

# 1 Corinthians 8 Commentary

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1 CORINTHIANS - PROBLEMS OF A LOCAL CHURCH  
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FROM CHART: Note 2 major divisions:

- **FIRST DIVISION** - Chapters 1-6 = Problems of Congregation - Divisions & Depravities,
- **SECOND DIVISION** - Chapters 7-16 = Personal Problems, Worship Problems

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**1 Corinthians 8:1 Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.**

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Amplified - NOW ABOUT food offered to idols: of course we know that all of us possess knowledge [concerning these matters. Yet mere] knowledge causes people to be puffed up (to bear themselves loftily and be proud), but love (affection and goodwill and benevolence) edifies and builds up and encourages one to grow [to his full stature].

Wuest - Now, concerning things sacrificed to idols, We know, [do you say?], because all of us are possessors of knowledge. The aforementioned knowledge inflates the ego, but the love [God's love produced in the heart] builds up [the Christian life]. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

Barclay - With reference to things offered to idols—we are well aware that we all possess knowledge; but knowledge inflates a man, whereas love builds him up.

NET 1 Corinthians 8:1 With regard to food sacrificed to idols, we know that "we all have knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now regarding your question about food that has been offered to idols. Yes, we know that "we all have knowledge" about this issue. But while knowledge makes us feel important, it is love that strengthens the church.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." This "knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up.

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge

puffs up, but love builds up.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:1 Περὶ τῶν εἰδωλοθῶτων, ὁ ὅσους ἡμεῖς πάντες γινώσκουμεν. ἡμεῖς πάντες οὐκ ἔχουμεν·

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:1 And concerning the things sacrificed to idols, we have known that we all have knowledge: knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up;

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now concerning things sacrificed to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:1 About food offered to idols: We know that "we all have knowledge." Knowledge inflates with pride, but love builds up.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now in regard to meat sacrificed to idols: we realize that "all of us have knowledge"; knowledge inflates with pride, but love builds up.

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now about food which has been dedicated to false gods. We are well aware that all of us have knowledge; but while knowledge puffs up, love is what builds up.

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now, concerning food offered to false gods: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes people arrogant, but love builds them up.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:1 Now about things offered to images: we all seem to ourselves to have knowledge. Knowledge gives pride, but love gives true strength.

- **Now concerning things:** 1Co 8:10 10:19-22,28 Nu 25:2 Ac 15:10,19,20,29 21:25 Rev 2:14,20,
- **we are,** 1Co 8:2,4,7,11 1:5 4:10 13:2 14:20 15:34 Ro 14:14,22 Col 2:18
- **Knowledge:** 1Co 4:18 1 Cor 5:2,6 1 Cor 13:4 Isa 5:21 47:10 Ro 11:25 12:16 14:3,10
- **but:** 1Co 13:1-13 Eph 4:16
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Ephesians 4:14-16+ As a result, we are **no longer to be children** (cf WEAK, IMMATURE BRETHREN), tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15+ but speaking the truth (cf KNOWLEDGE) **in love**, we are to **GROW UP** in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the **GROWTH OF** the body for the **BUILDING UP** of itself **in love**.

### IN A "GRAY CHAPTER" AN IDOL QUESTION WHICH IS NOT IDLE!

We might "color" this chapter "gray" because it deals with a [gray area](#) in the life of the saints in Corinth. A gray area is an ill-defined situation, one that is not clearly defined or that exists somewhere between two extreme positions and one that does not conform to an existing set of rules (e.g., nothing stated directly in Scripture). In this chapter we see how Christians are to balance their freedom in Christ and their responsibility in love their brethren. The question in this chapter deals with meat sacrificed to idols but the broader application is what should be our guidelines and our action regarding questionable things

**Legalism** denies any gray area and declares everything to be black and white. Unless it is permitted in Scripture it is wrong.

**License** also denies any gray area and declares everything to be black and white. Unless it is forbidden in Scripture it is OK.

**Rod Mattoon** entitles it "The Canker of Cockiness and Charity's Strength 1 Cor 8:1"

**Jack Arnold** - Should I have a glass of wine if at a wedding reception of a Jewish friend? Should I go see the Orlando Magic play basketball on Sunday if I have a Christian friend who is a strict Sabbath keeper? Should I pierce my body for jewelry or get a tattoo? These are all questionable practices or doubtful things among Christians in our American culture, and while 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 does not specifically deal with these issues, it does give basic principles which we can use in handling any questionable practice. A doubtful thing or questionable practice is: An act, not sinful in itself nor specifically commanded against in Scripture, which a Christian is free to do but which may become sinful for the Christian if practiced or abused when practiced. **There are only three questionable practices listed in the New Testament: 1) The observing of Jewish religious holidays; 2) The drinking of wine, and 3) The eating of meat which was sacrificed to idols.** In two thousand years of church history the Christian church in America has picked up hundreds of others such as use of tobacco, drinking of alcohol of any kind, dancing, cosmetics, clothing styles, television, movies, card playing, recreating on the Lord's Day, hairstyles for men and women, and listening to jazz or rock music. Some fairly recent questionable practices are body piercing for rings in the nose or in the belly button for women and ear lobes for men, tattoos for women and the purchasing of lottery tickets. This is just a representative list and other countries and cultures have questionable practices which we do not have in America. There are some practices and some situations in which there is no clear black-and-white or yes-or-no answer.....The Corinthian Church had just one questionable practice: whether to eat meat which was offered to idols. The Apostle Paul took three chapters (8-10) to deal with this subject which seems absolutely irrelevant to us today. Has anyone struggled with eating meat offered to an idol lately? Of course not, but you probably struggled with other American questionable practices, and those practices can only be solved by applying the principles of 1 Corinthians 8:1-13. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Knofel Staton** - But most of the ethical matters we have to decide about are in the neutral zone. That means they are neither moral nor immoral in and of themselves. Consequently, it is not the action itself, but rather the motives or the situation and circumstances that can make them either moral or immoral" (First Corinthians).

#### **Related Resource:**

- [See 67 guidelines below](#)

Remember the context -- beginning in 1 Corinthians 7:1+ and continuing through 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul is addressing **questions** which the Corinthians had asked him in a letter he had received from them.

**MacArthur** points out that "During the past several generations some of the strongest debate among fundamentalists and evangelicals has centered around questionable practices—practices that many believers feel to be wrong but that are not specifically forbidden in Scripture. Some of the key issues have been drinking alcoholic beverages, smoking, card playing, wearing makeup, dancing, Sunday sports, styles of music, and going to the theater or movies. One reason Christians have spent so much time arguing those issues is that the Bible does not specifically forbid them.

**Ray Stedman** introduces this chapter - In the eighth chapter of First Corinthians we come to the second question these Corinthians had asked the Apostle Paul in the letter they wrote to him. It has to do with a problem that is very common in our Christian lives today: "How much should I let other people's views control my actions?" That is, "Must I limit my liberty by the narrower, more restricted views of other Christians?" You recognize immediately that that is a problem every Christian faces. Some differ widely as to whether certain activities in our daily lives are right or wrong. The question is, "How much should I adjust my actions accordingly?"

**Jack Arnold** - All Christians agreed a complete break with heathen practices had to be made after one became a believer in Christ. "They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ." (1 Thess. 1:9). "Dear children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 Jn. 5:21). However, there arose the problem of meat offered to idols. The Corinthians were big meat eaters, and almost all of the meat sold in the meat markets and restaurants had first been offered to idols. There were some Christians in Corinth who thought it absolutely wrong to eat any meat offered to idols because it was part of that old system from which they had been delivered. They were weak in conscience and their doctrine of Christian liberty was not yet straight These weak brethren became offended at the actions of the strong brethren who exercised Christian liberty and the weak began to judge. On the other hand, there were some strong Christians who saw that the meat offered to idols was good meat and an idol was nothing, so they felt free to eat the meat. They had no conscience or scruples about this matter. Their tendency was to despise and snub those who chose not to eat. Obviously, there was a division in the local church at Corinth over this issue. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Arnold** - In the pagan temples in Corinth, they offered animal sacrifices. A third of the offering was cooked for the priests to eat; another third was given to the offered, and the last third was given to the priests which they in turn sold to the meat markets and the local restaurants for a profit. The best place to buy a roast or get a good steak was in the meat markets and restaurants that were right next door to the temple filled with idols. It was virtually impossible to eat any meat which was not sacrificed to idols. The

question naturally arose among the Christians, "If a Christian eats meat offered to idols, is he not participating in some way in the worship of an idol?" There were the strong brethren, advanced in doctrine, who knew that idols were nothing and meat sacrificed to idols was still good meat. They understood their rights to Christian liberty and insisted upon eating the meat, not giving in to any superstitious beliefs about idols. However, these stronger brethren became proud of their knowledge and boasted of their Christian liberty. Perhaps some even became libertines in their practice. A libertine is one who abuses Christian liberty, exercising all his rights and smugly looking down his nose at weaker Christians who have sensitive consciences about questionable practices. A libertine says, "I will not give up my rights for any narrow minded legalist," and he does not care that his freedom may be misinterpreted by weaker brothers as license to sin. There were also the weak brethren who knew the awfulness of idolatry and immediately associated the eating of meat with heathen practices. These brethren would be offended if they saw someone eating this meat, having a defensive, critical and judging spirit. Perhaps some of the weak Christians became legalists, demanding everyone conform to their negative thinking. The weak brethren were not weak because they did not practice certain doubtful things. They may have had solid convictions about their actions but they were weak because they could not stand to see other Christians practicing them and they judged. They would become legalists only when they insisted that all Christians conform to their opinions about questionable practices. We may be able to relate the Corinthian problem to our culture, for there are some Christians today who cannot celebrate Christmas, Easter, Halloween and Valentine's Day because of their pagan origin. Their sensitive consciences are offended as the whole idea. Those who buck at Christmas, Easter, Halloween and Valentines Day must deal with so much of our culture which is still influenced by pagan thought. The names of the days of the week are dedicated to a god: Sun-day, Moon-day, Thor's-day (Thor was god of war in the Pantheon of Norse). Even the names of our months are for pagan gods. January is named for the Roman god Janus, the two-faced god who looked backward to the old year and forward to the new. March was dedicated to Mars, the god of war. We know that we all possess knowledge. Apparently the "Liberty Party" in the church was repeating the slogan. "We all possess knowledge." The strong brethren were saying every Christian in Corinth knew in his head an idol is nothing. They were driving home knowledge alone as the only basis for handling the problem of meat sacrificed to idols. They said the weak brethren were wrong, narrow minded, ignorant and a bunch of legalistic fundamentalists. These weak brethren should be set straight before they ruined the whole church with their legalism. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

#### **Rod Mattoon's Introduction to chapter 8 -**

The Bible plays a vital role in the life of the Christian that wants to make his or her life count for Christ. It provides for us a standard or blueprint for living, instructing us how to live, what to do, and what activities or attitudes to avoid in our daily living. If you want to be an effective ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ that is maturing and growing spiritually, then obedience to God's Word is crucial.

Many Christians want God's blessings on their lives. They want God to use them to reach others for Christ. It is the desire of their hearts to please and honor the Lord and not do anything that would cause them to be a hindrance to the salvation or spiritual growth of another person. There are times, however, that questions may arise about certain activities that the Bible does not specifically address. Such activities are in what some call the "gray areas." Participation in such activities are fine for some Christians because they find nothing wrong with them, but to others, they are considered sinful. This was the situation that Paul was facing in the church at Corinth and he addresses this problem in this section of the epistle.

The issue in Corinth was about eating meat that had been dedicated to idols. Mature Christians saw nothing wrong with this at all, but those who were new Christians and had been saved out of a life of worshiping these idols wanted nothing to do with this meat. They did not want to have a part of anything that was connected to their old lifestyles and would not eat this meat. Paul provides for us principles about dealing with questionable practices and activities.

We do know that we as Christians have been set free from the bondage of sin. Christians are not under the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament. We are saved by grace and have liberty in Christ, who was the final sacrifice for the sins of man.

\* John 8:31-32 — ... Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

\* 2 Corinthians 3:17 — Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

\* Galatians 5:1 — Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

We have liberty in Christ, but our liberty does not give us the freedom to live in sin.

\* Romans 6:15 — What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

Our freedom from sin's power is to enable us to serve Jesus Christ, to reach the lost with the gospel, and to help them live godly lives. It will be difficult for you to help someone conquer sinful habits in his or her life if you are living in sin yourself and spiritually defeated. Your freedom in Christ should help you to help others and to be the right kind of example.

\* 1 Peter 2:15-16 — ... For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16- As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

**Now concerning things sacrificed to idols - Now concerning** (repeated 1Co. 7:1, 25, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1) **idols** reflects the Corinthian's question about whether or not to eat meat **sacrificed to idols**. Paul first takes a detour to discuss knowledge, for this relates to how one responds to ingestion of idol burgers.

While this practice is not directly related to most Western Christians, there are some Christians who have been called (saved) out of idol worship to whom it is relevant. On the other hand, the general principle that is taught in this chapter is applicable to all the "**gray areas**" of Christian practice, of which there are a large number. Failure to handle these "gray areas" guided by the principles in this chapter will usually result in behavior of two extremes, either legalism or license (libertinism), both of which are wrong and need to be corrected.

**Sacrificed to idols** (1494)(**eidolothuton** from **eidolon** = idol + **thuo** = sacrifice) refers to whatever is sacrificed or offered to an idol such as flesh (pagan sacrifices). meat offered to an idol, remains of victims sacrificed to an idol and reserved for eating. It refers to sacrificial meat, part of which was burned on the altar as the deities' portion and part was eaten at a solemn meal in the temple, and part was sold in the market (No uses in the Septuagint (in Apocrypha - 4 Macc 5:2 = "ordered the guards to seize each and every Hebrew and to compel them to eat pork and food sacrificed to idols.") **Arndt and Gingrich** note: "From the Jewish viewpoint it was unclean and there-fore forbidden" (cf. Nu 25:2+; Ps. 106:28). Dean Stanley observes: "This identification of a sacrifice and a feast was carried to the highest pitch among the Greeks. Sacrifices are enumerated by Aristotle and Thucydides amongst the chief means of social enjoyment"

**Eidolothuton** - 9v - Acts 15:29; Acts 21:25; 1 Co. 8:1; 1 Co. 8:4; 1 Co. 8:7; 1 Co. 8:10; 1 Co. 10:19; Rev. 2:14; Rev. 2:20

**We know** (**eido**) **that we all** (present tense - continually) **have knowledge** (**gnosis**) - **Know** is the verb (**eido**) that means that "**we**" (Paul is including the knowledgeable saints at Corinth) **know** beyond a shadow of a doubt. Paul is affirming the Corinthians who knew what God's Word taught (or what he had taught when he was with them for 18 months) and thus they knew that eating meat sacrificed to idols was not directly addressed either by Scripture or Paul's teaching. As we often say "**So far, so good.**"

**Knowledge** (**gnosis**) (present tense - continually, generally) **makes arrogant, but love** (**agape**)(present tense - continually, generally) **edifies** - **But** is a Term of contrast. marking an abrupt "change of direction" to qualify their **knowledge**, which in the context was not beneficial to the body. In short , Paul presents a striking contrast between **knowledge** (by itself) and **love**. Paul's use of **knowledge** here is not something purely intellectual. It is knowledge which has results and leads to action, especially religious action. Here it is not a reference to gnosticism, which developed later.

"Knowledge blows up, but love builds up."

What **knowledge** is Paul referring to? **Mattoon** first stresses "the importance of having a balance between knowledge and love. The apostle stated they all had **knowledge**, most likely referring to the **knowledge** that there is only one God and the fact that idols are powerless and worthless. This kind of knowledge would free the conscience of those who were mature believers who understood this truth. They knew that food dedicated to idols was not contaminated. These false gods did not exist and eating any meat dedicated to them would not harm them at all. They could eat with their friends without any problems whatsoever. Others, however, did not understand this truth. Their consciences bothered them concerning this matter. They were troubled about eating the offered meat and any other believer that ate it. This is where **knowledge** has to be balanced with **love**. The **knowledge** of a person can be of great help to those who need help and teaching. Sometimes, however, **knowledge** of the truth can be a hindrance instead of a help, especially when that **knowledge** creates an attitude of pride or "puffs up" a person. **Knowledge** that is tempered with love is usually a characteristic of someone with maturity and spiritual growth. Yet, there are many believers that have **knowledge** of God's Word, and think they are mature Christians, but they struggle with arrogance, selfishness, and a lack love for others, demonstrating a lack of maturity in their lives. The Corinthians had an abundance of spiritual **knowledge**. (recall 1 Cor 1:5) These folks were proud of their achievements, but they were not using their **knowledge** to help those who were spiritually weaker. Paul wanted these more mature believers to strengthen the spiritually weaker ones with the **knowledge** God had given to them....If you are a pastor, you have to love and be patient with the people you are trying to help. If you don't love them, you will become impatient, irritable, irritated, and indifferent toward them when they don't listen to what you say or do exactly opposite of what the Bible teaches. It will

drive you crazy if you are not careful.

Christian behavior is founded on love, not knowledge;  
and the goal of the Christian life is not knowledge, but love.

-- Dave Guzik

**Guzik** - Both **knowledge** and **love** have an effect on our lives in that each of them make something grow. The difference between puffs up and edifies is striking; it is the difference between a bubble and a building. Some Christians grow, others just swell!

Paul points out the problem with **knowledge** by itself (especially related to spiritual matters) is that, if it is not balance, it has the tendency to make one prideful, puffed up, and thinking he knows everything there is to know about a subject, especially in spiritual subjects. In short **knowledge** unbalanced by supernatural **love** continually (present tense) has the effect of making a person **arrogant**. We have undoubtedly all fallen into this fleshly trap in our spiritual walk and become judgmental or critical in spirit (SPEAKING FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE).

**THOUGHT** - Just wondering about grace and knowledge (Be a Berean as you read my thoughts). As I meditated on this passage, another passage came to mind 2 Peter 3:18+ which is a command to "**grow** ([present imperative](#)) in the grace and **knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." Note the strategic placement of grace before **knowledge**. These puffed up saints were filled with **knowledge** but deficient in grace! They failed to understand that grace governs **knowledge** and **knowledge** that is unfettered and masquerading as liberty or freedom is not true **knowledge** of Christ Who was the essence of grace upon grace and the epitome of **knowledge**. As a result, the arrogant believers abused grace and tore down (either by their words or their actions - e.g., eating idol meat in front of the weaker brother) the less knowledgeable (weak) brethren. The irony is that the weak brethren were also deficient in their understanding of grace, and how a true understanding of grace would have set them free from their overscrupulous conscience. In short Peter's prayer for continued growth in **grace and knowledge** would be apropos for both the strong and the weak, for they both needed a better understanding of grace to guide their proper use of knowledge.

