



PREACHING THE CROSS
God's Remedy for a Troubled Church

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF LAKE ORION

When Your "Rights" Are Idolatrous

Sunday, September 11, 2016

Sunday, September 18, 2016

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TEXT: 1 Corinthians 8:1–13

I. THE CONTEXT OF 1 CORINTHIANS 8

A. The Historical Context

From chapter 8:1 to chapter 11:1, Paul is addressing the topic of idolatry. Corinth was a city religiously charged with paganism. One aspect of pagan worship in the city was the sacrifice of animal meats at the Greek temples to honor the deities.

The three parts to the cultic sacrifice included the preparation of the meat for the sacrifice, the actual sacrifice itself, and the feast that followed in which the worshiper, invited guests and the priests would partake of the sacrifice in the presence of the gods.

The *first* portion of the meat was burned before the gods. The *second* portion was designated for the feast that followed to be eaten at the temple by the worshiper, the priest and the guests. The *third* portion served as the priests' compensation which was sold for a profit to vendors in the market place for public consumption. It is this meat at these various venues that is the topic of Paul's discussion in the ensuing chapters.

B. The Extended Context: 8:1– 11:1

In chapters 8-10, Paul addresses three situations confronting the Corinthians related to the temple meat:

1. Eating the Temple Meat at the Temple, 8:1-13, esp., 8:10; 1 Cor. 10:14–22

The issue: *"Is it permissible to eat meat offered to idols at the actual temple?"*

2. Buying the Temple Meat Sold at the Marketplace, 1 Cor. 10:25–26

The issue: *"Is it permissible to buy meat offered to idols at the marketplace?"*

3. Eating the Temple Meat at the House of an Unbeliever, 1 Cor. 10:27-29

The issue: *"Is it permissible to eat meat offered to idols at the private home of an unbeliever?"*

C. The Immediate Context, 8:1–13; 10:14–22

After their conversion, some believers at Corinth returned to the practice of attending the cultic temple meals. They had become believers and had probably attended meals at the temple all their lives.

1. The “strong” had no problem eating meat sacrificed to idols *at the temple*.
2. The “weak” had a problem eating meat sacrificed to idols *at the temple*.

II. THE CONTENT OF 1 CORINTHIANS 8

A. The “Strong” Were Asserting a Spiritual Knowledge of God That They Did Not Possess, 8:2

B. The “Strong” Were Operating in Arrogance and Not in Love, 8:1

1. The Object of Love: the Weaker Brother

“Love is that in you which moves you to give yourself and your gifts spontaneously and voluntarily for the good of others regardless of their merit or response.” (Modification to Alva McClain’s definition)

2. The Nature of Love: a Settled Commitment to Seek the Good of Others

“Love is a settled purpose of the will involving the whole person in seeking the well-being of others. It involves commitment of the whole person, initiated in the will.” (Gordon Lewis)

C. The “Strong” Were Claiming a “Right” to Eat at the Pagan Temples, 8:9-10

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D. The “Strong” Were Potentially Causing the “Weak” to Return to the Sin from Which They were Delivered, 8:10-12

1. **Because of past Idolatry, the Weak Were Still Processing the “Oneness of God,”**
8:4–7
2. **Because of Weak Uninformed Consciences, the Weak Were More Prone to Fall Back into Idolatry, 8:7, 11**

III. APPLICATION: