

Give Me Liberty, Or ... Part 2 (1 Cor. 8:7-9:23)

I. Introduction

- A. Review of the of context
 - 1. Scriptural: **Love** is the main theme of chapters 8-14
 - 2. Historical: the Corinthians' question: "*Why can't we eat idol-food?*"
- B. Outline of the sermon / Prayer

II. The Problem of idol-food revisited (1 Cor 8:1-6)

- A. **A hypothetical letter written by the Corinthians**
 - 1. The role of truth and love in the church ("*Humble Orthodoxy*")
 - a. Application: Take care how you use the knowledge you have

III. A refutation of eating idol-food, based on love (1 Cor 8:7-13)

- A. Paul does not immediately take a rigid stance against *idol-food*
 - 1. verses 7-8: his first concern is for "*the weak*"
 - a. There is no admonition to instruct "*the weak*" about freedom
 - b. Paul is more concerned with changing "*those in the know*" than in those with a "*weak conscience*."
 - 2. verse 9-12: the **severity** of the sin of "*those in the know*"
 - a. potentially inflicting spiritual disaster on a brother!
 - b. Application: You are responsible for how you speak and act toward your brothers and sisters in the church!
 - c. It is a sin against Christ himself (Matthew 25:40)
 - d. It's severity is seen in the consequences at the Lord's Table
 - 3. verse 13: just how far is this self-sacrificial love supposed to go?
 - a. Give me death, rather than offend with my liberty
 - b. Being like Christ (Philippians 2)
 - c. Application: Are we loving others in this way?
- B. A word to the non-Christian

IV. The example of Paul's love for the church (1 Cor 9:1-23)

- A. Chapter 9 is neither an insertion nor digression from the matter of *idol-food*
- B. Paul's "mock-defense" of his apostleship (vss. 1-14)
 - 1. Paul lists his rights as a true apostle to have a wife and receive material payment for his Gospel labors.
 - a. bi-vocational elders are equally elders
 - 2. Why is Paul reporting all of these rights that he surrendered?
 - a. To be an example to the Corinthians to surrender their right to eat idol-food
- C. Paul the slave-leader (vss. 15-23)
 - 1. The compelling nature of the ministry
 - 2. The minister as a household servant
 - 3. Paul's surprising reward as a servant
 - 4. We need more than to pay lip-service to our wretchedness
 - 5. "AS a Jew?" I thought Paul WAS a Jew?
 - 6. Not under law, but not lawless either
 - 7. The **good news** about being weak (Romans 5:6)