**MacArthur on knowledge** - The statement was true but egotistical. It reflected a feeling of superiority. The believers who made the claim were not suggesting they were omniscient, but that they had more than enough **knowledge** and understanding of God's Word to know that pagan gods and idols were not real and that food sacrificed to them was still just food. They knew that eating the food could not contaminate them spiritually, that it had no affect on their Christian lives. They felt totally free to eat whatever they wanted, no matter what others thought. But they are reminded that **knowledge makes arrogant. Those believers were mature in knowledge, but were not mature in love. Love edifies, or builds up others; and that edification they did not have. They were solid in doctrine but weak in love. They were strong in self-love but weak in brotherly love.**

Paul puts this type of **knowledge** in it's proper place later in this letter writing

"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but **do not have love** ([agape](#)), I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and **know** all mysteries and all **knowledge** ([gnosis](#)); and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have **love** ([agape](#)), I am nothing." (1 Cor 13:1-2+)

Paul goes on to define supernatural **love**...

**Love** ([agape](#)) is patient, **love** is kind *and* is not jealous; **love** does **not brag and is not arrogant**, (1 Cor 13:4+)

In Romans we read

**Love** ([agape](#)) does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore **love** ([agape](#)) is the fulfillment of the law. (Ro 13:10+)

And as Jesus taught in Mark 12:30-31+

YOU SHALL **LOVE** ([agapao](#)) THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' 31 "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL **LOVE** ([agapao](#)) YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

The problem of the mature, "puffed up" believers in Corinth was that they were not loving their neighbor as themselves, but they were more to the point loving their self and their rights. And we should not be surprised, because even though they had knowledge, Paul has already made it clear that they were fleshly, walking like mere (unregenerate) men (1 Cor 3:3). And how do "mere men" walk? They look out for "number one." Selfishness is their driving force. Little wonder they could not love their neighbors with agape

love, for this love is supernatural, is selfless, and seeks the best for the recipient expecting nothing in return. And since agape love is not natural love, the only way it can be displayed is by the power of the Holy Spirit, Who bears it in the surrendered saint as one aspect of the spiritual fruit in Gal 5:22-23+.

Peter shows the relationship between knowledge and love writing

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, **knowledge**, and in your **knowledge, self-control**, (cf 1 Cor 9:27) and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Pe 1:5-8)

To reiterate, [agape](#) love is described by actions, including what it does not do or say. In fact if one reads 1Cor 13:4-7 carefully and compares it with the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23+, it is apparent that all of characteristics of **love** are found in the fruit of the Spirit! Thus we can understand why **love edifies**. It releases the miracle working power of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the lives of our fellow church members. These fleshly believers had in effect quenched and grieved the Holy Spirit Who was necessary to energize "loving" knowledge, so to speak.

None of us has a right to do as we please, unless we please to do right.

Earlier in this letter Paul had warned about becoming **arrogant** writing "Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, **so that no one of you will become arrogant** in behalf of one against the other." (1 Cor 4:6). Now Paul says this is exactly what had happened in the realm of their spiritual leaders, some were bragging about their favorite leader at the expense of another. In 1 Cor 4:18-19 Paul chided them stating that "some have become **arrogant**, as though I were not coming to you. But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are **arrogant** but their power." And again in 1 Cor 5:2 he rebukes them for their arrogance in the face of flagrant sexual immorality in their midst writing "You have become **arrogant** and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst." And so the ground was "fertile" (so to speak) for their becoming **arrogant** in "[gray areas](#)."

**Jack Arnold** - Those who had the most knowledge and understanding about questionable practices were abusing their freedom. They rightly understood the law of liberty. (see 1 Cor 6:12, 1 Cor 10:23) Yet they were lax in practicing the law of love. (see Ro 14:13, Ro 14:21) The Liberty Party had their facts straight about questionable practices, but their attitude was atrocious, displaying a superiority spirit. They did not understand that **love** takes precedence over **knowledge** in the solving of questionable practices. **Love builds up** the saints, but **knowledge**, not rightly applied, puffs up. **Knowledge** is important, but **knowledge without love brings pride, selfishness and a critical spirit. Love is always superior to knowledge, and true love takes a servant's position and displays an accepting, caring and understanding attitude when dealing with the brethren who do not see eye to eye with them on questionable practices.** (cf Ro 14:1) ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Building up or edifying** of the brethren is a repeatedly emphasis in Paul's letters - Ro 14:19; Ro 15:2; 1 Cor. 8:1; 1 Cor 10:23; 1 Cor 14:3, 5, 12, 26; 2 Cor. 10:8; 1 Cor 12:19; 1 Cor 13:10; Eph. 4:12, Eph 4:29; 1 Th. 5:11. When believers pursue what builds themselves up, they in effect are seeking to glorify themselves, rather than build up the body, which in turn brings the glory to God.

**Ralph Earle on love builds up** - The picture here is a striking contrast. Intellectualism often inflates a person with pride. We can blow up a balloon in a minute or two, and collapse it in a second with a pin prick. So it is with self-important intellectuals. They can be deflated with a single remark. But building up with love is something else. Just as one has to lay stone on stone or brick on brick in order to construct a solid building, so we must lay one loving deed on another if we would build a solid life that will last. (Word Meanings in the NT)

Romans 14 while not using the word **love**, definitely alludes to the fact that "**love edifies**" (Paul also adds it brings with it **peace**, which means the walls of division are broken down) in the discussion of "gray areas" in Christian behavior. And so near the end of that chapter Paul concludes...

So then (TERM OF CONCLUSION) we pursue the things which (1) make for **peace** ([eirene](#)) and (2) the **building up** ([oikodome](#) the noun form of the verb used in 1 Cor 8:1) of one another. 20 **Do not tear down** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) = stop tearing down as you are now doing) the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense ([proskomma](#) - stumbling stone, hindrance, obstacle -- to continued growth in Christ-likeness). 21 It is good not **to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything** (ANY SO-CALLED "GRAY AREA") by which your brother (present tense - continually trips up or) stumbles ([proskopto](#)). 22 The faith which you have (ABOUT THESE "GRAY AREAS"), have as your own conviction before God (KEEP THEM

BETWEEN YOU AND GOD - HE CAN HANDLE THEM! A WEAKER BROTHER CANNOT!). Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves (NLT - "Blessed are those who do not condemn themselves by doing something they know is all right."). 23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith (I.E., HE DID NOT BELIEVE IT WAS RIGHT); and whatever is not from faith is sin (IF HE DOES ANYTHING WITHOUT BELIEVING IT IS RIGHT, THEN HE COMMITS SIN). (Romans 14:19-23+)

**Knowledge** (1108) **gnosis** from **ginosko** = to know especially experientially) in simple terms is the possession of information of what is known. **Gnosis** describes the comprehension or intellectual grasp of something. **Gnosis** refers to knowledge gained by experience in contrast to intuitive knowledge. **Gnosis** is an "experiential knowledge," and not a mere passing acquaintance. Gnosis is not simply an intellectual (head) knowledge of Christ, but refers to a more intimate, experiential knowledge.

**Louw-Nida** says **gnosis** means "acquaintance with," which in the English dictionary refers to "personal knowledge" with synonyms such as familiarity with, knowledge of, experience with/of, awareness of, understanding of, comprehension of, grasp of. The English dictionary definition states that **knowledge** is the fact or condition of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association. It describes an acquaintance with or understanding of something (the NT uses **gnosis** most often referring to spiritual/divine knowledge). Knowledge is the clear and certain perception of that which exists. Knowledge describes information and/or skills acquired through experience. Knowledge is that which is or can be known and applies to facts or ideas acquired by study, investigation, observation, or experience.

**Love** (last used in 1 Cor 4:21)(26) **agape** is unconditional, sacrificial love and Biblically refers to a love that God is (1Jn 4:8,16), that God shows (Jn 3:16, 1Jn 4:9) and that God enables in His children (see note on fruit of the Spirit - Gal 5:22-note). It is not surprising that Greek literature throws little light on its distinctive NT meaning. Biblical **agape love** is the love of choice, the love of serving with humility, the highest kind of love, the noblest kind of devotion, the love of the will (intentional, a conscious choice) and not motivated by superficial appearance, emotional attraction, or sentimental relationship. **Agape** is not based on pleasant emotions or good feelings that might result from a physical attraction or a familial bond. **Agape** chooses as an act of self-sacrifice to serve the recipient. From all of the descriptions of **agape** love, it is clear that true **agape** love is a sure mark of salvation. **Agape** is volitional **Phileo** is emotional **Agape** love does not depend on the world's criteria for love, such as attractiveness, emotions, or sentimentality. Believers can easily fall into the trap of blindly following the world's demand that a lover **feel** positive toward the beloved. This is not **agape** love, but is a love based on impulse. **Impulsive love** characterizes the spouse who announces to the other spouse that they are planning to divorce their mate. Why? They reason "I can't help it. I fell in love with another person!" Christians must understand that this type of impulsive love is completely contrary to God's **decisive love**, which is decisive because He is in control and has a purpose in mind. There are many reasons a proper understanding of the truth of God's word (and of the world's lie) is critical and one of the foremost is Jesus' declaration that "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have **love** (agape) for one another." (John 13:35). **MacArthur** explains that "**Agape love** is the greatest virtue of the Christian life. Yet that type of love was rare in pagan Greek literature. That's because the traits agape portrays—unselfishness, self-giving, willful devotion, concern for the welfare of others—were mostly disdained in ancient Greek culture as signs of weakness. However, the New Testament declares agape to be the character trait around which all others revolve. The apostle John writes, "God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him" (1John 4:16)". (The Power of Integrity)

**Arrogant** (inflated)(5448) **phusioo** from **phusia** = a pair of bellows - pictures a blowing up or inflating one's ego!) means literally to puff up, to inflate, to cause to swell up or blow up. Figuratively, as in the present passage **phusioo** means make proud or arrogant (active sense) or to become conceited, proud or haughty (passive sense as in this verse). To become puffed up or put on airs. In classic Greek **phusioo** was used to describe anger that swells (puffs up) the heart. **Moulton and Milligan** record an example of **phusioo** from ancient literature - "priding themselves on their birth". **Phusioo** describes one who has an exaggerated self-concept (as indicated by the adverb **eike** = there being no reason). The **present tense** pictures this self "inflation" as a continual practice. **Phusioo** - 7x in 7v (not in Septuagint) - 1Cor 4:6, 18, 19; 5:2; 8:1; 13:4; Col 2:18. **NAS** = arrogant(5), inflated(1), makes arrogant(1). Clearly the concentration of **phusioo** in the first epistle to the Corinthians reflects that spiritual pride among the believers in Corinth was a serious spiritual problem. God is inveterately opposed to the self inflated mindset (Jas 4:6±, cp Pr 6:16, 17, 29:23)



**Edifies** (builds up) (3618)([oikodomeo](#) from **oikos** = dwelling + **doma** = building [of a house] from **demo** = to build) means literally to build, construct or erect a dwelling. **Oikodomeo** is used here as a metaphor meaning to build up, establish, confirm, edify. Webster's dictionary says our English **edify** is derived from the Latin *aedificare* to instruct or improve spiritually, in turn from Latin, to erect a house, in turn from *aedes* temple, house. What a picture of the power of Spirit saturated believers on their brethren. Uses in First Corinthians - 1 Co. 8:1; 1 Co. 8:10; 1 Co. 10:23; 1 Co. 14:4; 1 Co. 14:17; Gal. 2:18; 1Thess. 5:11; 1Pet. 2:7

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**Mattoon - Background on Idolatry** - Idolatry was rampant in Corinth and deeply ingrained in the culture of the people. People ate meals in pagan temples or places associated with idols. They worshiped a variety of false gods. If they sought love, they prayed to Athena. If they needed healing, they would pray to Apollo. If they were in a war, they would seek Athena. If a woman wanted a child, she prayed to Hera. For protection at sea, they would cry out to Poseidon. The king of all the gods was Zeus. All of these different pagan gods were worshiped and animal sacrifices were made to them.

If a banquet, party, feast, celebration, or wedding was held, sacrifices were made to an idol of one of these idols. This was very important to the people who wanted to honor their gods, but also to protect themselves. They believed that the air was filled with demonic spirits that were trying to get inside of their bodies. They felt that the easiest way for a demon to do this was to attach itself to food, and when the person ate that food, the demon would enter the body. To keep this from happening, they believed they would be protected if that food was dedicated to their god who would cleanse the food of evil spirits.

When this meat was offered to a pagan idol, the presiding priest would divide the portion of meat three ways. One portion was burned. The second portion of meat was consumed by those offering the meat as a sacrifice. The third portion was given to the priest who could use it to sustain himself or if he had more meat than he could eat, he could sell the meat in the markets for a reasonable profit. This meat was highly sought in the market because it was cheaper, it was believed to be cleansed of evil spirits, and blessed by their pagan gods. It was purchased by citizens and used for their meals in their private homes.

The problem that surfaced in the church was the fact that some Christians believed that this meat was contaminated because it was offered to a pagan god on a pagan altar. They felt that eating this meat would be an act of worship to that particular god. These believers did not want to have anything to do with meat linked to a pagan idol. Many of them had come out of this kind of background.

This food brought back memories of their old lifestyles. They also were concerned that people might conclude that they were reverting back to pagan worship if they partook of this meat. Their testimony was important to them. They were confused why other Christians did not feel the same way they felt. So this problem created tension in the church.

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**Excellent Message by Chuck Smith - Excerpt** - Now there was in Corinth those intellectuals who were arguing that Pagan idols were nothing, they were representing gods that did not even exist, thus eating things that were sacrificed to them was no problem. They were putting down those who held to such convictions as intellectually inferior. It seems that there are always those who feel intellectually superior to others. The prophet Isaiah wrote, "Your wisdom and knowledge has perverted you, for you have said in your heart, I am and there is none other beside me.". KNOWLEDGE PUFFS UP. A. How many people have an inflated ego because they believe they are superior in knowledge than others? They are puffed up. Some of the most educated people I know are some the dumbest people I know.

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**Warren Wiersbe - PUFFY "I'S AND "KNOW"S** (ED: DO YOU SEE HIS PLAY ON WORDS?! I MISSED IT AT FIRST. READ IT AGAIN.)

Love and knowledge must go together. It has well been said, "Knowledge without love is brutality, but love without knowledge is hypocrisy." Paul's great concern was that the strong saints help the weaker saints to grow and to stop being weak saints. Some people have the false notion that the strong Christians are the ones who live by rules and regulations and who get offended when others exercise their freedom in Christ, but such is not the case. It is the weak Christians who must have the security of law and who are afraid to use their freedom in Christ. It is the weak Christians who are prone to judge and criticize stronger believers and to stumble over what they do. This, of course, makes it difficult for the strong saints to minister to their weaker brothers and sisters.

It is here that love enters the picture, for "love builds up" and puts others first. When spiritual knowledge is used in love, the stronger Christian can take the hand of the weaker Christian and help him to stand and walk so as to enjoy his freedom in Christ. You cannot force-feed immature believers and transform them into giants. Knowledge must be mixed with love; otherwise, the saints will end up with "big heads" instead of enlarged hearts. (Pause for Power)

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**J Vernon McGee** - Knowledge blows up like a balloon or like an automobile tire. Love doesn't blow up, but it fills up. Love for God and love for others should determine our conduct. Knowledge alone puffs up and tends to make us harsh in our dealings with others. This is a danger with a great many folk who feel that they have a lot of knowledge and yet in reality know very little.

Let me give an illustration. We had just concluded a service at a Bible conference in which six young men had received Christ. A man came to me and insisted that I break away from everyone else and discuss with him the subject of election (he erroneously felt that I had alluded to it in my message). I took a few moments to talk with him until I discovered that he didn't want to discuss it; he wanted to tell me what he thought about election. I discovered that he had been reading on that subject recently and that he thought he knew everything about it. As I listened to him, I could picture myself as a young seminary student going into the office of a theological professor to tell him what I thought about election. I thought I was telling him something he didn't know! Well, I don't care what stage of spiritual development you are in today, you don't know everything about any subject—and I don't either. All of us are in the learning process. Paul could say of himself, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings ..." (Phil. 3:10). It is the knowledge of Christ which we need above everything else. If the man who wanted to argue about election had been governed by love, he would have been rejoicing over the conversion of these young men and would not have taken me away from folk who needed encouragement and counsel.

Paul is saying that we have a certain knowledge and, because of that certain knowledge, our behavior is governed by it.

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### **Transforming Power By Dennis Fisher**

These words which I command you today shall be in your heart. —Deuteronomy 6:6

Many people love to play games that test their knowledge. Recently, a colleague and I were testing a Bible-knowledge game. Since we were seated in an open area of our office, those nearby could hear our conversation. Soon questions ranging from Noah's ark to the woman at the well were being answered by those within earshot of us. It was a delight to hear various staff members volunteering responses to Bible questions.

A knowledge of the Bible is important, but God desires us to be saturated with His Word and to internalize it so we can grow in our relationship with Him. The Holy Spirit uses the Word to make us more like Christ (Eph. 4:20-24). Consider these benefits of internalizing the Bible: joy and rejoicing (Jer. 15:16); spiritual success (Josh. 1:8); a tool in spiritual warfare (Matt. 4:1-11); correction (2 Tim. 3:15-16); light for our path (Ps. 119:105); wisdom with problem solving (Prov. 1:1-2); and stimulating faith (Rom. 10:17).

Learning about the Bible just to increase our knowledge can lead to spiritual pride (1 Cor. 8:1). But allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us by the Word helps us navigate through life's twists and turns and respond in love to God and to each other.

My hunger for the truth He satisfies;  
Upon the Word, the Living Bread, I feed:  
No parching thirst I know, because His grace,  
A pool of endless depth, supplies my need.  
—Sanders

Many books can inform, but only the Bible can transform.

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### **1 Corinthians 8:2 If anyone supposes that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know;**

Amplified - If anyone imagines that he has come to know and understand much [of divine things, without love], he does not yet perceive and recognize and understand as strongly and clearly, nor has he become as intimately acquainted with anything as he ought or as is necessary.

Wuest - Assuming that anyone thinks that he has come to know anything, not yet has he come to know in a manner in which it is a necessity in the nature of the case to know. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

Barclay - If anyone thinks he has reached a certain stage of knowledge, it is not the kind of knowledge it ought to be.

MacDonald Idiomatic Translation If anyone presumes to know anything, he has not yet known the prerequisite for knowing. (1Co 8:2 )

NET 1 Corinthians 8:2 If someone thinks he knows something, he does not yet know to the degree that he

needs to know.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:2 Anyone who claims to know all the answers doesn't really know very much.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:2 If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know.

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:2 The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:2 ε τις δοκε γνωκ ναι τι, ο πω γνω καθ ς δε γν ναι·

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:2 and if any one doth think to know anything, he hath not yet known anything according as it behoveth him to know;

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:2 If any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth not yet as he ought to know;

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:2 If anyone thinks he knows anything, he does not yet know it as he ought to know it.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:2 And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:2 Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge;

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:2 If anyone supposes he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know.

