

# 1 Corinthians Part One

## Lesson #28, Chapter 8:7-13

Please read all of chapter 8 before beginning this lesson. Ask the Lord for insight into His Word as you spend time with Him.

1. How would you summarize the contents of verses 1-6?
2. Was there anything in verses 1-6 to indicate that eating things sacrificed to idols was sin? How should that knowledge have influenced how the Corinthians related to one another?
3. Paul continues his discussion in verse 7 with the statement, *However not all men have this knowledge*. What knowledge is he referring to? See verses 1-6.
4. Some of the believers at Corinth didn't understand or hadn't received complete teaching on God's superiority over idols. How did that incomplete knowledge affect them according to verse 7?
5. Why was their conscience weak according to Paul's statements in this chapter?
6. Warren Wiersbe writes, "Conscience is that internal court where our actions are judged and are either approved or condemned (Rom. 2:14-15). Conscience is not the law; it bears witness to God's moral law. But the important thing is this: *conscience depends on knowledge* (italics mine). The more spiritual knowledge we know and act on, the stronger the conscience will become." What is the way to bolster a weak conscience? See verse 7; Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 1:12; 1 Tim. 4:1-6.

Your conscience is like a smoke alarm. It is that internal mechanism that God gives you to warn you of sin. It is adjusted by the screwdriver of truth to respond correctly or incorrectly to all thoughts, actions, and information. As we grow in the knowledge of God's truth, the Holy Spirit will constantly be adjusting our consciences. ~ Jack Hughes

7. So if someone has a weak conscience in an area of biblical freedom what is the best way to win him or her to a more biblical understanding? What are we often tempted to do instead? What do we need to remember any time we're discussing areas of liberty in the Christian life? See verse 9 and Rom. 12:10; 14:15.
8. Look up the following verses and summarize what you learn about the conscience: 1 Sam. 24:5; Acts. 23:1; 24:16; Rom. 13:5; 1 Cor. 8:7, 12; 1 Tim. 1:5, 19; 3:9; 4:2; Titus 1:15; Heb. 10:22.
9. Based on what you've learned, why is it so important to pay attention to our conscience?
10. How did the Corinthians' background of idol worship affect how they viewed God? See verse 8.
11. Paul's obvious concern for these young believers is seen in his comments to those whose consciences are more informed. What caution does he give them in verse 9?
12. In verse 10 Paul illustrates how a liberty could become a stumbling block. What scenario does he paint?

13. How does verse 11 help us answer the somewhat awkwardly worded question of verse 10? What is the answer to verse 10?
  
14. Similar situations are cited in Prov. 20:25; 1 Cor. 10:23-28; Rom. 14:14-15. What issues are at stake in these verses and in 1 Corinthians 8?
  
15. What does verse 12 tell us we are doing if we hold to our liberties without considering how our actions could affect weaker believers?
  
16. What does that understanding move Paul to declare in verse 13?
  
17. What does Jesus have to say about stumbling blocks? See Matt. 13:41 and 18:6-7.
  
18. What are some *liberties* Christians struggle with during our day and age?
  
19. Take any one of those liberties you just listed (especially if it's one you personally like to exercise) and insert it into the following somewhat modified verses from chapter 8:  
*But \_\_\_\_\_ will not commend us to God; we are neither the worse if we do not \_\_\_\_\_, nor the better if we do \_\_\_\_\_. But take care lest this liberty of \_\_\_\_\_ somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. Therefore, if \_\_\_\_\_ causes my brother to stumble, I will never again, that I might not cause my brother to stumble.*

20. How did that little exercise help you gain more clarity about your role and duties when it comes to Christian liberties and loving others?
  
21. My husband, Jack Hughes, has said, “Christian liberties are like sharp pencils. If used in the right way they can be a blessing, but misused, they become a weapon to do us and others harm.” How does that statement fit in exactly with what Paul is saying in verses 9-13?
  
22. How has the study of 1 Corinthians chapters 1-8 impacted you this year? What do you hope stays with you—whether doctrinal or practical in nature?

**Grace to you and peace from God our  
Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

First Corinthians Part 2 (Chapters 9-16) will delve even deeper into the issue of Christian liberties, but for now take a moment to read through Jack Hughes' *Christian Liberties Truth Grid* below. This handy guide helps believers sort through the tangled reasoning associated with a Christian's liberties.

### **Christian Liberties Truth Grid**

1. Are you fully convinced in your own mind that your liberty is acceptable to God and not contrary to the Scriptures (Rom. 14:5, 14, 23; I Cor. 8:1, 8)?
2. Can you engage in this activity and still guard your heart and keep it pure (Prov. 4:23)?
3. Are you exercising your liberty for the Lord and His glory (Rom. 14:6-8; I Cor. 6:20; 10:31)?
4. In exercising your liberty will you be in the presence of someone who thinks your liberty is forbidden in Scripture (Rom. 14:14)?
5. Will you be exercising your liberty in love, considering others before yourself (Rom. 15:1-3; 14:15; I Cor. 8:1; Phil. 2:3-4)?
6. Will you, by exercising your liberty, harm, destroy, or put a stumbling block before someone else's faith (Mt. 18:4-7; Rom. 14:13, 15, 20-22; I Cor. 8:7, 9-13)?
7. If you exercise your liberty, will it cause what is for you a good thing to be spoken of as evil (Rom. 14:16)?
8. In exercising your liberty will it edify and build others up (Rom. 15:1-3; 14:19; I Cor. 8:1)?
9. Is exercising your liberty going to help or hinder your ability to win others to Christ (I Cor. 9:19-22)?
10. Will exercising your liberty tempt you to sin or put you in a position to be easily tempted to sin i.e., will it cause you to live on the edge of the cliff (Prov. 27:12; Gal. 5:13; I Pet. 2:16)?
11. Can you exercise your liberty and still maintain peace (Rom. 14:17-19)?
12. Is it wise for me to exercise this liberty if I am, or have been enslaved or mastered by it (I Cor. 6:12; Gal. 5:13; I Pet. 2:16)?
13. Are you taking into consideration your position and influence in the body of Christ? Leaders need to be extra careful in the exercise of their liberties as they are high profile examples to all (Lev. 10:8-9; Prov. 31:4-5; Eccl. 10:16-17; I Tim. 3:3-7; Tit. 1:5-9)?