

I CORINTHIANS 10:14-33

REVIEW...

- I CORINTHIANS 7-8 THE 1ST QUESTION - MARRIAGE / THE 2ND QUESTION - IDOLS...
- I CORINTHIANS 9:1-18 - PAUL'S DEFENSE...
 - There were some who questioned Paul's authority in an attempt to discredit him...
 - Paul gave three examples for his life as his defense - food / marriage / support...
- I CORINTHIANS 9:19-27 - PAUL'S EXAMPLE TO THE CHURCH...
 - 1st - The servant of all - became all thing to all men so some might be saved...
 - 2nd - Hard worker - four examples: Race / Olympics / Boxing / Wrestling
- I CORINTHIANS 10:1-23 - THE EXAMMPLE OF ISRAEL...
 - God had given Israel everything they needed...
 - He gave them freedom from slavery - new life - baptism in the Red Sea...
 - He gave them food (*manna*) and water (*from the rock*)...
 - Yet Israel rebelled against the Lord...
 - They did not have faith in God - did not enter the Promised Land - wandered 40 years...
 - Lived for pleasure rather than for God - Golden calf / Sin of Balaam...
 - Complained against the Lord - Fiery serpents / Rebellion of Korah...

RUN FROM IDOLATRY... (3 THINGS)

- 1ST - USING COMMON SENSE.. VS. 14-25
 - Paul comes back to the issue of eating food offered to Idols...
 - In light of the example of the mistakes of Israel - who gave into idolatry...
 - Gold calf rebellion - 3,000 killed / Sin of Balaam - 23,000 killed...
 - In fact Israel's idolatry eventually led to their complete destruction!
 - I Kings 17:12, 18 - "They worshiped idols, despite the Lord's specific and repeated warnings... because the LORD was angry, he swept them from his presence."
 - Seeing the certainty of the very serious consequences God brings upon idolaters...
 - Do not give into idolatry - do not put anything/anyone - before the Lord in your life...
 - Idolatry is not limited to bowing down before lifeless statues / pagan gods...
 - Anything we put before the Lord in our lives - dedicate our lives to - is an idol to us...
 - Money can be an idol / pleasure / fame / we can be our own idol...
 - Who is sitting in the throne of our heart - who or what are we living for...
 - If it is anyone/anything other than the Lord - learn the lesson of the nation of Israel!
 - Speaking to 'wise men' - judge for yourself - 'food offered to idols'...
 - As Paul had addressed in chapter 8 - a common problem of the day...
 - Part of how Greeks worshiped their gods was by offering a sacrifice of food to them
 - So if you were invited over to an unbeliever's house for a meal...
 - Or if you bought meat in the market (*almost always which had been offered*)...
 - As a believer in Jesus - could you with a good conscience eat the meat...
 - Paul challenged the church in Corinth to use their heads - logically approach the issue...
 - Often the Godly answers to the challenges we face in life - just take a little thought...