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:2 Someone may think that he has full knowledge of something and yet not know it as well as he should;

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:2 Those who think they know something still have a lot to learn.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:2 If anyone seems to himself to have knowledge, so far he has not the right sort of knowledge about anything;

- **if:** Pr 26:12 30:2-4 Ro 11:25 Ga 6:3 1Ti 1:5-7 6:3,4
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT LOVE IS A FAULTY PERCEPTION

**If - IF** introduces a first class conditional clause, which is assumed to be true (cf similar first class **"IF"** in 1 Cor 8:3, 5)

**Anyone** (present tense - continually) **supposes** ([dokeo](#) - sets himself forth as one) **that he knows** ([ginosko](#)) **anything, he has not yet** (absolutely not at any time) **known** ([ginosko](#)) **as he ought** ([dei](#) = must!) **to know** ([ginosko](#)) - Note the key word is [ginosko](#) used 3 times in this one verse. **Amplified** = "If anyone imagines that he has come to know and understand much [of divine things, without love], he does not yet perceive and recognize and understand as strongly and clearly, nor has he become as intimately acquainted with anything as he ought or as is necessary." The **NLT** paraphrase while not totally true to the Greek text is still rather blunt stating that "Anyone who claims to know all the answers doesn't really know very much!"

**Supposes** is the idea of imagining which expresses the subjective mental opinion of someone about a particular matter. The **anyone** is clearly a shot at the arrogant saints. They are imagining they know (because of their vast knowledge) about **anything** (in this case to eat or not eat idol meat). Paul says you think you know, but you don't really know. In other words they were correct in their knowledge that it was Biblically fine to eat idol meat, but their knowledge was incomplete. What they failed to know was how their actions of eating meat could damage the conscience of a weaker brother. And so Paul says "**he** (REFERRING TO THE PUFFED UP ONES) **has not yet known as he ought** ([dei](#) = must, not optional) **to know** (THAT EXERCISING HIS RIGHT TO EAT IDOL MEAT COULD HURT OTHER BRETHREN)." In other words (and this is a warning to all of us) if we think we know it all, we really don't for as Paul says in 1 Cor 13:9 now we only "know in part.". They needed to know that the goal of true knowledge was to build up, not tear down which is what their "supposed" knowledge was doing to the weaker brethren.

He Who Thinks He Knows It All Has a Lot to Learn!

-- Spiros Zodhiates

As **Zodhiates** says "We Cannot Know Anything in Its Totality. Such a person is not to be trusted because there may be certain facts of which he is not aware. The conclusion about such a person is that he never has known all there is to know about a thing.....At no

time may we ever claim that we know all there is to be known about a particular thing. This is why we need revelation since full discovery is absolutely impossible. Thus John says, "And you have anointment from the Holy [One], and you perceive [oidate, perceive; not the word ginōskete, experientially know] all things" (1 John 2:20). We have a way of arriving at the absolute truth, but this is only by revelation (John 14:6; 1 John 5:20) and not by the discovery of knowledge, because at best we only know partially. What the apostle says in this verse constitutes the basis of science and education. A scientist is one who arrives at Socrates' dictum: "I get old ever learning." Furthermore, there is never a point in time when one can arrogantly boast, I have learned all there is to learn, therefore I have learned in full. Experiential knowledge about anything is always lacking. The finality of knowledge comes as a result of one's relationship with God as His child (1 John 2:20; 3:2). Whether we as believers should or should not eat of the meats sacrificed to idols is not a matter of divine revelation, but is a matter of human conclusion according to the knowledge we have on the matter. The Lord has not said eat or don't eat. Let the principle be one of love and not of knowledge.

**Arnold** - This is a subtle slam at the Corinthians who prided themselves on their **knowledge**. Human **knowledge** on this earth is at best incomplete and partial. Any time a stronger brother looks down his nose at a weaker brother for not exercising a Christian liberty, or a weaker brother judges a strong brother for practicing some liberty, he must remember his **knowledge** is incomplete. We often judge motives and forget that our ability to grasp the whole situation with all the facts is incomplete. We not only do not know motives when we see a brother refraining or practicing some doubtful thing, but also our **knowledge** of the whole action is usually limited, insufficient and incomplete. When solving the problem of questionable practices, **knowledge**, doctrine and logic is not enough. There must be love ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Hodge** - Compare 1 John 4:7, 8. "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God; he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." This is the precise sentiment of the text. Love is essential to knowledge. He that loves God, knows God. The apostle in this connection interchanges love of the brethren and the love of God, because the love of the brethren is only one of the forms in which the love of God manifests itself. When he said, "Love edifieth," he meant love to the brethren, and without that love, he says, there can be no true knowledge; but if a man love God, (which includes love to the brethren,) the same is known of him. ([1 Corinthians 8 Commentary](#))

### 1 Corinthians 8:3 but if anyone loves God, he is known by Him.

Amplified - But if one loves God truly with affectionate reverence, prompt obedience, and grateful recognition of His blessing], he is known by God recognized as worthy of His intimacy and love, and he is owned by Him].

Wuest - Now, assuming that anyone loves God, this person is known by God. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

Barclay - If a man loves God, he is known by God.

NET 1 Corinthians 8:3 But if someone loves God, he is known by God.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:3 But the person who loves God is the one whom God recognizes.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:3 But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:3 But the man who loves God is known by God.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:3 ε δ τις γαπ τ ν θε ν, ο το ς γνω σται π α το .

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:3 and if any one doth love God, this one hath been known by Him.

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:3 but if any man loveth God, the same is known by him.

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:3 But if anyone loves God, he is known by Him.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:3 But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:3 but anyone who loves God is known by him.

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:3 But if one loves God, one is known by him.

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:3 but someone who loves God is known by God.

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:3 But if they love God, they are known by God.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:3 But if anyone has love for God, God has knowledge of him.

- **loves:** 1Co 2:9 Ro 8:28 Jas 1:12 2:5 1Pe 1:8 1Jn 4:19 1Jn 5:2-3
- **is:** Ex 33:12,17 Ps 1:6 17:3 139:1,2 Na 1:7 Mt 7:23 Joh 10:14 Joh 21:17 Ro 8:29 11:2 Ga 4:9 2Ti 2:19 Rev 2:9,13,19 Rev 3:8,9,15,16
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

1 John 4:19+ We love, because He first loved us.

1 John 5:2-3+ By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. 3For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome

2 Timothy 2:19+ Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness."

Ps 25:14+ The secret of the LORD is for those who fear Him (THEY LOVE HIM), And He will make them know His covenant.

## LOVING GOD WHO LOVES US

Paul does not deprecate **knowledge** and here states the **knowledge** which is supremely important!

**Utley** nails it commenting that "Our knowledge of God is important, but knowledge about God is no substitute for a personal relationship, initiated by God, that issues in our love for one another which expresses our love for Him (cf. Gal. 4:6+; 2Ti 2:19+; 1 John 4:19+).

**If - IF** introduces a first class conditional clause, which is assumed to be true -- Paul is addressing this to those who are genuine believers, for they would be the only ones who could truly love God.

**but if** (see [IF above](#)) **anyone** (present tense - continually) **loves God, he is known ([ginosko](#)) by Him - Amplified** = "But if one loves God truly with affectionate reverence, prompt obedience, and grateful recognition of His blessing], he is known by God recognized as worthy of His intimacy and love, and he is owned by Him]." In other words, when one loves God with this Spirit enabled type of love, they experience a relationship with Him. Note aht loves is in the present tense indicating our love for God is continual and progressive. **Known** is perfect tense which is to say God experientially knew us in the past and knows us still (and will know us forever)!

The verb for **known**, [ginosko](#), speaks of experiential knowledge and also often is used to speak of intimacy as in Mt 1:25KJV+ which says Joseph "**knew ([ginosko](#))** her not" signifying he had no intimate relations with Mary. What a contrast this is with the words of Jesus, Who will say to many (WHO FALSELY THINK THEY HAVE CORRECT KNOWLEDGE) "I (ABSOLUTELY) never **knew ([ginosko](#))** you, **depart ([aorist imperative](#) - Do it now! Do not delay!)** from me, you who (present tense - continually) practice lawlessness (CONTINUAL LAWLESSNESS WAS THEIR FRUIT, INDICATIVE OF THEIR ROTTEN UNREDEEMED ROOT!)." (Mt 7:23+).

So let's put it together now -- Paul is speaking to one who continually **loves God** (their love shown by their obedience, even though it is imperfect, obedience is the general "direction" of their life - see Jn 14:15, 21, 23, 24) and thus this love identifies them as true believers, as those who are supernaturally enabled to love God by the power of His indwelling Spirit (Ro 5:22+) (for no unbeliever truly loves God or is even capable of loving God, regardless of what they say. God is actually their enemy and they are hostile toward Him - read Ro 5:10+, Ro 8:7+, Col 1:21+) These are the ones who are **known** intimately and personally and experientially **by Him**. So Paul begins by exalting the highest knowledge in the universe, God's knowledge, a knowledge He manifests to all who are His children! Praise His Holy Name!

**Zodhiates** adds that "While God does not have to wait for the demonstration of our love to find out whether or not it is genuine, our fellow Christians can tell only by observing our actions whether our lives are directed by His love or not. Our consideration of others in matters such as eating meats sacrificed to idols is one way they can know. When His love is shown in our daily lives, He recognizes it because it is the love that He has imparted to us. His love becomes part of our nature. We do not demonstrate mere acts of love, but a loving lifestyle to our fellow human beings, and especially our brethren in Christ (1 John 4:20, 21)." (1 Corinthians Commentary)

**Arnold** - The Apostle Paul says the test of real knowledge is loving God. The person loving God is recognized by him as having real

knowledge. The acid test of whether we really know something is how this knowledge affects our love towards God and how this flows out in our love toward people. Love is the supreme quality of Christian character. The determining factor to find out one's spirituality is not how much a Christian knows but how much he loves other Christians. A Christian is to have a knowledge which operates on the principle of love. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Kistemaker** - But if someone loves God, he is known by God." Human knowledge is temporal but divine love is eternal. Here Paul links the two concepts and intimates that the essential ingredient of knowledge is love. Without true love, knowledge ceases to be meaningful. But the believer, who loves God, fully comprehends that he is known by God.

**Lenski on is known** in perfect tense - Perfect indicates, "he has come to be known and is still known by God."

**Utley** comments that "Our knowledge of God is important, but knowledge about God is no substitute for a personal relationship, initiated by God, that issues in our love for one another which expresses our love for Him (cf. Gal. 4:6; 2 Ti 2:19; 1 John 4:19)."

**Loves (25) agapao** means to love unconditionally and sacrificially as God Himself loves sinful men (John 3:16), the way He loves the Son (John 3:35, 15:9, 17:23, 24). Note that **agapao** is a verb and by its verbal nature calls for action. This quality of love is not an emotion (not motivated by superficial appearance or emotional attraction), but is an action initiated by a volitional choice. Agapao in the Corinthian letters - 1 Co. 2:9; 1 Co. 8:3; 2 Co. 9:7; 2 Co. 11:11; 2 Co. 12:15

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While the following devotional thought from William Wilberforce does not directly comment on this passage in 1 Corinthians 8, it does offer some powerful insights into the heart of man who loved God and was known by Him and was greatly used by Him. May God be pleased to make Wilberforce's sentiments and desires be our desires beloved. In the Name of Jesus Christ Our Lord...

I will try to retire at nine or half-past, and every evening give half an hour, or an hour, to secret exercises, endeavouring to raise my mind more, and that it may be more warmed with heavenly fire. Help me, O Lord—without thee I can do nothing. Let me strive to maintain a uniform frame of gratitude, veneration, love, and humility, not unelevated with holy confidence, and trembling hope in the mercies of that God, whose ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. Strive, O my soul, to maintain and keep alive impressions, first, of the constant presence of a holy, omniscient, omnipotent, but infinitely merciful and gracious God, of Christ our Almighty Shepherd and of the Holy Spirit. (From The Life of William Wilberforce 1838 - [here is an online OCR copy](#) - this quote is about half way down the page)

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### Loving God - Puritan Daily Readings

But if any man love God, the same is known of him. 1 Corinthians 8:3

Some say that all love arises from self-love; and that it is impossible in the nature of things for any man to have any love to God, or any other beings, but that love to himself must be the foundation of it. But I humbly suppose it is for want of consideration that they say so. They argue that whoever loves God, and so desires His glory or the enjoyment of Him, he desires these things as his own happiness; the glory of God, and the beholding and enjoying His perfections are considered as things agreeable to Him, tending to make him happy; he places his happiness in them, and desires them as things, which (if they were obtained) would be delightful to him, or would fill him with delight and joy, and so make him happy. And so, they say, it is from self-love, or a desire of his own happiness, that he desires God should be glorified, and desires to behold and enjoy His glorious perfections. But then they ought to consider a little further, and inquire how the man came to place his happiness in God's being glorified, and in contemplating and enjoying God's perfections. There is no doubt but that after God's glory, and the beholding His perfections, are become so agreeable to Him, that he places his highest happiness in these things, then he will desire them, as he desires his own happiness. But how came these things to be so agreeable to him, that he esteems it his highest happiness to glorify God, &c.? Is not this the fruit of love? A man must first love God or have his heart united to Him, before he will esteem God's good his own, and before he will desire the glorifying and enjoying of God as his happiness.

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**1 Corinthians 8:4 Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.**

Amplified - In this matter, then, of eating food offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing (has no real existence) and that there is no God but one.

Barclay - With regard to food which consists of things offered to idols, we well know that there is nothing in the

universe for which an idol stands, and that there is no God but one;

Zodhiates - Concerning, therefore, the eating of meats sacrificed to idols, we perceive that absolutely no idol in the world represents a real existence and that there is no God that is different than the one true God.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:4 So, what about eating meat that has been offered to idols? Well, we all know that an idol is not really a god and that there is only one God.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:4 Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "an idol has no real existence," and that "there is no God but one."

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:4 So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:4 Περ τ ς βρ σεως ο ν τ ν ε δωλοθ των, ο δ αμεν π ο δ ν ε δωλον ν κ σμ κα π ο δε ς θε ς ε μ ε ς.

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:4 Concerning the eating then of the things sacrificed to idols, we have known that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God except one;

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:4 Concerning therefore the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that no idol is anything in the world, and that there is no God but one.

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:4 About eating food offered to idols, then, we know that "an idol is nothing in the world," and that "there is no God but one."

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:4 Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one.

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:4 Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one."

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:4 So about the eating of meat sacrificed to idols: we know that "there is no idol in the world," and that "there is no God but one."

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:4 On the subject of eating foods dedicated to false gods, we are well aware that none of the false gods exists in reality and that there is no God other than the One.

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:4 Now about eating food that was offered to false gods: We know that the false gods in this world don't really exist and that no god exists except the one God.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:4 So, then, as to the question of taking food offered to images, we are certain that an image is nothing in the world, and that there is no God but one.

- **we know:** 1Co 10:19,20 Ps 115:4-8 Isa 41:24 44:8,9 Jer 10:14 51:17,18 Hab 2:19,20 Ac 19:26
- **there is:** 1Co 8:6 De 3:24 4:39 6:4 32:39 Isa 37:16,20 44:6,8,24 45:5,14 Jer 10:10 Mk 12:29 Eph 4:6 1Ti 1:17 2:5 Jude 1:25
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Psalms 115:4-8+ Their idols are silver and gold, The work of man's hands. 5 They have mouths, but they cannot speak; They have eyes, but they cannot see; 6 They have ears, but they cannot hear; They have noses, but they cannot smell; 7 They have hands, but they cannot feel; They have feet, but they cannot walk; They cannot make a sound with their throat. 8 Those who make them will become like them, Everyone who trusts in them.

Romans 1:22-23+ Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

**MacArthur** - In verses 4–6 Paul states his agreement with the Corinthians who were theologically well taught.

**Therefore** - Paul is going to bring his discussion of knowledge and love to a practical conclusion that related to the everyday life of the Corinthians.

**Concerning** (same word in 1 Cor 8:1) **the eating of things sacrificed to idols** ([eidolothuton](#)), **we know** ([eido](#) beyond a shadow of

doubt) **that there is** (absolutely) **no such thing as an idol in the world** - Paul is saying "we perceive that absolutely no idol in the world represents a real existence." In other words the idols were not real beings. For example an idol to Zeus that is a statue is a statue made to something that does not exist - there is no such a thing as a so-called deity named "Zeus." That is Paul's point about the [vanity](#) of idols. Note the plural "**WE**" which would refer to himself and those Corinthians who had a true understanding of idolatry (1 Cor 8:7) and realized that **idols** were inanimate objects without real existence. These were be the Corinthians who were stronger in their faith and knowledge of the essence of idolatry than the believers who were "weak" (Compare 1 Cor 8:9) They knew that the idols were certainly not gods.

So where did idols come from? Paul clearly tells us they are the result of the rejection of the natural revelation of God so that all men (even the deepest, darkest jungles) are without excuse and will be held accountable for failing to respond to the revelation God provided. If a native in the deepest, darkest jungle responded appropriately to God, He would in some way may sure they were presented with the Gospel (I remember years ago they dropped radios into the jungle with the Gospel and sometime later when men got to the natives, they discovered some were already believers! Amazing? Absolutely! But God was clearly responding to their honest seeking of Him as the true God and not as some idol. The problem occurs when men refuse to seek Him for he made us all with a "God shaped vacuum" in our soul and it will be filled either the true God or falsehood. And so we read that man

Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and **exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God** for an **image in the form of corruptible man** (LIKE A STATUE OF ZEUS OR BUDDHA, ETC) and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures ([SO-CALLED ANIMISM](#)). 24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them (Ro 1:22-24+)

That passage summarizes the [pathogenesis](#) of all idolatry. But sadly it does not stop there as Ro 1:24+ shows -- God gives idol worshippers into the power of their fallen flesh which in turn is the source of their insatiable desires to gratify self, which progressively results in corruption of their souls and ultimately destruction, not only in this life but in the life to come (eternal punishment)!

**Zodhiates** - Thus when Paul writes that absolutely no idol exists in the world, nor represents a real existence, he means idols are merely a material representation of something imaginary that has no life in itself. Idols are dead, nonexistent, while the true God is spirit, not corruptible matter, who is alive and gives life (John 1:4; 14:6; 1 John 1:2; 5:20)....We must conclude that idols are not real beings. Idols do indeed exist, but that which they represent is nonexistent.

**MacArthur** on **no such thing as an idol** - The image is not of anything that really exists. It only reflects the imagination of the one who designed it, or the impersonation of the demon who deceives through it (1 Cor 10:20).

**Guzik** - If meat is offered to Zeus, there is no real Zeus. There is no other God but one. "He" is only one of the so-called gods. "There are many images that are supposed to be representations of divinities: but these divinities are nothing, the figments of mere fancy; and these images have no corresponding realities." (Clarke)

Even though the statues of the gods lined the marketplace of Corinth and were made from marble, copper, gold, silver, ivory, or wood, with eyes made out of precious stones, they could not see. They were not real.

**Utley** - In the OT idols were "empty" or "vain." They were not gods at all (cf. 2 Chr. 13:9; Isa. 37:19; 41:29; Jer. 2:11; Acts 14:15; Gal. 4:8). Later in I Corinthians Paul asserts that demons use people's superstitions and idolatry (cf. 10:20), but there is no reality to idols!

**NET Note** suggests that "'An idol in this world is nothing" and "There is no God but one." Here and in v. 1 Paul cites certain slogans the Corinthians apparently used to justify their behavior (cf. 6:12–13; 7:1; 10:23). Paul agrees with the slogans in part, but corrects them to show how the Corinthians have misused these ideas.

**Idol** ([1497](#))([eidolon](#) from **eidōs** = that which is seen, what is visible, figure, appearance) is primarily a phantom, form, image, shadow or likeness. **Friberg's** summary of **eidolon** - strictly form, copy, figure; hence (1) an object resembling a person or animal and worshiped as a god idol, image (Rev 9.20); (2) idol, false god, with reference to demonic power involved in idol worship (1Cor 10.19). Eidolon - 11v in NT - Acts 7:41; Acts 15:20; Rom. 2:22; 1 Co. 8:4; 1 Co. 8:7; 1 Co. 10:19; 1 Co. 12:2; 2 Co. 6:16; 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 Jn. 5:21; Rev. 9:20

#### **Related Resources:**

- [What is the definition of idolatry?](#)
- [1 John 5:21 The Peril of Idolatry](#)
- [Why is idol worship such a powerful temptation?](#)
- [What is a graven image?](#)



- [What is the true meaning of the second commandment?](#)

**And that there is no God but one** - Stated positively Paul is saying that is absolutely only one God! These "stronger" believers know that there was only one God. They were solid monotheists and had no belief in polytheism (many gods). Paul's point is that "These idols represent an imaginary god other than the true One, "for there [is] no other different God." (Zodhiates)

**Arnold** - There is only one God and He is eternal and not made with hands. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Utley** - This is the theological affirmation of monotheism (cf. 1 Tim. 2:5–6). According to biblical revelation there is only one true God (cf. v. 6; Deut. 4:35, 39; Ps. 86:8, 10). Often the OT speaks of other elohim (spiritual beings), but none like (in the same category as, cf. Exod. 20:2–3; Deut. 32:39) YHWH (cf. Exod. 15:11; Ps. 86:8; 89:6). The Jewish prayer called the Shema from Deut. 6:4 is the Jewish affirmation of the uniqueness and oneness of YHWH. It is quoted daily and at every worship service (cf. Mark 12:28–29).

**Guzik** - What about Biblical passages which some take to suggest there are other gods? For example, in John 10:34, Jesus quotes Psalm 82:6–8, in saying You are gods. But the judges of Psalm 82 were called "gods" because in their office they determined the fate of other men. Also, in Exodus 21:6 and 22:8–9, God calls earthly judges "gods." In John 10, Jesus is saying "if God gives these unjust judges the title 'gods' because of their office, why do you consider it blasphemy that I call Myself the 'Son of God' in light of the testimony regarding Me and My works?" Jesus is not taking the you are gods of Psalm 82 and applying it to all humanity or to all believers. The use of gods in Psalm 82 was a metaphor. As well, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Paul calls Satan the god of this age. Certainly, he does not mean Satan is a true god, a rival god to the Lord God. Satan can be called the god of this age because he is regarded as a god by so many people

**ILLUSTRATION** - A singular phenomenon, known as the Spectre of the Brocken, is seen on a certain mountain in Germany. The traveller who at dawn stands on the topmost ridge beholds a colossal shadowy spectre, moving on the summits of the distant hills. But, in fact, it is only his own shadow projected upon the morning mists by the rising sun; and it imitates, of course, every movement of its creator. So heathen nations have mistaken their own image for Deity (cf Romans 1:22-23+ ). Their gods display human frailties and passions and scanty virtues, projected and magnified upon the heavens, just as the small figures on the slide of a magic-lantern are projected, magnified, and illuminated upon a white sheet.

**1 Corinthians 8:5 For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords,**

Amplified - For although there may be so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many of them, both of gods and of lords and masters,

ICB It is really not important if there are things called gods, in heaven or on earth. (And there are many things that people call "gods" and "lords.")

NLT (original edition) According to some people, there are many so-called gods and many lords, both in heaven and on earth.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:5 There may be so-called gods both in heaven and on earth, and some people actually worship many gods and many lords.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:5 For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth-- as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"--

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"),

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:5 κα γ ρ ε περ ε σ ν λεγ μενοι θεο ε τε ν ο ρ αν ε τε π γ ς, σπερ ε σ ν θεο πολλο κα κ ριοι πολλο ,

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:5 for even if there are those called gods, whether in heaven, whether upon earth -- as there are gods many and lords many --

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many;

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth-- as there are many "gods" and many "lords"--

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords),

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:5 Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth-- as in fact there are many gods and many lords--

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:5 Indeed, even though there are so-called gods in heaven and on earth (there are, to be sure, many "gods" and many "lords"),

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:5 Though there are so-called gods, in the heavens or on earth -- and there are plenty of gods and plenty of lords-

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:5 People may say that there are gods in heaven and on earth-many gods and many lords, as they would call them.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:5 For though there are those who have the name of gods, in heaven or on earth, as there are a number of gods and a number of lords,

- **are so-called gods:** De 10:17 Jer 2:11,28 11:13 Da 5:4 Joh 10:34,35 Ga 4:8 2Th 2:4
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**For even if** (see [IF above](#)) **there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords** - Paul has just clearly stated the idols are not gods. So what is he saying here? The point is that both the Greeks and the Romans had many **so-called gods** and worshipped them as **gods** and **lords**. They even had gods known as the unknown god to cover any gods one might have missed (Acts 17:23). He says these gods exist in name only; but they are devoid of authenticity. In other words Paul acknowledges that there were many **so-called gods** in [Greek](#) and [Roman mythology \(list of Roman "deities"\)](#), some supposedly living in heaven, and others on earth (and the sea), but in reality in neither heaven or earth (or the sea) because they did not actually exist!. Paul is not acknowledging that they are real **gods** and **lords**, for he qualifies that in the next verse repeating that there is only one true God.

**Arnold** - while there are no deities behind these idols, Paul tells us there are supernatural beings (demons) who are behind them. "No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons." (1 Cor. 10:20). ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Henry Morris** - The Gentile Christians to whom Paul was writing had, before their conversion, worshiped many "gods" in heaven and "lords" on earth. These were really just personified forces of nature, but the whole system was actually energized by demonic spirits. It was difficult for new Christians to free their minds from the power these demonic spirits had exerted over them. It is just as difficult for new Christians today to free their thinking of the similar evolutionary presuppositions with which they have been indoctrinated.

**1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we exist through Him.**

Amplified - Yet for us there is [only] one God, the Father, Who is the Source of all things and for Whom we [have life], and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through and by Whom are all things and through and by Whom we [ourselves exist].

NET 1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we live, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we live.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:6 But we know that there is only one God, the Father, who created everything, and we live for him. And there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom God made everything and through whom we have been given life.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:6 ἄλλ μ ν ε ς θε ς πατ ρ ξ ο τ π ντα κα με ς ε ς α τ ν, κα ε ς κ ριο ς η σο ς Χ ριστ ς δι ο τ π ντα κα με ς δι α το .

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:6 yet to us is one God, the Father, of whom are the all things, and we to Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are the all things, and we through Him;

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:6 yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him.

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is one God, the Father. All things are from Him, and we exist for Him. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ. All things are through Him, and we exist through Him.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things are and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things are and through whom we exist.

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is only one God, the Father from whom all things come and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things come and through whom we exist.

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:6 But for us, "There is only one God, the Father. Everything came from him, and we live for him. There is only one Lord, Jesus Christ. Everything came into being through him, and we live because of him."

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:6 There is for us only one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we are for him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we have our being through him.

- **one God:** 1Co 8:4 Jon 1:9 Mal 2:10 Joh 10:30 14:9,10 17:3 20:17 Eph 1:3 3:14 Eph 4:6 1Pe 1:2,3
- **whom:** Ac 17:28 Ro 11:36 Eph 4:6
- **and we:** Joh 14:20 17:21-23
- **in him:** or, for him, 1Co 6:13
- **one Lord, Jesus Christ,:** 1Co 12:3 Mt 11:27 28:18 Joh 5:20-29 13:13 17:23 Ac 2:36 5:31 Eph 1:20-23 4:5 Php 2:9-11 Col 1:16,17 1Ti 2:5,6 1Pe 1:21 Rev 1:18
- **we exist through Him:** Joh 1:3 Col 1:6 Heb 1:2,3
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "**Jesus is Lord**," except by the Holy Spirit.

1 Timothy 2:5; 6 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

### PAUL AFFIRMS THE MONOTHEISTIC CREATOR

**Yet** - ([alla](#)) - Strong term of contrast between **many** so called **gods** and **lords** and now **one** true **God** and one true **Lord**.

**Kistemaker** - The Gentiles placed their gods in either heaven, earth, or sea. But our God, says Paul, is one God who is not confined to one location but is everywhere (compare Ps. 139:7–10+).

**For us there is but one God** ([theos](#)) **the Father** ([pater](#)) **from Whom are all things and we exist for Him** - Paul repeats what he had said in v4 - "**that there is no God but one.**" **Us** refers to himself and those who had the knowledge without love. Here Paul

teaches [monotheism](#) and that the [Father is the originator of all things](#) .(Amplified = "the Source of all things"). **All things** means the totality of things without any exclusion! Believers now live for Him. Our purpose for existence is for God! And we can call God Father in contrast to the pagan gods.

Note that the two uses of **exist** are added by the translators and are not in the original Greek text. Literally **we for Him and through Him**

**Utley on Father** - This is a wonderful intimate, personal, familial title for deity. It emphasizes God's immanence. This aspect of God can only be known by His self-revelation, not human philosophy or discovery. Although this familial title appears in the OT sparsely (cf. Deut. 32:5–6; Isa. 63:16; 64:8; Jer. 31:9, 20; Hos. 11:3–4; Mal. 1:6; 2:10), it was Jesus, the Son, who fully revealed this astonishing, intimate, metaphorical analogy (cf. "our Father," Matt. 6:9; 23:9; Eph. 4:6; Abba, Mark 14:36). **from whom are all things**" This is affirmation of God as creator (cf. 11:12; Rom. 11:36; 2 Cor. 5:18; Col. 1:16; Heb. 2:10).

**Utley on we exist for Him** - God made the world as a stage for humankind to have fellowship with Himself. Once the results of human rebellion (cf. Gen. 3) have been overcome in our salvation and restoration through Christ, we understand our intended purpose. Once the image of God in mankind is restored through Christ, the intimate, personal fellowship of Eden is restored.

This verse should astound us and generate gratitude and praise that we can address the Most High God as our Father, even calling in [Abba](#) as His Son Jesus addressed Him (Mk 14:36+, cf Ro 8:15+, Gal 4:6+)! Take a moment to worship our [Good , Good Father sung by Chris Tomlin....](#)

Oh, I've heard a thousand stories of what they think You're like  
But I've heard the tender whisper of love in the dead of night  
And You tell me that You're pleased and that I'm never alone

You're a good, good Father  
It's who You are, it's who You are, it's who You are  
And I'm loved by You  
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am

Oh and I've seen many searching for answers far and wide  
But I know we're all searching for answers only You provide  
'Cause You know just what we need before we say a word

**You're a good, good Father**  
**It's Who You are, it's who You are, it's who You are**  
**And I'm loved by You**  
**It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am**

Because You are perfect in all of Your ways  
You are perfect in all of Your ways  
You are perfect in all of Your ways to us  
(Oh) You are perfect in all of Your ways (all of Your ways)  
Oh, You're perfect in all of Your ways (Your ways)  
You are perfect in all of Your ways to us

Oh, it's love so undeniable I  
I can hardly speak  
Peace so unexplainable I  
I can hardly think  
As You call me deeper still  
As You call me deeper still  
As You call me deeper still into love, love, love

#### **Related Worship Resources:**

- [Abba Father \(We Give You Glory\)](#)
- [Cry Out to the Heavenly Father](#) (followed by 10 more songs to our Great Father)! Have an evening of worship.

**Arnold on God ([theos](#)) the Father ([pater](#))** - They could have no intimate relationship with them (idols). They dreaded and feared

their gods, but Christians have a God they call Father. This God is the originator of all things. Paganism had a god to create the sea, another the earth, another the sky, others who created the sun and the moon. There was a god for everything. The Christian God created all things by a word from His mouth. This God has created us for Himself. We exist for Him, not for the gods but for the one, true God. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Father** (3962) **pater** is the genitor (a begetter), by whom another is begotten. Stated more simply this is a man who has begotten a child. Father is the progenitor, the ancestor in the direct line (a forefather -- thus Adam was the "progenitor" of the Human Race). **Father** one who imparts life and is committed to it; a progenitor, bringing into being to pass on the potential for likeness. (HelpsBible.com) **Vine** writes that **pater** is "from a root signifying "a nourisher, protector, upholder" (Lat., pater, Eng., "father," are akin)." (**Note:** Not all lexicons agree with this origin)...Whereas the everlasting power and divinity of God are manifest in creation, His "Fatherhood" in spiritual relationship through faith is the subject of NT revelation, and waited for the presence on earth of the Son, Matt. 11:27; John 17:25. The spiritual relationship is not universal, John 8:42, 44 (cf. John 8:12 and Gal. 3:26).

#### **Related Resources:**

- [How should I understand the concept of the Father God? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean that God is our Abba Father? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean that God is father to the fatherless? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**And one Lord** (**kurios**), **Jesus** (**lesous**) **Christ** (**Christos**), **by Whom are all things** - **Kurios**, means Master. Paul says we have one Master, the **Lord Jesus Christ** Who is the Creator of everything. He is ascribing deity to the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 1:3+ All things came into being through Him (JESUS), and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

Colossians 1:16-17+ For by Him (JESUS) all things were created (JESUS IS THE CREATOR), both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together (JESUS IS THE SUSTAINER OF HIS CREATION!).

Hebrews 1:2-3+ in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, Whom He appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power (JESUS IS THE SUSTAINER OF HIS CREATION). When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

**Utley** - Calling Jesus **Lord** (**kurios**, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew **adon**) is a way of affirming His deity and oneness with YHWH (cf. Phil. 2:11). The concept of oneness is also significant (cf. Eph. 4:5; 1 Tim. 2:5). Although Paul does not use **Theos** (God) for Jesus in this context, he does use it of Jesus in Acts 20:28; Rom. 9:5; and Titus 2:13 and **Theotētus** in Col. 2:9. There can be no doubt that in Paul's mind Jesus is divine. Paul was a strict monotheist. He never qualifies how one God can eternally exist in three personal manifestations, but that is the obvious conclusion.

**Kistemaker** - Paul calls Jesus Lord but not God. At the same time, he intimates that Jesus is divine through the work of creation and redemption. Here Paul treads softly, so that he will not be accused of contradicting his earlier statement that God is one. Yet, he teaches Jesus' divinity and eternity by stating that all things in creation came into being through Jesus Christ.

**And we exist through Him** - As noted "exist" is added. We are His **through** His Creation and then His **through** redemption by His sacrificial death on the Cross, even as He Himself declared "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but **THROUGH ME.**" (Jn 14:6)

**Arnold** sums up - Paul agreed with the Liberty Party that an idol is nothing and the one, true God is everything. Therefore, meat offered to idols can be eaten because the Christian has the liberty to do so. ([Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

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#### **Selwyn Hughes - The Great Stimulator**

There is one God, the Father. All things are from Him ... And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ. All things are through Him.—1 CORINTHIANS 8:6

In order to remain spiritually vibrant we must strive to be creative and outgoing. It is never too late to acquire this characteristic. We are made in the image of our Creator, and when we cease to be creative, we cease to be.

Kagawa, the famous Japanese Christian, used to refer to Jesus as "the great Stimulator." One day some students asked him why he was so fond of this phrase, and he replied: "Because He stimulates the creative center in each one of us, making us first aware of God, and then aware of the infinite possibilities in God."

When I was at school, I struggled with my studies, and although I passed all my examinations and went to college, my passes were always on the borderline. Then I found Christ as the great Stimulator—and what a change. He stimulated the creative center within me, and He so transformed my attitude toward work that within months I had moved from near the bottom of my classes to near the top.

When taking a seminar in Birmingham, I met a friend who had recently come to live there. "What do you think of Birmingham?" I asked. His reply was: "I have lived here for three months, and every day I keep seeing new horizons." This is what happens when we stay close to Jesus—every day we keep seeing new horizons. In His company we begin to see farther, feel for people on a wider scale, act more decisively, and live on the growing edge of adventure. Why? Because a creative God gives to His creation the same creative impulses.

Prayer - O God, stimulate my whole being, I pray, so that every day I shall see new horizons. Help me never to walk with my eyes focused on the ground, but with my eyes fixed on You. For Your own dear name's sake I ask it. Amen.

**1 Corinthians 8:7 However not all men have this knowledge; but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.**

Amplified - Nevertheless, not all [believers] possess this knowledge. But some, through being all their lives until now accustomed to [thinking of] idols [as real and living], still consider the food [offered to an idol] as that sacrificed to an [actual] god; and their weak consciences become defiled and injured if they eat [it].

NET 1 Corinthians 8:7 But this knowledge is not shared by all. And some, by being accustomed to idols in former times, eat this food as an idol sacrifice, and their conscience, because it is weak, is defiled.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:7 However, not all believers know this. Some are accustomed to thinking of idols as being real, so when they eat food that has been offered to idols, they think of it as the worship of real gods, and their weak consciences are violated.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:7 However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:7 But not everyone knows this. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:7 ἄλλο κὲν πᾶσι γνώσιν· τινὲς δὲ τὸ συνήθει ὡς ῥητὸ εἰδωλοῦ ἐδωλοῦτο σθουσιν, καὶ συνεδησίου αὐτὸν σθενεὶ ὀσάμολνεταί.

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:7 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:7 but not in all men is the knowledge, and certain with conscience of the idol, till now, as a thing sacrificed to an idol do eat it, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:7 Howbeit there is not in all men that knowledge: but some, being used until now to the idol, eat as of a thing sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:7 However, not everyone has this knowledge. In fact, some have been so used to idolatry up until now that when they eat food offered to an idol, their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:7 However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:7 It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:7 But not all have this knowledge. There are some who have been so used to idolatry up until now that, when they eat meat sacrificed to idols, their conscience, which is weak, is defiled.