- God has given us a mind - and He expects us to use it - **Isaiah 1:18...**
- 2ND - LOOKING AT THE EXMAPLE OF JESUS & THE TEMPLE... vs. 15-22
 - The sacrifice of Jesus... vs. 16-17
 - When we partake of communion (*bread/cup*) - we become part of Christ...
 - Paul is not speaking here of transubstantiation...
 - At the moment of communion - bread & wine become the body of blood of Jesus...
 - Simple observation will prove what you are eating is just bread and juice...
 - The purpose of communion is not to literally 'eat' Jesus...
 - It is symbolic - a way to remember the cost of our salvation...
 - That is why Jesus said - **Luke 22:19** - "Do in remembrance of me..."
 - A public statement we all make of our faith in Christ...
 - Communion is one way we come together and corporately confess our faith...
 - We are sinners and the only way for us to be saved is through Jesus' sacrifice...
 - Sin has only one price - death - and Jesus paid that price for us...
 - His body was broken (*bread*) - He died (*cup*) - so that we might have life!
 - As the family of God we declare to anyone who is watching - we believe in Jesus...
 - If we weren't Christians - if we did not believe - there would be no reason to partake
 - Therefore the act of communion - identifies/labels us - as Christians!
 - The sacrifices of the altar... vs. 18
 - In the same way - those who are of the Jewish faith - offer sacrifices to the Lord...
 - At the time Paul was writing this letter - the Temple still stood in Jerusalem...
 - According to **Leviticus 3** - Israel was to offer 'peace' offerings to the Lord...
 - The fat of the animal was burnt on the Bronze Altar - but the rest was to share...
 - The 'picture' - having a meal with God - He got part / you got part...
 - If you offered the sacrifice - it was a sure sign you were a Jew...
 - Like someone wearing military fatigues - M-16 - driving in a military jeep...
 - It's a fairly good assumption - you can safely say - they are a soldier...
 - That is Paul's point - you know who someone is - by what they do...
 - If people watch your life - what do your actions say about who you are...
 - Just looking at where we go - are we identified with Jesus / or with the world...
 - Sacrifices to idols... vs. 19-20
 - Not that idols are anything - or what is offered to idols is anything...
 - Paul makes the comparison of Jesus' sacrifice / Temple sacrifices - to idol sacrifices...
 - But in case the assumption is made they are equal - he clarifies the key difference...
 - There are no others gods - there is only One God - **Ephesians 4:6**
 - Sacrifices to idols - are sacrifices to demons...
 - Worshiping other 'gods' - no matter what the religion - is really worshiping demons!
 - All the Greek gods / all 6 million Hindu deities / Buddha / Allah - demons!
 - There are only two options - you are either worshiping the One True God...
 - Or you are worshiping the god of this world - no matter what name you give to him...
 - There is a way to tell the difference...
 - God motivates us to worship Him through Love - God is Love - **I John 4:7-8...**
 - **John 3:16** - "God so loves us that He gave us His only son..."
 - Satan motivates through fear - the common denominator in all false religions...

- The very word 'Panic' comes from the Greek God 'Pan' - god of the underworld...
 - Whose image of a man with horns - tail - and hooves is still used for satan today!
- o Do not provoke the Lord... vs. 21-22
- So do not have fellowship with demons...
 - If you partake of the food offered to idols - then you identified with them...
 - If someone saw you walking into the temple of Zeus to have a meal...
 - The natural assumption is that you were a believer in that false deity...
 - Be very careful where you allow yourself to go - who you are identified with...
 - **I Corinthians 15:33** - "Bad company corrupts good character."
 - We are foolish if we think those around us do not affect us...
 - If you hang out with people who gamble - tell bad jokes - and get drunk...
 - But you think to yourself - I will not be like them - I am a godly Christian - foolish...
 - Choose VERY wisely who you spend time with - because you will become like them!
 - You cannot drink the cup of the Lord - and the cup of demons...
 - The idea being - go to church on Sunday and partake of common - 'I am a Christian'...
 - Then on Monday - go to the local temple and offer a sacrifice - 'I am a heathen'...
 - We will provoke the jealousy of God - unless we think we are stronger than He is...
 - We cannot live our lives with a divided heart - living for God and for the world...
 - On Sunday we walk and talk like a Christian - but the rest of the week...
 - We end up lukewarm - knowing the right answers - but living for the world...
 - * **Revelation 3:15-16** - "I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish you were one or the other! But since you are like lukewarm water, I will spit you out of my mouth!"
 - It is easy to say we have 'faith' and 'believe' in Jesus - but the proof is in our actions...
 - If we say we're Christians - but still live like the world - then do we really have faith
 - We can call ourselves Christians - but if we are continually sinning - are we really...
 - That is not to say that as believers we never make mistakes...
 - But as believers - if we sin - there should be remorse - confession - repentance...
 - If there is no remorse - no repentance for sin - there is good reason for concern...
 - We might think we are OK with God - but in truth we are ready to be vomited out!
- **3RD - THE SOLUTION... (4 THINGS) vs. 23-33**
- o 1ST - All things are lawful - but not all things are helpful... vs. 23
- We have amazing freedom in Christ - but not everything is helpful...
 - As a believer in Jesus - there is very little that we cannot do...
 - But though we have freedom - not everything we do is 'good for us'...
 - The question we have to ask - is does it draw us closer to / or farther from the Lord...
 - If we want to know if a particular activity is good for us to be a part of...
 - What is the result of participation - does it strengthen our walk with Jesus...
 - If we are honest - it is not difficult to tell the difference...
 - If given we are given two lists - one good & one bad - we can tell which is which...
 - Read the Bible / pray / go to church / love others / help those who are in need...
 - Gambling / being drunk / cheating / lying / partying / fighting...
 - Chose to partake of those things that are 'good for us' - build us up in God!