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:7 However, not everybody has this knowledge. There are some in whose consciences false gods still play such a part that they take the food as though it had been dedicated to a god; then their conscience, being vulnerable, is defiled,

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:7 But not everyone knows this. Some people are so used to worshipping false gods that they believe they are eating food offered to a false god. So they feel guilty because their conscience is weak.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:7 Still, all men have not that knowledge: but some, being used till now to the image, are conscious that they are taking food which has been offered to the image; and because they are not strong in the faith, their minds are troubled.

- **However not all men:** 1Co 1:10,11
- **being accustomed :** 1Co 8:9,10 10:28,29 Ro 14:14,23
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **PARTIAL KNOWLEDGE PREDISPOSES TO DEFILEMENT OF CONSCIENCE WHEN EATING MEAT**

**However not all men have this knowledge** ([gnosis](#)) - **All men** in context is referring to believers, and by deduction to those who were newly converted and/or did not fully understand their freedom (from their former practice of idolatry) in Christ (cf John 8:31-32, 36). To what **knowledge** does Paul refer? In the immediately preceding context, **all men** would not fully understand God is one. In the preceding context, they would not fully understand the nothingness of idols and idol worship.

**MacArthur** - Not all believers were mature in their knowledge and understanding of spiritual truths. Some were new Christians, freshly out of paganism and its many temptations and corruptions. They still imagined that idols, though evil, were real and that the gods the idols represented were real. They knew that there is only one right God but perhaps they had not yet fully grasped the truth that there is only one real God. Even if they did understand that there was only one real God, the experiences of their past paganism were so fresh that they rejected all that was related to it. To participate in any way was to be tempted to fall back into former practices.

**But some, being accustomed to the idol** ([eidolon](#)) **until now** - In other words, **some** of those called (saved) in Corinth had been "habituated by repeated actions into a pattern of behavior." (Friberg). They were like the Israelites who had come out of Egypt, but in whom the remnants of Egypt had not come out of them! By analogy, these saints had been deeply entrenched in paganism, polytheism and idolatry, and even though now free in Christ, they had not completely realized how free they had become in Christ.

**Accustomed** ([4914](#)) ([sunetheia](#) from **sun** = with + **ethos** = custom ) describes the state of being familiar and accustomed to something by frequent use or practice. **Louw-Nida** - a pattern of behavior more or less fixed by tradition and generally sanctioned by the society—"custom, habit." Friberg - as an established practice; (1) objectively custom, usage, habit (Jn 18.39); (2) as a state, a being habituated by repeated actions into a pattern of behavior becoming used to, being accustomed to (1 Cor 8.7). **BDAG** - **1.** a relationship in which the participants are compatible because of shared interests, friendship, fellowship, intimacy. There is a close semantic relationship between 'being accustomed to one another' in the sharing of values in a personal relationship and **2.** a usage or practice that has become established or standard, custom -**a.** subjectively being or becoming accustomed 1 Co. 8:7 **b.** objectively custom, habit, usage 1 Co. 11:16

Sunetheia - Three uses in NT - Jn. 18:39; 1 Co. 8:7; 1 Co. 11:16 (Elsewhere only in Apocrypha - 4 Macc. 2:13; 4 Macc 6:13; 4 Macc. 13:22; 4 Macc. 13:27)

**Eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol** ([eidolothuton](#)) **and their conscience being weak is defiled** - **As if** indicates they ate it with the thought that it had been sacrificed to the idols. When these "weaker" brethren ate meat that they knew had been sacrificed to idols, it grated on their conscience. Undoubtedly they thought in eating idol meat, they were in effect committing idolatry. They "injured" their conscience as if they were in a sense participating once again in the paganism they had left when they believed in Christ. The thought that the meat had been sacrificed to idols brought up the old practices in which they had once gladly participated and they felt "defiled," their consciences smitten with a sense of "dirtiness," of guilt and of shame.

The wilful violation of conscience contains within itself a seed of destruction.

-- David Brown

**Weak** speaks of a weakness in faith, which through lack of advanced knowledge, considers externals of the greatest importance (1Cor 8:7, 9, 10, cp similar use of related verb [astheneo](#) in Romans 14:1-2+)

**Weak conscience** - as we might say "diseased," incapable of forming a sound healthy judgment. As we speak of weak nerves the apostle speaks of a weak conscience. A person who has been taught when a child to believe in ghosts, will sometimes be seized with dread if he is alone at night, though his reason has long since convinced him that spectres do not appear. Similarly, though the moral reason of a Christian tells him that the heathen deities which he formerly worshipped do not exist, yet it requires spiritual knowledge of the true God to allay his dread. Cf. 1 Timothy 1:5, where the apostle joins "a good conscience" with "faith unfeigned." (Principal Edwards.)

**Arnold** - Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol. Not every Christian in Corinth had a knowledge that meat offered to idols is nothing. They could not make the theological and practical distinction between the meat and the idolatry. They still made a religious connection between the meat and the idol. Therefore, it was not just meat for the weaker brother. It was meat offered to an idol and this was sinful in the mind of the weaker brother. And since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. For these weak brethren to eat this meat would defile the conscience which says it is wrong for them to eat meat sacrificed to idols. What is a weak conscience? It is a conscience which has been trained by upbringing, background and teaching so as to make one feel sinful or guilty when doing or seeing others participating in a questionable practice. It is a conscience which needs instruction, training and development so as to enlighten the person to Christian liberty. The weak brother is not sure whether he himself should eat of the meat. To eat or not to eat for this weaker brother becomes the question. How then is his conscience defiled? He senses he is doing wrong; he feels condemned and guilty when he involves himself in a questionable practice, but at the same time he likes it. His conviction is sincere but he is placed into frustration. The rule for the weak brother is: "When in doubt, don't" "But the man who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin: (Rom. 14:23). Any questionable practice which cannot be done by a Christian with a clear conscience should not be practiced because it will cause the brother to sin, defiling his conscience. A Christian must never violate his conscience, and to do so is sin for him. He may open his conscience to understanding and training, but he must never practice any doubtful thing until he has a clear conscience to do so, or he will end up sinning in a big way. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**MacArthur** - A **defiled conscience** is one that has been ignored and violated. Such a conscience brings confusion, resentment, and feelings of guilt. A person who violates his conscience willingly does what he thinks to be wrong. In his own mind he has committed sin; and until he fully understands that the act is not sin in God's eyes, he should have no part in it. "He who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23). Defiled conscience is defiled faith. Such behavior brings guilt feelings, despair, and loss of joy and peace. It may also lead to sinful thoughts connected with former pagan practices and even lead a person back into some of them. Paul's primary point in the present passage is that anyone who causes such a weaker brother to defile his conscience and his faith helps lead that brother into sin. Knowledge may tell us that something is perfectly acceptable, but love will tell us that, because it is not acceptable to a fellow believer's conscience, we should not take advantage of our freedom.

**ESV Study Bible** as an interesting thought - The pagans of Paul's day feared what the gods might do to those who neglected to worship them. Some of the Christians in Corinth probably found it a constant struggle to place their trust solely in Christ instead of trying to placate the gods they used to worship.

**Conscience** (4893) **suneidesis** from **sun/syn** = with + **eido** = know) literally means a "knowing with", a co-knowledge with oneself or a being of one's own witness in the sense that one's own conscience "takes the stand" as the chief witness, testifying either to one's innocence or guilt. It describes the witness borne to one's conduct by that faculty by which we apprehend the will of God. The Greek noun **suneidesis** is the exact counterpart of the Latin **con-science**, "a knowing with," a shared or joint knowledge. It is our awareness of ourselves in all the relationships of life, especially ethical relationships. We have ideas of right and wrong; and when we perceive their truth and claims on us, and will not obey, our souls are at war with themselves and with the law of God. **Suneidesis** is that process of thought which distinguishes what it considers morally good or bad, commending the good, condemning the bad, and so prompting to do the former and avoid the latter. To have a "**clear conscience**" does not mean that we have never sinned or do not commit acts of sin. Rather, it means that the underlying direction and motive of life is to obey and please God, so that acts of sin are habitually recognized as such and faced before God (1Jn 1:9)

**Webster** defines **conscience** as the sense or consciousness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's own conduct, intentions, or character together with a feeling of obligation to do right or be good.

**Suneidesis** in the Corinthian letters - 1 Co. 8:7; 1 Co. 8:10; 1 Co. 8:12; 1 Co. 10:25; 1 Co. 10:27; 1 Co. 10:28; 1 Co. 10:29; 2 Co. 1:12; 2 Co. 4:2; 2 Co. 5:11;

**Related Resources:**



- [In Depth Discussion of Conscience - including multiple quotes, illustrations, etc related to conscience](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Conscience](#)
- [What is the conscience? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How can I get a clear conscience? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Weak** (sick, helpless) (772)(**asthenes** from **a** = without + **sthénos** = strength, bodily vigor) (See study of related verb [astheneo](#) - note the concentration of asthenes/astheneo in the epistles to the Corinthians - almost 50% of NT uses) is literally without strength or bodily vigor. **Asthenes** describes one's state of limited capacity to do or be something and is used literally of physical weakness (most of the uses in the Gospels) and figuratively of weakness in the spiritual arena (weak flesh, weak conscience, weak religious system or commandment [Gal 4:9, Heb 7:18], etc) and thus powerlessness to produce results.

Asthenes - 22v - Matt. 25:43; Matt. 25:44; Matt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38; Lk. 10:9; Acts 4:9; Acts 5:15; Acts 5:16; Rom. 5:6; 1 Co. 1:25; 1 Co. 1:27; 1 Co. 4:10; 1 Co. 8:7; 1 Co. 8:9; 1 Co. 8:10; 1 Co. 9:22; 1 Co. 11:30; 1 Co. 12:22; 2 Co. 10:10; Gal. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:14; Heb. 7:18

**Defiled** (3435)(**moluno**) literally meant to cause something to become dirty as when smeared with dirt, mud, filth. It was used of used of "moral soil" ("smut") that defouls and besmirches the soul. All three uses are figurative - 1 Cor 8:7 a "befouled" conscience, Rev 3:4+ of garments not soiled (before believing they had "filthy garments" as we all did = see Isa 64:6, after believing they could still be "soiled" - Jas 1:27, Jude 1:23, and cleansed by confession - 1 Jn 1:9), become spiritually besmirched (by sin), and Rev 14:4+ of the 144,000 who have not been defiled with women. In Rev 3:4, 14:4 the reference is not just to sexual continence in the strict sense but to the faithfulness of the community (cf. Rev 14:1) as the bride of Christ (cf. 2Co 11:2)The picture of moluno is of sin smearing a person with its spiritual filth.

**Moluno** in the Septuagint - Gen. 37:31; Cant. 5:3; Isa. 59:3; Isa. 65:4; Jer. 12:10; Jer. 23:11; Lam. 4:14; Ezek. 7:17; Ezek. 21:7; Zech. 14:2; (In Apocrypha - 1 Es. 8:80; Tob. 3:15; Tbs. 3:15; 1 Macc 1:37; 2 Macc. 6:2; 2 Macc. 14:3; 4 Macc. 9:20; Sir. 13:1; Sir. 21:28; Sir. 22:13)

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the conscience? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean to have a seared conscience? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How can I get a clear conscience? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- American Tract Society [Conscience](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Conscience](#)
- Baker's Evangelical Dictionary [Conscience](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Conscience](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Conscience](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Conscience](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Conscience](#)
- Holman ' Dictionary of the NT [Conscience](#)
- King James Dictionary [Conscience](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Conscience](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Conscience](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Conscience](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Conscience](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Conscience](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Conscience](#)

#### Torrey's Topic - Conscience

- Witnesses in man Proverbs 20:27; Romans 2:15
- Accuses of sin Genesis 42:21; 2 Samuel 24:10; Matthew 27:3; Acts 2:37
- We should have the approval of Job 27:6; Acts 24:16; Romans 9:1; 14:22
- The blood of Christ alone can purify Hebrews 9:14; 10:2-10,22
- Keep the faith in purity of 1 Timothy 1:19; 3:9
- Of saints, pure and good Hebrews 13:18; 1 Peter 3:16,21

- Submit to authority for Romans 13:5
- Suffer patiently for 1 Peter 2:19
- Testimony of, a source of joy 2 Corinthians 1:12; 1 John 3:21
- Of others, not to be offended Romans 14:21; 1 Corinthians 10:28-32
- Ministers should commend themselves to that of their people 2 Corinthians 4:2; 5:11
- Of the wicked, seared 1 Timothy 4:2
- Of the wicked, defiled Titus 1:15
- Without spiritual illumination, a false guide Acts 23:1; 26:9

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**R C Sproul - [1 Corinthians 8 The Weak Conscience](#) While the conscience in the redeemed is awakened, it can still be influenced by sin and weakened by wrong information. One part of the sanctification process is to keep your conscience tender by knowing your own heart and the Word of God.**

Paul dealt with problems of conscience in Romans 14. Those who rejected meat offered to idols were considered weak because, by conscience, they could not do something even though God had not forbidden it. Those who were free in this matter wrongly flaunted their freedom before their weaker brothers. Error stirs tensions when the weaker brothers wrongly judge those whose consciences are free. If you have a weak conscience, you can as easily develop a judgmental spirit as form legalistic notions, denying you and others freedom in Christ.

You do not possess an overly-scrupulous or weak conscience when you refrain from an activity that invites temptation. For example, if you are prone to drunkenness and you refrain from drinking alcohol, this actually reveals a discerning conscience. You only step into error when you dictate other people's consciences according to your own, or if you consider something to be inherently wrong that God has not said is sinful—this is legalism.

A weak conscience is often characterized not only by a legalistic bent but by a *lawless* one. If you continue to sin in ways God has forbidden, or if you refuse to examine your own life for areas that are prone to sin, you are profaning your conscience. Many people sin too often in the name of Christian liberty. They either don't know God's law or they don't know themselves. Often, they foolishly continue to engage in behavior that, though not inherently sinful is an impetus to sin.

Be it an overly-scrupulous conscience or a profane one, both must be avoided for a Christian to grow strong. Only with rigorous self-examination, thorough study of God's Word, and faithful application of biblical principles can a follower of Christ say with Paul, "this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world ... in the holiness and sincerity that are from God (2 Cor. 1:12)."

Coram Deo - Has anyone ever called you judgmental? Do you consider something to be sinful that God has not? Do you try to be another's conscience? Are you too loose with God's Word? Do you feel uncomfortable around more conscientious Christians? If so, do you abuse Christian liberty and pamper sinful habits?

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### **A Weak Conscience - Robert Neighbour**

"Their conscience being weak is defiled" (1 Cor. 8:7).

The story setting of our key verse is concerning the things offered unto idols.

In the old days in Corinth, idolators offered sacrifices of animals unto their false gods. The meat thus offered was sold upon the shambles. Some of the Christians were offended because other Christians bought this meat and ate it. The Apostle Paul saw nothing wrong in this act and surely the meat offered unto an idol was not hurt thereby, for the idol was nothing at all, and the only reason that the consciences of some of the saints were troubled, was due to their lack of knowledge.

Paul gives advice that we should not wound the weak consciences of those saints, lest in so doing we sin against Christ. We need, above all things, to be sane and sure in our knowledge, that we may be sane and sure in our conclusions.

We do not want to have a conscience that will strain out gnats and swallow camels.

We do not want to be so straight that we lean backwards.

We do not want to put on an air of "holier than thou," which is based upon entirely wrong conceptions of Christian virtue.

We must be true.

We must not yield one point that is vital.

We must stand as bravely as Daniel stood, and dare to face any and all issues unswervingly, but we must not go beyond the Word of God.

Let us give an example of what we mean.

Illustration: A member of one of our churches had a husband who was a drunkard. Her daughter was maid in our home. On one occasion, we had a case of soda water given us; the children were delighted and enjoyed the refreshing drink.

The next day, however, this good sister said to us that her daughter had told her that we had bottles in the house, and she pleaded with me to do away with them. She said she had no objection to drinking soda water out of a glass at the soda fountain, but she hated bottles. Of course, we did away with the bottles at once, for her sake, but we knew, nevertheless, that soda water was soda water whether it was in a glass or in a bottle.

What we need is solid teaching concerning morals, and concerning doctrine. Then we will have a strong and safe conscience and not what the Word calls "a weak conscience."

Wound not the weak conscience, strong brother,  
Of the least of God's children, so dear,  
Guard well ev'ry deed, ev'ry action,  
Live spotlessly on, without fear.

Be not too exacting, weak brother,  
Put up no false standard of right,  
Demand not, unless you are certain,  
You are walking in God's holy light.

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**Question - [What does the Bible say about eating food/meat that has been sacrificed to idols?](#)**

**Answer:** One of the struggles in the early church concerned meat which had been sacrificed to idols. Debates over what to eat might seem strange to most of us in modern society, but to the first-century believers, it was a subject of great consequence. As the apostles dealt with the issue, they gave instructions on several broader topics with application for today:

**Unity within the church.** In the early years of the church, as Gentile converts began joining Jewish believers in local fellowships, an issue arose concerning the eating of meat. Greco-Roman society was saturated with idol worship, and it was common for meat sold in the marketplace to have been consecrated as a sacrifice to false gods prior to its sale. The Jews would have nothing to do with such meat, wary of "unclean" food-handling practices and believing that to partake of consecrated meat was to give tacit approval of idol worship—kind of a "second-hand" idolatry. The Gentiles rejected the notion that such meat was tainted and held that they could eat meat sacrificed to idols without endorsing idolatry—they had not actually offered the sacrifice, after all. The matter was becoming a point of contention within the church.

**The church in Syrian Antioch, comprised of both Jews and Gentiles, struggled with this issue (Acts 15). The Jerusalem Council settled the matter by urging Gentile converts to abstain from meat sacrificed to idols (Acts 15:29).** This decision was made not to promote legalism but to keep peace within the church. Since eating meat offered to idols was a divisive issue—carrying the possibility of scandalizing fellow believers—abstinence was expedient. Compliance with the council's directive assured that, at the next church potluck, a Jewish believer could eat the brisket he was served with confidence, knowing it had never been part of a sacrificial cow. And the Gentile believer could not be accused of participating in idol worship.

**With its ruling, the Jerusalem Council affirmed the need for deference, or consideration for the scruples of others. The principle is one of self-denial; we should be willing to lay down our personal rights for the sake of maintaining unity in the body of Christ. Spiritual growth takes priority over personal preferences.**

**Causing a weaker brother to sin.** In 1 Corinthians 8:4-13, Paul clarifies the teaching on this subject. First, he says that eating meat offered to an idol is not immoral, because "an idol is nothing at all." An idol is an inanimate object. "Food," he says, "does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do." The meat itself is amoral. However, there is more to consider, namely the brother with a weak conscience. Some believers, especially those with a background of idol worship, were still very sensitive concerning this issue and considered it morally wrong to eat meat sacrificed to idols. Under no circumstances, Paul says, should a believer encourage another believer to violate his conscience. To the pure, all things are pure (Titus 1:15), but to one with a weak conscience, meat taken from pagan temples was spiritually defiled. It would be better never to eat meat again than to cause a believer to sin against his conscience.

The “weaker” brother is not someone who simply objects to a certain practice, but one who is in danger of falling into sin. To illustrate, let’s say there are two 1st-century Christians named Demetrius and Clement. Both are former idolaters, now saved by faith in Christ. Demetrius shuns everything to do with his old way of life, including the meat sold in the marketplace, because, for him, eating such meat would constitute a return to paganism. Clement avoids the temple and refuses to participate in the pagan festivals, but he has no problem eating the meat from the market. Clement understands (correctly) that an idol has no power to corrupt good meat, and, for him, eating such meat is a non-issue. Then one day, as both men are in the marketplace, Demetrius sees Clement eating meat that was sacrificed to idols. Demetrius is horrified, but Clement laughs it off and encourages Demetrius to eat some, too. When Demetrius hesitates, Clement cuts off a piece and hands it to him. Demetrius—emboldened by Clement’s confidence—eats the meat. Biblically, both believers have sinned. Clement sinned by violating the conscience of a fellow believer. Demetrius sinned in that he essentially returned to idolatry—at least, that’s what his conscience is telling him. More importantly, Demetrius is learning how to ignore his conscience—a very dangerous thing to learn.

The principle here is that the conscience of a weaker Christian is more important than individual freedom. Doing something “permitted” should never hinder the spiritual health of someone else.

**Maintaining a pure testimony.** In 1 Corinthians 10:25-32, Paul again emphasizes the believer’s liberty and what should limit that liberty. If you buy meat for your own use, don’t inquire where it came from; it doesn’t really matter whether it was sacrificed to an idol or not. “The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it” (Psalm 24:1). However, if you are invited to dinner and someone there says, “This meat was offered to idols,” then graciously refrain from eating. Since your associate obviously considers the meat to be “tainted” by the idols, do not eat it for his conscience’s sake—even though your own conscience is fine. The Christian glorifies God when he limits his freedom for the spiritual benefit of others.

**Compromise with the world.** In the letter to the church of Thyatira, Jesus rebukes them for tolerating a prophetess who “misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols” (Revelation 2:20). This is a different situation from what Paul was dealing with in Corinth. It seems that members of the church of Thyatira were partaking of the pagan “love feasts,” celebrated with gross immorality and feasting. These believers were not simply buying meat in the marketplace; they were actually attending idolatrous festivals and joining in the sin of the idolaters. (See verse 14 for a similar rebuke of the church of Pergamos.)

Here is a summary of the Bible’s teaching on eating meat sacrificed to idols:

Eating meat offered to an idol is not inherently wrong. Meat is not “defiled” because it was taken from a pagan sacrifice. God “richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment” (1 Timothy 6:17). However, some Christians consider meat offered to an idol to be defiled, and for them it is, since they must follow their conscience. Their scruples should be respected by other Christians with a stronger conscience. Love dictates that all Christians make allowances for their weaker brothers.

There are certain cultures today where idolatry is still practiced and where the specifics of the Bible’s teaching about sacrificial meat are still timely. For the rest of us, here are the principles which should govern our participation in the “gray areas” of life:

- 1) Having the “right” to do something does not mean we are free to do it in every circumstance, regardless of its effects on others.
- 2) The believer’s liberty in Christ can and should be voluntarily limited in order not to cause a weaker brother to sin by violating his conscience. Liberty is limited in love.
- 3) Maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of love may require a believer to give up his personal “right” to a thing. “How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1).
- 4) We should avoid anything that would make a weak Christian think less of his faith or that would make an unsaved person feel more at ease in his sin. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**1 Corinthians 8:8 But food will not commend us to God; we are neither the worse if we do not eat, nor the better if we do eat.**

Amplified - Now food [itself] will not cause our acceptance by God nor commend us to Him. Eating [food offered to idols] gives us no advantage; neither do we come short or become any worse if we do not eat [it].

Wuest But food will not provide for us an entree to God. Neither if we do not eat do we fall short. Neither if we eat do we exceed [others]. ([Erdmans Publishing](http://Erdmans Publishing) - used [by permission](#))

NET 1 Corinthians 8:8 Now food will not bring us close to God. We are no worse if we do not eat and no better if we do.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:8 It's true that we can't win God's approval by what we eat. We don't lose anything if we don't eat it, and we don't gain anything if we do.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:8 Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:8 But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:8 βρ μα δ μ ς ο παραστ σει τ θε · ο τε ν μ φ γωμεν στερο μεθα, ο τε ν φ γωμεν περισσε ομεν.

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:8 But victuals do not commend us to God, for neither if we may eat are we in advance; nor if we may not eat, are we behind;

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:8 But food will not commend us to God: neither, if we eat not, are we the worse; nor, if we eat, are we the better.

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:8 Food will not make us acceptable to God. We are not inferior if we don't eat, and we are not better if we do eat.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:8 But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:8 "Food will not bring us close to God." We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:8 Now food will not bring us closer to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, nor are we better off if we do.

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:8 But of course food cannot make us acceptable to God; we lose nothing by not eating it, we gain nothing by eating it.

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:8 Food will not affect our relationship with God. We are no worse off if we eat that food and no better off if we don't.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:8 But God's approval of us is not based on the food we take: if we do not take it we are no worse for it; and if we take it we are no better.

- **But food:** 1Co 6:13 Ro 14:17 Col 2:20-23 Heb 13:9
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## EATING OR NOT EATING OF NO SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

**But food will not commend us to God - Amplified** = "Now food [itself] will not cause our acceptance by God nor commend us to Him." Paul's point is that food is "neutral" when it comes to our relationship to God. God wants our hearts not our bellies. What we eat or don't eat will not bring us any closer to God. He is not interested in the external but the internal. As David said even regarding the prescribed OT sacrifices "For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise." (Psalm 51:16-17).

**Commend** (3936) **paristemi** from **para** = near, beside + **histemi** = place, set) literally means to place or set beside or near and hence to place at someone's disposal. **Paristemi** means to present oneself for service or to put at the service of (sometimes translated "help" [Ro 16:2+](#)) **Paristemi** pictures giving something over to another, relinquishing your grip, and not letting go only to take it back!

**Paristemi** - 39v - Matt. 26:53; Mk. 4:29; Mk. 14:47; Mk. 14:69; Mk. 14:70; Mk. 15:35; Mk. 15:39; Lk. 1:19; Lk. 2:22; Lk. 19:24; Jn. 18:22; Jn. 19:26; Acts 1:3; Acts 1:10; Acts 4:10; Acts 4:26; Acts 9:39; Acts 9:41; Acts 23:2; Acts 23:4; Acts 23:24; Acts 23:33; Acts 24:13; Acts 27:23; Acts 27:24; Rom. 6:13; Rom. 6:16; Rom. 6:19; Rom. 12:1; Rom. 14:10; Rom. 16:2; 1 Co. 8:8; 2 Co. 4:14; 2 Co. 11:2; Eph. 5:27; Col. 1:22;

**We are neither the worse if we do not eat, nor the better if we do eat-** This simply reiterates what he had just stated (**food will not commend us to God**). What we eat does not affect our spiritual relationship with God (UNLESS we eat meat sacrificed to idols and cause a weaker brother to stumble into ruin and in so doing we sin against them and Christ! - 1 Cor 8:11-13+)

**Arnold** - A person is not one bit more spiritual if he partakes of some questionable practice or chooses not to partake. Eating meat or any other doubtful thing is a matter of indifference. Christians with weak consciences need to grow up spiritually so as to accept the brother who can participate in some questionable practice even though he himself may not be able to do so. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

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### John Henry Jowett - THE SACRED USE OF LIBERTY

“Take heed lest this liberty of yours becomes a stumbling-block.” —1 Corinthians 8:8-13.

THAT is a very solemn warning. My liberty may trip someone into bondage. If life were an affair of one my liberty might be wholesome; but it is an affair of many, and my liberty may be destructive to my fellows. I am not only responsible for my life, but for its influence. When a thing has been lived there is still the example to deal with. If orange peel be thrown upon the pavement, that is not the end of the feast. The man who slips over the peel is a factor in the incident, and my responsibility covers him.

I am, therefore, to consider both my deeds and their influence. How does my life trend when it touches my brother? In what way does he move because of the impact of my example? Towards liberty or towards license? To the swamps of transgression or to the fields of holiness? These are determining questions, and I must not seek to escape or ignore them. My brother is a vital part of my life. I must never shut him out of my sight. How is he influenced by my example? “If meat make my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth.”

**1 Corinthians 8:9 But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.**

Amplified - Only be careful that this power of choice (this permission and liberty to do as you please) which is yours, does not [somehow] become a hindrance (cause of stumbling) to the weak or overscrupulous [giving them an impulse to sin].

Wuest But be taking heed that this right of yours does not possibly become a stumbling block to those who are weak. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

NET 1 Corinthians 8:9 But be careful that this liberty of yours does not become a hindrance to the weak.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:9 But you must be careful so that your freedom does not cause others with a weaker conscience to stumble.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:9 But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:9 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:9 βλ πετε δ μ πως ξουσα μ ν α τη πρ σκομμα γ νηται το ς σθεν σιν.

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:9 but see, lest this privilege of yours may become a stumbling-block to the infirm,

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to the weak.

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:9 But be careful that this right of yours in no way becomes a stumbling block to the weak.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:9 But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:9 But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to

the weak.

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:9 But make sure that this liberty of yours in no way becomes a stumbling block to the weak.

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:9 Only be careful that this freedom of yours does not in any way turn into an obstacle to trip those who are vulnerable.

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:9 But be careful that by using your freedom you don't somehow make a believer who is weak in faith fall into sin.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:9 But take care that this power of yours does not give cause for trouble to the feeble.

- **take:** 1Co 8:10 10:24,29 Mt 18:6,7,10 Lu 17:1,2 Ro 14:20,21 Ga 5:13 1Pe 2:16 2Pe 2:19
- **a stumbling block:** 1Co 10:32 Lev 19:14 Isa 57:14 Eze 14:3 44:12 Ro 14:13-15,20 Ga 5:13 Rev 2:14
- **weak:** 1Co 8:12 9:22 Isa 35:3 Ro 14:1,2 15:1 2Co 11:21
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 9:4-6 Do we not **have a right** ([exousia](#)) to eat and drink? 5 Do we not **have a right** ([exousia](#)) to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? 6 Or do only Barnabas and I not **have a right** ([exousia](#)) to refrain from working?

### A WARNING TO THOSE WITH KNOWLEDGE OF LIBERTY

**But take care** that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak - **Take care** is a command in the [present imperative](#) (see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)). **Liberty** ([exousia](#)) speaks of one's freedom of choice in Christ (see use of [exousia](#) in [Related Passages](#) above), specifically in regard to whether we want to eat or not eat meat sacrificed to idols. These "stronger" brothers had the right or freedom to do as they saw fit. However Paul gives them a warning command that they need to be very careful not to abuse their freedom in the presence of weaker brethren. Paul says if they do abuse their right to eat "idol hamburgers" (in the presence of the weak brethren as Paul explains in v10), they may cause a weaker brother to stumble spiritually.

Our rights end when another person is offended.

-- John MacArthur

**Amplified on does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak** - "Does not [somehow] become a hindrance (cause of stumbling) to the weak or overscrupulous [giving them an impulse to sin]."

**Arnold** - Paul's appeal is not to the weaker brother but to the stronger brother who should have more Christian maturity because he has right doctrine and understanding. He pleads with the strong that they might have an understanding and care for the weaker brother. While a Christian has the right to Christian liberty, he may not always exercise that right to keep a brother from stumbling. A "stumbling block" is the putting of an obstacle in the way of a Christian brother so as to hinder his spiritual growth. It appears in this context that the stronger brothers were abusing their liberty so as to cause the weaker brethren to stumble. Paul appeals to these mature believers to apply the principle of love to their weaker brethren. Their conduct was not to be governed by their knowledge (which was right) but by their love. The Christian who says he is going to do some doubtful thing no matter what anybody thinks, and he is never going to yield to any narrow-minded legalist who needs to get into the twentieth century, really does not understand grace. This person is not as mature as he thinks he is. The actions of the strong must never hinder the spiritual progress of the weaker brother; therefore, the mature believer willingly gives up that which is alright to do to help the weaker brother come to understand grace. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Staton** - The apostle Paul takes the position of Christian liberty; however, he develops the teaching that real freedom involves the responsibility of love. Exercising liberty with love is the overriding principle for making such decisions. The Christian must not ask about his rights without also asking about his responsibilities"

**MacArthur** - Obviously, some Corinthian believers could not handle such liberty; it would pull them down into the pit from which they had been delivered. If an immature brother sees us doing something that bothers his conscience, his spiritual life is harmed. We should never influence a fellow Christian to do anything that the Holy Spirit, through that person's conscience, is protecting him from.

**Barclay on stumbling block** (proskomma) "means 'a barrier', 'a hindrance', 'a road-block'. It is the word that would be used for a

tree that has been felled and laid across a road to block it. We must never do or allow anything which would be a road-block on the way to goodness. (New Testament Words)

**Liberty** (1849) **exousia** from **éxesti** = it is permitted, it is lawful) means the power to do something and was a technical term used in the law courts, of a legal right. "**Authority** or right is the dominant meaning (of exousia) in the New Testament." (Vincent) **Exousia** refers to delegated **authority** and combines the idea of the "right and the might", these attributes having been granted to someone. Exousia in this passage in 1 Cor 8:9 is used with the idea of freedom of choice, right to act, decide, etc. (Compare this nuance in Jn 10:18; Acts 5:4; Ro 9:21; 1Cor 9:4-6, 1Cor 12; 2 Th 3:9; Heb 13:10 ; Rev 13:5; Rev 22:14)

Note that **exousia** becomes a "**key word**" in 1 Corinthians 9 - (All uses in the Corinthian letters) - 1 Co. 7:37; 1 Co. 8:9; 1 Co. 9:4; 1 Co. 9:5; 1 Co. 9:6; 1 Co. 9:12; 1 Co. 9:18; 1 Co. 11:10; 1 Co. 15:24; 2 Co. 10:8; 2 Co. 13:10

**Stumbling block** (4348)(**proskomma** from **prós** = to, against + **kopto** = cut, strike) can describe literal or figurative stumbling. It is something a person trips over. Thus **proskomma** can be an obstacle in the way which if one strikes his foot against he stumbles or falls or figuratively it can describe that over which a soul stumbles i.e. by which is caused to sin or which causes an occasion of apostasy. It is also used figuratively, to describe a cause of falling or an occasion of sinning (Ro 14:13, 20; 1Cor. 8:9; Septuagint: Ex 23:33; 34:12). All 6 NT uses - Rom. 9:32; Rom. 9:33; Rom. 14:13; Rom. 14:20; 1 Co. 8:9; 1 Pet. 2:8

**Proskomma** is used in a similar context in Romans 14

Romans 14:13 Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an **obstacle** (**proskomma**) or a stumbling block (**skandalon**) in a brother's way.

Romans 14:20 Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives **offense** (**proskomma**).

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Devotional - But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak (1 Corinthians 8:9).

Many states in the U.S. allow motorists to make a right turn when the traffic signal is red—if the way is clear. This gives drivers liberty and keeps traffic moving. At some intersections, however, signs say, "No turn on red." These corners are exceptions because they are potential danger spots. By turning on red there, a motorist could cause a serious accident.

In 1 Corinthians 8, we have a similar situation concerning Christian liberty. Paul had perfect freedom to eat meat offered to idols. He knew that there was only one true God and that idols were nothing. Eating meat offered to them was neither right nor wrong. But not all believers felt that way. A person who had a weak conscience believed that the meat was defiled by the idol, and therefore it was off limits. Paul recognized the need to take special care lest by eating he would influence such a person to eat, thus violating his conscience. Concern for weaker believers kept him from exercising his liberty.

As Christians, we are free in Christ—free to engage in social practices and customs not specifically forbidden by biblical commands. Yet the Holy Spirit may prompt us to refrain from some legitimate practices. Then the principle of love must take precedence over the principle of liberty. A mature Christian will heed the "no turn on red" sign to keep from causing a weaker believer "to have a serious accident." —D.J.D. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

None of us has a right to do as we please, unless we please to do right.

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1 CORINTHIANS 8:9 READ: 1 Corinthians 8

DRIVING on a big-city freeway can be dangerous. But I've found more danger at a busy intersection just a half mile from home. Even when the light turns green, I proceed with great caution. You see, one time a driver came roaring through a red light when I had the right of way. Thank God for brakes—both providential breaks and power brakes!

There's a striking similarity between that little drama and the issue Paul discusses in 1 Corinthians. With him, the question was whether or not to eat meat offered to idols. God's Word and Paul's conscience gave him a green light. But for Paul to do what was lawful could hurt or even destroy a weaker Christian. So he stopped even though he had a green light. Because of his love for them, he did not want to be a stumbling block, so he chose not to insist on his own rights.

Liberty must be governed by love. That's a principle we must live by when we know another believer might act contrary to his or her own conscience by following our example. Yes, love limits liberty. But it enables us to build up the body of Christ so that weak



Christians can become strong by following the example of those who are stronger.—DJD ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thank You, Lord, for the freedom I have in You. May I never exercise my freedom in a way that causes another person confusion or doubt. May I use my freedom to build up Your body, the church, not weaken it.

**1 Corinthians 8:10 For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, dining in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols?**

Amplified - For suppose someone sees you, a man having knowledge [of God, with an intelligent view of this subject and] reclining at table in an idol's temple, might he not be encouraged and emboldened [to violate his own conscientious scruples] if he is weak and uncertain, and eat what [to him] is for the purpose of idol worship?

Wuest For if a certain one sees you, the one who has knowledge, reclining at a sacrificial banquet in the idol's temple, will not the conscience of the one who is weak be built up to the place where he will be eating the things sacrificed to idols? ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

NET 1 Corinthians 8:10 For if someone weak sees you who possess knowledge dining in an idol's temple, will not his conscience be "strengthened" to eat food offered to idols?

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:10 For if others see you-- with your "superior knowledge"-- eating in the temple of an idol, won't they be encouraged to violate their conscience by eating food that has been offered to an idol?

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols?

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:10 For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol's temple, won't he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols?

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:10 ν γ ρ τις δ σ τ ν χοντα γν σιν ν ε δωλε κατακε μενον, ο χ συνε δησις α το σθενο ς ντος ο κοδομηθ σεται ε ς τ τ ε δωλ θυτα σθ ειν;

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:10 for if any one may see thee that hast knowledge in an idol's temple reclining at meat -- shall not his conscience -- he being infirm -- be emboldened to eat the things sacrificed to idols,

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:10 For if a man see thee who hast knowledge sitting at meat in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to idols?