- o 2nd - Look out for one another... vs. 24
 - Be careful of your freedom in Christ - don't stumble a weaker brother...
 - Our freedom in Christ can lead another brother into sin!
 - We might know that idols are nothing / cards are nothing / movies are nothing...
 - Perhaps we can do these things without any compromise to our walk with Jesus...
 - But to a brother who thinks they are evil – to him they are sin...
 - If eating food offered to idols stumbles your brother – don't eat in front of him...
 - If watching a movie stumbles him – then don't watch the movie in front of him...
 - If playing with cards stumbles him – then don't put out the deck when he comes by...
 - Remember it's about Jesus - consider your brother before yourself...
- o 3rd - Practical guidelines for eating meat... vs. 25-30
 - 1st - Eat whatever is sold in the Market...
 - But do not ask if the meat was offered to an idol - for conscience sake...
 - o In India - they still offer their food to their many gods...
 - o If I bought meat - found out it was offered to 'ganesh' - it would bother me...
 - o Better simply not to ask - then you don't have to worry about it!
 - One might ask - but is that just having blind ignorance...
 - o Even if you don't ask - isn't the meat still defiled - an offering to a false god...
 - o Not at all - the earth is the Lord - and everything that is in it - **Psalm 50:12**
 - o Everything belongs to the Lord - so I am really eating God's meat!
 - 2nd - If an unbeliever invites you over for dinner - go ahead and eat...
 - Again do not ask if the food was offered to an idol - for conscience sake...
 - If someone then tells you - 'this was offered to an idol' - then don't eat it...
 - Not for your conscience sake - but for the those around you...
 - If someone offered to buy you dinner - go ahead and enjoy the blessing...
 - If they then told you they stole the money - then politely refuse...
 - Not for your sake - but so as not to encourage them to continue in their sin...
 - It also gives you the opportunity to share with them about Jesus!
 - 3rd - Give thanks for whatever you eat...
 - Whatever you eat - give thanks to the Lord for what He has provided...
 - *** I Timothy 4:4-5** - "Since everything God created is good, we should not reject any of it. We may receive it gladly, with thankful hearts. For we know it is made holy by the word of God and prayer."
 - Say grace - both as a way of thanking God for the food - remember He provides...
 - And as an opportunity to share the Lord with everyone sharing the meal!
- o 4th - Do all to the Glory of God... vs. 31-33
 - Try your best not to offend anyone with your actions...
 - We are not called to be rude - we are not looking to offend anyone...
 - As Christians some times we come across as 'better than everyone else'...
 - If you are invited over for a 'pagan dinner' - and you need to refuse...
 - You don't have to make a scene - 'self-righteous' - make them feel bad/evil...
 - Instead try to please all men in all things - so they might be saved!
 - Use every opportunity to share the Love and hope of Jesus with everyone...

- We are called to stand out from the world - we do not blend in...
- But we should be a light to them - show them the Love of Jesus!