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:10 For if someone sees you, the one who has this knowledge, dining in an idol's temple, won't his weak conscience be encouraged to eat food offered to idols?

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols?

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:10 For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols?

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:10 If someone sees you, with your knowledge, reclining at table in the temple of an idol, may not his conscience too, weak as it is, be "built up" to eat the meat sacrificed to idols?

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:10 Suppose someone sees you, who have the knowledge, sitting eating in the temple of some false god, do you not think that his conscience, vulnerable as it is, may be encouraged to eat foods dedicated to false gods?

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:10 For example, suppose someone with a weak conscience sees you, who have this knowledge, eating in the temple of a false god. Won't you be encouraging that person to eat food offered to a false god?

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:10 For if a man sees you, who have knowledge, taking food as a guest in the house of an image, will it not give him, if he is feeble, the idea that he may take food offered to images?

- **who have knowledge:** 1Co 8:1,2
- **dining in an idol's temple:** 1Co 10:20,21 Nu 25:2 Jud 9:27 Am 2:8
- **will not his conscience** 1Co 10:28,29,32 Ro 14:14,23
- **be strengthened,** 1Co 8:1
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Dinner with the Demons in an Idol's Temple

### DINING IN A PAGAN RESTAURANT

For [\(gar\) term of explanation](#). Paul explains why he had given them the command to continually keep their eyes open for a weaker brother who might see them eating meat sacrificed to idols and be stumbled.

If This is a third class [conditional statement](#), which means a weaker brother might just happen to see the stronger brother eating a "MaIdol Burger!"

**Someone sees you, who have knowledge** ([gnosis](#)) **dining in an idol's temple**- In this context **the someone** is the weaker brother and the **knowledge** is that possessed by the stronger brother as in 1 Cor 8:1+. The **Amplified** puts it this way = "For suppose someone sees you, a man having knowledge [of God, with an intelligent view of this subject and] reclining at table in an idol's temple." Frankly, I would think this is pushing one's **liberty** (1 Cor 8:9) a bit too far, for it's one thing to eat a "MaIdol Burger" at the restaurant next to the idol temple, but seems to be quite another thing to actually enter into the idol temple and dine in this evil atmosphere! This seems to go against Paul's command in 1 Cor 10:14+ to "**Flee** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) from idolatry!"

**Will not his conscience** ([suneidesis](#)), **if he is weak, be strengthened** ([oikodomeo](#)) **to eat things sacrificed to idols** ([eidolothuton](#)) - This is a rhetorical statement. The answer is of course, the weak brother would be "built up" ([oikodomeo](#)). This seems to be a play on Paul's use of the same verb [oikodomeo](#) in 1 Cor 8:1 where he stated that "love builds up." In this context [oikodomeo](#) has the opposite effect Paul desired. The NAS translates it **strengthened** rather than build up. **Wuest** paraphrases it "will not the conscience of the one who is weak **be built up** to the place where he will be eating the things sacrificed to idols?" The net effect of the stronger brother's knowledge is not to build up his faith, but actually to tear it down!

Arnold - When a weak brother sees a strong brother eating a delicious T-bone steak in the temple restaurant, it will strengthen, encourage or influence his to try it for himself, even though his conscience says it is wrong for him. In trying this questionable practice, the weaker brother may go back into his old idolatrous habits, bringing disgrace on his Christian testimony. Opening his weak conscience to eat meat sacrificed to idols, which he saw a strong brother do, gets the weak brother out of fellowship with Christ because of past associations with idolatry, so the result is the weak brother gets wiped out spiritually. The stronger brother has influenced the weaker brother to do something his conscience could not handle. The obvious result is a spiritual disaster because his weak conscience gets hardened and insensitive to the danger of the questionable practice which he cannot handle. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**MacArthur**- if a Christian who has a **conscience** that is weak sees a mature believer eating in the temple, the weak brother is likely to be tempted to go against his own conscience and to eat in the temple himself. That could be dangerous to him, causing him to go against his own conscience.

Here is the point - The weaker brother is learning how to ignore his conscience—a dangerous thing to learn!

## J Oswald Sanders - The Weak Conscience 1 Corinthians 8:10

A weak conscience is one that is unhealthy, overscrupulous, and oversensitive (1 Corinthians 8:7–12). It reacts faithfully according to its light, but like a compass with a weak magnetic current, it is easily influenced and tends to vacillate. Its possessor is constantly tormented by doubt as to whether an action is right or wrong and constantly digs up in unbelief what has been sown in faith.

It is very possible to become a martyr to conscience, as John Wesley discovered when he one day vowed that he would not speak to a soul unless the Spirit definitely prompted him. On arriving at Kingswood at the end of the day he found he had not spoken to a soul. He then made the resolution that when there were souls needing speaking to, it would be best for him to do the speaking and trust the Holy Spirit to use the opportunity in the best way.

**A conscience may be weak for two reasons—an imperfect knowledge of God's Word and will, with a consequent imperfect**

**faith, or a lack of surrender that leads to vacillating choices.** When we obey the known will of God or are willing to do that will, we need not be harassed by an overscrupulous conscience, and we should refuse to constantly review an action committed in good faith. Too many are given to the unsatisfying occupation of photographing themselves and developing their own film. The corrective is to clearly face the issues involved in a situation in the light of Scripture and, seeking the guidance of the Spirit, come to a decision according to one's best judgment. Thereafter we should resolutely refuse to reopen the matter. (SC)

### 1 Corinthians 8:11 For through your knowledge he who is weak is ruined, the brother for whose sake Christ died.

Amplified - And so by your enlightenment (your knowledge of spiritual things), this weak man is ruined (is lost and perishes)—the brother for whom Christ (the Messiah) died!

Wuest For the one who is weak, through your knowledge is being ruined [in his Christian life], your brother on account of whom Christ died ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

NET 1 Corinthians 8:11 So by your knowledge the weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:11 So because of your superior knowledge, a weak believer for whom Christ died will be destroyed.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:11 And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died.

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:11 So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:11 π λ λ υ τ α ι γ ρ σ θ ε ν ν ν τ σ γ ν σ ε ι , δ ε λ φ ς δ ι ν Χ ρ ι σ τ ο ς π θ α ν ε ν .

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:11 and the brother who is infirm shall perish by thy knowledge, because of whom Christ died?

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:11 For through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, the brother for whose sake Christ died.

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:11 Then the weak person, the brother for whom Christ died, is ruined by your knowledge.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:11 And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:11 So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed.

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:11 Thus through your knowledge, the weak person is brought to destruction, the brother for whom Christ died.

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:11 And then it would be through your knowledge that this brother for whom Christ died, vulnerable as he is, has been lost.

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:11 In that case, your knowledge is ruining a believer whose faith is weak, a believer for whom Christ died.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:11 And so, through your knowledge, you are the cause of destruction to your brother, for whom Christ underwent death.

- **he who is weak is ruined:** 1Co 8:13 10:33 11:1 Ro 14:15,20,21 15:1-3
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**For through your knowledge** ([gnosis](#)) - Paul continues addressing the stronger brother ("**your**") with greater **knowledge** of his liberty in Christ.

**He who is** (present tense - continually) **weak** ([astheneo](#)) **is** (present tense, passive voice - continually be) **ruined** - The **Amplified** has a rather strong translation "this weak man is ruined (is lost and perishes)." That could almost be read to say the weaker brother would lose his salvation, which of course is not remotely what Paul is teaching here. **Wuest** is somewhat closer, paraphrasing it as "being ruined [in his Christian life]." When we were saved Paul gives one of the purposes for which we were saved, explaining that "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." (Eph 2:10+) This weaker brother was saved for "good works," but now in the "ruined state" is unable to accomplish the works

for which he was saved! (Ruined [apollumi](#) is first word in Greek sentence for emphasis).

**MacArthur on ruined - Ruined** has the idea of "to come to sin." We cause that person to sin by leading him into a situation he cannot handle....

**Arnold** - Misuse of freedom by the strong may well inflict ruinous damage on the weak by inducing him to do what he otherwise might not do. Christ died for the weak brother and Christ loves him as much as he loves the strong brother. If Christ loved the weaker brother enough to die for him, then the strong brother ought to love him enough so as not to put any stumbling block in his way that might hinder spiritual growth. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Is ruined** (622) [apollumi](#) from **apo** = away from or wholly + **olethros** = state of utter ruin) as it relates to men, is not the loss of being per se, but is more the loss of well-being. It means to ruin so that the person ruined can no longer serve the use for which he was designed. To render useless. The gospel promises everlasting life for the one who believes. The failure to possess this life will result in utter ruin and eternal uselessness (but not a cessation of existence). **Apollumi** then has the basic meaning of describing that which is ruined and is no longer usable for its intended purpose.

**Apollumi** in the Corinthian letters - 1 Co. 1:18; 1 Co. 1:19; 1 Co. 8:11; 1 Co. 10:9; 1 Co. 10:10; 1 Co. 12:23; 1 Co. 15:18; 2 Co. 2:15; 2 Co. 4:3; 2 Co. 4:9;

**The brother for whose sake Christ died** ([apothnesko](#)) - This statement would or should be painful for the stronger brother to read, and in fact the next verse adds to the pain.

**Arnold** - Every Christian is in spiritual union with Christ, and any sin done against the believer is a direct sin against Christ. Whenever the stronger brother wounds the conscience of the weaker brother over any questionable practice, the stronger brother has sinned, not only against the weaker brother but against Christ. A warning is given to the strong brother by the Lord Jesus: "But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea" (Matt. 18:6). ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

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### Vance Havner - A Test for Making Decisions

If you have a doubtful issue in your life, something with a question mark after it, put it to this fourfold test.

- The test of expediency (1 Cor. 6:12).
- The test of enslavement (1 Cor. 6:12).
- The test of edification (1 Cor. 10:23).
- The test of example (1 Cor. 8).

If your problem clears these four hurdles, it should no longer be a problem.

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**Spurgeon** - Do you not think, dear friends, that though it may be quite proper for you to take a glass of wine or a glass of beer, and there is no sin in the thing at all, your example may be injurious to somebody to whom it would be a sin to take it? Perhaps some persons cannot take a glass without taking two, three, four, five, or six glasses. You can stop, you know; but if your example leads them to start, and they cannot stop, is it right to set them going? Though you have a clear head, and can stand in a dangerous place, I would not recommend you to go there if somebody else would thus be placed in danger. If I were walking by the cliffs of Dover, and I happened to have a very fine cool head, yet, if I had my sons with me, and I knew that they had ordinary kinds of heads, I should not like to go and stand just on a jutting piece of crag so as to induce them to try the same position. No; I should feel, "Though I can stand here, you cannot; and if I stand here, perhaps you will attempt it, and fall, and I shall be guilty of your blood." Let us treat men as we would treat our sons; and let us be weak to their weakness, and deny ourselves for their sakes. Is not that good and proper reasoning? It seems to me that it is. If it is not good reasoning, it is safe. I never have asked God to forgive me for my sin in going without strong drink. I have never seen any commandment in Scripture showing that I am bound to take it. I feel free to do as I like about abstaining; but especially free when for the good of others I prefer to abstain altogether.

**1 Corinthians 8:12** And so, by sinning against the brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.

Amplified - And when you sin against your brethren in this way, wounding and damaging their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

Wuest Moreover, sinning in this manner against your brethren and inflicting a blow on their conscience when it is weak, against Christ you are sinning; ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

NET 1 Corinthians 8:12 If you sin against your brothers or sisters in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:12 And when you sin against other believers by encouraging them to do something they believe is wrong, you are sinning against Christ.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:12 Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:12 When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:12 ο τω ς δ̄ μαρτ νοντες ε ς το ς δ̄ελφο ς κα τ πποντες α τ ν τ ν συνε δησι ν σθενο σαν ε ς Χριστ ν μαρτ νετε.

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:12 and thus sinning in regard to the brethren, and smiting their weak conscience -- in regard to Christ ye sin;

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:12 And thus, sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, ye sin against Christ.

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:12 Now when you sin like this against the brothers and wound their weak conscience, you are sinning against Christ.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:12 But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:12 But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:12 When you sin in this way against your brothers and wound their consciences, weak as they are, you are sinning against Christ.

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:12 So, sinning against your brothers and wounding their vulnerable consciences, you would be sinning against Christ.

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:12 When you sin against other believers in this way and harm their weak consciences, you are sinning against Christ.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:12 And in this way, doing evil to the brothers, and causing trouble to those whose faith is feeble, you are sinning against Christ.

- **And so:** Ge 20:9 42:22 Ex 32:21 1Sa 2:25 19:4,5 24:11 Mt 18:21
- **by sinning against:** 1Co 12:12 Ex 16:8 Mt 12:49,50 18:10,11 25:40,45 Ac 9:4,5
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **STRONGER BROTHER SINS AGAINST WEAKER BROTHER AND CHRIST!**

**And so, by** (present tense - continually) **sinning** ([hamartano](#)) **against the brethren and** (present tense - continually) **wounding** ([tupto/typto](#)) **their conscience** ([suneidesis](#)) **when it is** (present tense - continually) **weak** **you** (present tense - continually) **sin** ([hamartano](#)) **against Christ** - Note that the stronger brother has manifested the antithesis of Christian love called for in 1 Cor 8:1. And in so doing not only is he guilty of sin against the weaker brother, but worst of all, he is guilty of sin against Christ! One would think a stronger brother reading this would thereafter be especially cautious about where and how openly he ate his "MacIol Burgers!"

**MacArthur** - The voice of a Christian's conscience is the instrument of the Holy Spirit. If a believer's conscience is weak it is because he is spiritually weak and immature, not because the leading of his conscience is weak. Conscience is God's doorkeeper to keep us out of places where we could be harmed. As we mature, conscience allows us to go more places and to do more things

because we will have more spiritual strength and better spiritual judgment. A small child is not allowed to play with sharp tools, to go into the street, or to go where there are dangerous machines or electrical appliances. The restrictions are gradually removed as he grows older and learns for himself what is dangerous and what is not. God confines His spiritual children by conscience. As they grow in knowledge and maturity the limits of conscience are expanded. We should never expand our actions and habits before our conscience permits it. And we should never encourage, either directly or indirectly, anyone else to do that.

**Is weak** (770) **astheneo** from **asthenes** = without strength, powerless from **a** = without + **sthenos** = strength, bodily vigor) means to be feeble (in any sense), to be diseased, impotent, sick, to lack strength, to be infirm, to be weak. **Moo** (commenting on James 5:14+) a good point in regard to the figurative interpretation writing that "When **astheneō** refers to spiritual weakness, this meaning is made clear by a qualifier ("in conscience" in 1 Cor. 8:7; "in faith" in Ro 14:1, 2) or by the context. More importantly, in the NT material that has exercised the greatest influence on James's vocabulary and theology (the Gospels), **astheneō** always denotes physical illness (Matt. 10:8; 25:36, 39; Mark 6:56; Luke 4:40; John 4:46; 5:3, 7; 6:2; 11:1, 2, 3, 6)." (Ibid) **Astheneo** in the Corinthian letters - 1 Co. 8:11; 1 Co. 8:12; 2 Co. 11:21; 2 Co. 11:29; 2 Co. 12:10; 2 Co. 13:3; 2 Co. 13:4; 2 Co. 13:9

### 1 Corinthians 8:13 Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble.

Amplified - Therefore, if [my eating a] food is a cause of my brother's falling or of hindering [his spiritual advancement], I will not eat [such] flesh forever, lest I cause my brother to be tripped up and fall and to be offended.

Wuest because of which very fact, since food makes my brother stumble, I will in no case eat animal flesh forever, in order that I may not make my brother stumble. ([Erdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

NET 1 Corinthians 8:13 For this reason, if food causes my brother or sister to sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I may not cause one of them to sin.

NLT 1 Corinthians 8:13 So if what I eat causes another believer to sin, I will never eat meat again as long as I live-- for I don't want to cause another believer to stumble.

ESV 1 Corinthians 8:13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

NIV 1 Corinthians 8:13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.

GNT 1 Corinthians 8:13 δι περ ε βρ μα σκανδαλ ζει τ ν δελφ ν μου, ο μ φ γω κρ α ε σ τ ν α να, να μ τ ν δελφ ν μου σκανδαλ σω.

KJV 1 Corinthians 8:13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

YLT 1 Corinthians 8:13 wherefore, if victuals cause my brother to stumble, I may eat no flesh -- to the age -- that my brother I may not cause to stumble.

ASV 1 Corinthians 8:13 Wherefore, if meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I cause not my brother to stumble.

CSB 1 Corinthians 8:13 Therefore, if food causes my brother to fall, I will never again eat meat, so that I won't cause my brother to fall.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 8:13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

NRS 1 Corinthians 8:13 Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

NAB 1 Corinthians 8:13 Therefore, if food causes my brother to sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I may not cause my brother to sin.

NJB 1 Corinthians 8:13 That is why, if food can be the cause of a brother's downfall, I will never eat meat any

more, rather than cause my brother's downfall.

GWN 1 Corinthians 8:13 Therefore, if eating food offered to false gods causes other believers to lose their faith, I will never eat that kind of food so that I won't make other believers lose their faith.

BBE 1 Corinthians 8:13 For this reason, if food is a cause of trouble to my brother, I will give up taking meat for ever, so that I may not be a cause of trouble to my brother.

- **if food causes my brother to stumble:** 1Co 6:12 9:12,19-23 10:33 11:1 13:5 Ro 14:21 2Co 11:29 2Ti 3:8,9
- 1 Corinthians 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Therefore** - Term of conclusion. Based upon the clear and ever present danger of a stronger brother flaunting their liberty to openly eat meat sacrificed to idols, Paul gives the conclusion, a conclusion which is very personal!

**If** - This is a first class [conditional statement](#), which means the weaker brother will likely be cause to stumble.

**Food causes my brother to stumble - Amplified** - "if [my eating a] food is a cause of my brother's falling or of hindering [his spiritual advancement]"

**MacArthur** - Paul restates the principle he has been explaining. In regard to doubtful things a Christian's first concern should not be to exercise his liberty to the limit but to care about the welfare of his brother in Christ. Paul set the example. He would never eat meat again, or do anything else his own conscience allowed him to do, if that would cause his brother to stumble.

**Arnold** - Notice what Paul concluded. He did not say, "I'll eat just a little meat," or "I won't eat when a weaker brother is around." No! He would not eat meat ever if that is what it took to help a weaker brother understand grace. As far as Paul was concerned, he was willing to forego any rights or privileges in order to keep a brother from stumbling and maintain the unity of the body of Christ. Paul's position was, "When in doubt, don't do it!" He did not walk the thin line between what is doubtful and what is sin. The important thing to him was not his own rights, nor his own comforts or his own pleasures, but the well-being of all Christians. Paul chose to operate on a higher principle than knowledge. He operated on the highest principle which is love. "It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall (Rom. 14:21). ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

**Stumble** (take offense) ([4624](#)) **skandalizo** from **skandalon** = a trap = put a snare or stumbling block in way; English = scandalize = to offend the moral sense of) means to put a snare (in the way), hence to cause to stumble, to give offense. To entrap, trip up, or entice to sin, offend. So in Mt 5:29-30 **skandalizo** is used in the active sense which conveys the idea to cause to do wrong, to entice to commit sin. In the passive sense it means to be led into sin, to be caused to do wrong. In the passive some uses mean to be offended (Mt 11:6), the idea being that one is taking offense at Jesus and/or refusing to believe in Him. Finally, **skandalizo** can mean to furnish an occasion for some to be shocked, angered, or offended (Mt 17:27). **Skandalizo** is derived from **skandalon** which refers to stick in a trap on which the bait is placed and which springs up and shuts the trap at the touch of the careless, unwary animal. It follows that the idea is to put a stumbling block or impediment in one's way, upon which another may trip and fall. Jesus' point is that anything or anyone that morally traps us (by our senses, visual, touch, and by expansion not excluding the other senses such as hearing), and causes us to fall into sin should be eliminated, radically and quickly. If we do not make every necessary effort to control our surroundings, what we watch and read, who we keep company with and speak with, etc, then those things will control us. If you cannot control something, it needs to be "jettisoned" to keep the boat afloat so to speak.

**Skandalizo** - 27v in NT - only use in 1 Corinthians. - Matt. 5:29; Matt. 5:30; Matt. 11:6; Matt. 13:21; Matt. 13:57; Matt. 15:12; Matt. 17:27; Matt. 18:6; Matt. 18:8; Matt. 18:9; Matt. 24:10; Matt. 26:31; Matt. 26:33; Mk. 4:17; Mk. 6:3; Mk. 9:42; Mk. 9:43; Mk. 9:45; Mk. 9:47; Mk. 14:27; Mk. 14:29; Lk. 7:23; Lk. 17:2; Jn. 6:61; Jn. 16:1; 1 Co. 8:13; 2 Co. 11:29

**I will (absolutely) never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble**- In view of the destructive effects on a weaker brother, Paul will give up his liberty to eat "McIddol Burgers" if that is what he has to do to assure that he never causes his **brother to stumble!** That is called death to self! That is called imitating Jesus as he wrote in Phil 2:3-4

"Do **nothing** (HOW MUCH?) from selfishness or empty conceit (OR OUT OF KNOWLEDGE OF LIBERTY WE HAVE IN CHRIST!), but with humility of mind regard one another (SPECIFICALLY THE WEAKER BROTHER FOR WHOM CHRIST DIED!) as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests (AND PERSONAL "LIBERTY"), but also for the interests of others (THE BUILDING UP OF YOUR BROTHER IN LOVE!)."

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## Liberty vs. Temptation

"Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall."—1 Corinthians 8:13

Marco Polo was the son of a Venetian merchant. In 1270, when he was fifteen years old, Polo and his father made an overland journey to China to trade with Kublai Khan. Khan was overjoyed with their arrival and requested that Polo's father be his ambassador to Rome and presented Marco's father with numerous expensive gifts.

Later the Polos returned to China through Baghdad to the edge of the Gobi Desert. There they rested at a town called Lop to pick up supplies and camels to cross the desert. In Lop they heard strange stories of people who had tried to cross the desert and had died. The arduous crossing of the desert with its heat, lack of water, and constant swirling winds caused delirium. Many strayed away from their caravans enticed by the sound of a wind that sounded like voices of their friends. The people of Lop warned: "Do not stray from your caravan. You will hear false voices that will call out your names as though they were your friends calling you. Following these voices you will be led in the wrong direction and hopelessly lost." The voices of those whom we think are our friends can lead us into dangerous temptations.

You may have liberty. But do not let that liberty lead someone else into sin. Are you considerate in your liberty to ensure that others will not fall into sin? Today ask God for wisdom in your conduct.

"There are many forms of recreation which in themselves might be honorable, but they have become associated with worldliness and godlessness and have proved to be snares to many a young heart. The law of love leads me to avoid them and in no way encourage others to participate in them."—A. B. Simpson

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## Larry Richards - When Doctrine Divides (1 Cor. 8:1–13)

At first glance it looks like a fight over roast beef. One group said, "Don't eat it! It's polluted!" The other said, "Looks all right to me. Mmmm. Tastes good too!"

Actually it's a doctrinal battle, set in the kitchen. The folks who cried, "Polluted" were saying that any animal offered to a pagan deity bears the taint of idolatry. The folks who said, "Tastes good. And less filling," were saying that pagan deities aren't real! So whatever was offered to an idol can't be polluted by the act!

What fascinates me here is that Paul showed us a fascinating approach to resolving our doctrinal disputes. He didn't say, "Well, this group is right." Instead he said, "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. But the man who loves is known by God" (vv. 1–3).

What in the world was he saying? Simply that those arguments about "who's right" won't help settle doctrinal disputes! The claim of superior knowledge just leads to pride. And that pride was ill-founded. Whatever we know, we know it imperfectly. So those fights about who is right about doctrine can only isolate us from one another. In view of our human limitations, we can't even be sure the winner of the argument is more than half right!

What Paul suggested is that we approach doctrinal disputes on the basis of love, rather than of knowledge. Love doesn't puff people up, it builds them up. And love opens up our hearts to the ministry of the Spirit of God, who is able then to instruct both parties in the debate (implied by v. 3, "is known by God").

What about while we're waiting to learn? Why then, each group needs to be sensitive to the other's convictions and conscience. We can exercise our freedom and live by our personal beliefs. But we also need to be "careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak" (v. 9).

Is it wrong to dispute over doctrine? Not at all. It's only wrong if dialogue becomes a dispute, and dispute dissension. We need to hammer out our understanding of God's truth. But we need to do it together, so we can learn from each other. And we need to do it in a spirit of love, so that both parties can grow spiritually through the experience.

### Personal Application

Hold on to your doctrines, but hold on even tighter to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

### Quotable

"It has not pleased God to save His people by dialectic."—Ambrose of Milan

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## Arnold -CONCLUSION



There are some cautions and clarifications Christians should observe to rightly understand questionable practices.

- (1) Paul is not deprecating knowledge. We must have knowledge to guide the conscience. He is appreciating love as the highest principle.
- (2) Paul is not saying that a Christian must abandon all Christian liberty to appease the ignorant prejudices of legalists and bigots. A person with a weak conscience is still sincerely wrestling with the right or wrong of a particular action. A legalist is set in his wrong, prejudiced convictions and demands that everyone conform to them.
- (3) Paul does not say the strong Christian must be permanently shackled by the weak brother. He does not say a Christian should never use his liberty, but he may temporarily set it aside to help the weak brother understand grace.
- (4) Paul does not say that strong Christians ought to be concerned about Christian taboos all over the world and seek to conform. The emphasis is upon offending a brother in your culture, and that only if someone sees you."
- (5) Paul is not teaching legalism. A legalist says you can't be a Christian and do certain questionable practices. This is not Christianity. When a person comes to Christ, he enters into a sphere of liberty where he is free to enjoy all the wonderful things God has provided for him if his conscience permits.
- (6) what Paul is teaching is that because of the stronger brother's concern and love for the weaker brother, he chooses not to exercise his right of Christian liberty for fear that he might influence the weak brother to violate his conscience and fall into sin. A strong brother is free to exercise liberty and he is just as free not to exercise it.
- (7) Paul is saying that with liberty comes more responsibility to use one's freedom wisely and discreetly, and to never abuse that liberty.

Have you been taught or told to be a Christian you cannot go to movies, watch television, dance, have a glass of wine, listen to rock music or a hundred other so-called taboos? You have been deceived. It is true that there may be questionable practices that may not be the wise thing for a Christian to do, but they never keep anyone out of heaven or send anyone to hell. You can do all the questionable practices and be a Christian and you may not do any of them and not be a Christian.

You need a right understanding of what sin really is. Sin is lying, cheating, stealing, swearing, jealousy, anger, hate, pride, sexual immorality, lust, homosexuality, slander, gossip, drunkenness, prejudice and a thousand other things. It is these kinds of sin which put a person into hell and keeps him out of heaven. All people are guilty of some or all of these sins. They need a Savior to forgive them. ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Questionable Practices At Corinth](#))

## **BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF GUIDANCE**

### **Middletown Bible Church**

SHOULD I or should I not? Life is full of decisions: Should I do a certain thing? Should I go a certain place? Should I take part in a certain activity?

Those who are believers in Christ have a wonderful objective standard of truth which can guide our conduct and govern our lives in a way that pleases our Saviour. The heart cry of the Psalmist was this: "Order my steps in Thy Word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me" (Psalm 119:133). Our lives, our actions, our decisions are all to be ordered and governed by God's Word.

In many, many areas God's Word is not specific. Instead the Bible gives us clear principles and sure guidelines which if rightly understood and applied would answer every specific question. The problem is that we often fail to apply the principles and follow the guidelines which the Lord has given to us.

In this study we have set forth 67 TESTS by which we can determine which course of action to take. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Other TESTS could be added to it. Most of these guidelines are taken from the New Testament epistles. Many other guidelines or "tests" could certainly be found in the gospels, in the book of Proverbs and elsewhere in the Bible.

These tests might be useful in pastoral counseling. When someone in the church wants to know if some questionable practice is acceptable, he can be given this study as a homework assignment. Or the pastor (or SS Teacher or parent) could sit down and go

through these questions with him. This study is available in booklet format and is available from the Middletown Bible Church (25 cents each).

None of these tests will do us any good unless we really apply them. With a desire to please Christ in all that we do, let us test our deeds and actions by these New Testament guidelines: (Note: These "tests" are given in New Testament order so that the verses can be more easily found)

1. The Scripture Test (Isaiah 8:20; 1 Thess. 5:21) Does the Scripture forbid it? Am I commanded not to do it?
2. The Stewardship Test (Luke 16:9-12) Will doing it involve a waste or poor use of the money, possessions and time God has entrusted me with?
3. The Separation Test (Rom. 1:1). Is this action or activity consistent with a life which is separated unto God's good news?
4. The "Bodily Members" Test (Rom. 6:13) In doing this are my bodily members being presented to be used as instruments of righteousness unto God or are they being used in a way that is not honoring to the God who owns me and Whom I serve?
5. The Abhorrence Test (Rom. 12:9; cf. Jude 23) Would doing this in any way make unclear the fact that I hate sin and abhor evil and must avoid it (1 Pet. 3:11) at any cost?
6. The Love Test (Rom. 14:15) In doing this am I walking according to love? Am I seeking God's highest and best for those persons that I am involved with?
7. The Conscience Test (Rom. 14:22-23) Can I do it with a good and clear conscience? (The believer must never do what his conscience forbids. The believer's conscience may need to be corrected and brought more and more into harmony with God's Word, but it is never safe to go against one's conscience and to rebelliously do what my own heart condemns) When in doubt DON'T!
8. The "Who Am I Pleasing?" Test (Rom. 15:1-2) Am I doing this to please myself or others?
9. The Fire Test (1 Cor. 3:11-15) Would this be building upon that which will last forever or will it contribute to mere wood, hay and stubble which will all be burned up at the judgment seat of Christ?
10. The Expediency Test (1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23) Is it profitable, beneficial, advantageous to do such a thing? (This is better than asking "Is it permissible?")
11. The Slave Test (1 Cor. 6:12) In doing this will I become a slave to anything? Will it make me a slave? Will it bind me up so that I am not free to serve my Saviour as I must?
12. The "Temple of God" Test (1 Cor. 6:19-20) Will it harm my body? Will God be honored by the way I use my body? Will this course of action rest and strengthen or will it weary and weaken the body and brain? If I spend myself to the point of physical exhaustion is it for a wise and righteous cause, even the cause of Christ (2 Cor. 12:15)?
13. The Distraction Test (1 Cor. 7:35) Would doing this distract me from serving the Lord? Would it hinder me from pleasing the Lord (1 Cor. 7:32)?
14. The Stumbling block Test (1 Cor. 8:13; 10:32; Rom. 14:21). Will doing this cause another person to stumble? Would it in any way hinder another believer's growth? Would it in any way hinder an unsaved person from coming to know Christ as Saviour?
15. The Missionary Test (1 Cor. 9:19-22; 10:33; cf. 2 Tim. 2:10). Will my actions contribute toward and encourage others to come to know Christ as Saviour? Will it in any way hinder or detract from Christ and His gospel? Will it help others to know the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour?
16. The Idolatry Test (1 Cor. 10:7,14; 1 John 5:21) In doing this am I allowing something or someone to be more important to me than God?
17. The Edification Test (1 Cor. 10:23; 14:26). Will this edify and build up a fellow believer? Would my actions encourage another's growth in the Lord?
18. The Selfishness Test (1 Cor. 10:24; 13:5). Am I doing this to please and serve myself or others? Am I living to myself or to the Lord (Rom. 14:7; 2 Cor. 5:15)?
19. The Glory of God Test (1 Cor. 10:31). Can I do it to the glory of God? In doing this am I showing forth a clear picture of my God and WHO HE IS?

20. The "Follow Me" Test (1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 4:9). Would I want others to follow me in this? Would I want other believers to imitate me in this? Could I recommend this course of action to them?
21. The Association Test (1 Cor. 15:33; cf. 2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Pet. 4:4). In doing this will I be brought into a compromising association with bad company (evil companionships) which will have a spoiling and corrupting influence upon my character and morals?
22. The "Labor in the Lord" Test (1 Cor. 15:58; cf. 2 Cor. 9:8). Would this in any way keep me from abounding in the work of the Lord? Would it keep me from serving the Lord with ardent zeal and zip?
23. The Temporal/Eternal Test (2 Cor. 4:18; Col. 3:1-2). Am I basing my decision on temporal or eternal realities? Am I seeing the short view or the long view? Am I making this evaluation based on time or eternity? Am I seeing it as God would see it?
24. The Judgment Seat Test (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12). Would this bring shame to me (cause me to be ashamed) at the Judgment Seat of Christ?
25. The Motivation Test (2 Cor. 5:14). Am I motivated by the love of Christ or by the lust of the flesh?
26. The New Creature Test (2 Cor. 5:17). Are these things part of my old life (are they part of the "old things" which have passed away) or part of my new life in Christ?
27. The Ambassador Test (2 Cor. 5:20). In doing this am I representing My Saviour in a clear and unmistakable way?
28. The Holiness Test (2 Cor. 7:1; 2 Tim. 2:21). Would doing this in any way cause me to compromise personal holiness? Would it hinder me in any way from being a clean and set apart vessel for the Lord's use?
29. The Mental Test (2 Cor. 10:5; cf. 11:3). Will doing this help me to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ or will it put me in the place where my mind is bombarded with high things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God?
30. The "Pleasing Who?" Test (Gal. 1:10). In doing this am I seeking to please God or man?
31. The "Reap What Is Sown" Test (Gal. 6:7). Am I prepared to reap the consequences of this action?
32. The Holy Spirit Test (Eph. 4:30; cf. 1 Thess. 5:19). Does it grieve (sadden, pain) the Holy Spirit of God? Would doing this in any way quench or hinder the Holy Spirit's working in my life?
33. The Saint Test (Eph. 5:3)—the child of God test (Eph. 5:1), the new creature test (2 Cor. 5:17), the citizen of heaven. Am I acting in a way that is appropriate and fitting to WHO I AM in Christ Jesus? Is that what a child of God would do? Is this what a saint would do? Is this what a new creature in Christ would do? Etc.
34. The Divine Approval Test (Eph. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:9). Is it well pleasing to the Lord? If I do this will I have God's smile of approval and His "Well Done!"? (cf. Matt. 25:21,23)
35. The Time Test (Eph. 5:16). Is this the best use of time? Is it the best way to buy up the opportunities God has given to me?
36. The Submission Test (Eph. 5:21) In doing this am I in submission to those authorities whom God has placed over me?
37. The Armor of God Test (Eph. 6:10-18). Will doing this make me more vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy?
38. The Excellence Test (Phil. 1:10). It may be acceptable and permissible to do this, and it may even be a good thing to do, but is it really the BEST THING?
39. The Magnification Test (Phil. 1:20). By my doing this will Christ be magnified?
40. The Gospel Test (Phil. 1:27). Would my actions in any way detract from or cloud or confuse the message of good news which I want others to know and believe?
41. The Dung Test (Phil. 3:7-8). Am I willing to sacrifice and forego certain things that are important to me for the sake of Christ?
42. The Joy Test (Phil. 4:4). Is my joy in the Lord or is it in something or someone else? If I were not to do this, would I lose my joy? Am I seeking joy, happiness and satisfaction from the wrong source?

43. The Contentment Test (Phil. 4:11; 1 Tim. 6:6,8). If I were not to do this or have this, could I still be content and satisfied?
44. The Pure Thinking Test (Phil. 4:8). Will this contribute to pure, wholesome, healthy thinking or will it encourage me to become occupied with mental garbage?
45. The Preeminence Test (Col. 1:18). In doing this will the Lord Jesus be given first place in my life?
46. The Name of Christ Test (Col. 3:17). Can I do it in the Name of the Lord Jesus with thanksgiving? Would He want to identify His Name with what I am doing?
47. The Servant of Christ Test (Col. 3:23-24). Can I do it heartily (with all my soul) as unto the Lord?
48. The Good Testimony Test (Col. 4:5). Will it present a clear testimony to those outside of Christ?
49. The Prayer Test (1 Thess. 5:17; Luke 18:1) Would this in any way hinder my prayer life or make prayer more difficult for me?
50. The Thanksgiving Test (1 Thess. 5:18; Eph. 5:20). Can I do it with thanksgiving? Can I thank God with a clear conscience?
51. The Appearance Test (1 Thess. 5:22). Would what I do assume any appearance of evil? Would my actions be misinterpreted or seen in a negative light?
52. The Modesty Test (1 Tim. 2:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:3-4). Would doing this draw attention to me or to Christ in me? Would I be displaying SELF or the SAVIOUR?
53. The "Blameless" Test (1 Tim. 3:1). Would doing this give anyone an occasion to point the finger at me and blame me for conduct that is out of harmony with my professed faith in Christ? (See Daniel's worthy example in Daniel 6:4).
54. The Example Test (1 Tim. 4:12). By doing this would I be a good example of what a believer ought to be?
55. The Entanglement Test (2 Tim. 2:4). Would doing this get me caught or tangled up "with the affairs of this life" to the neglect of my primary duty which is to please Christ?
56. The Pleasure-Loving Test (2 Tim. 3:4). Am I doing this because I love pleasure more than I love God? Am I delighting myself in other things or other persons more than I am the Lord (Psalm 37:4)?
57. The Second Coming Test (2 Tim. 4:8; 1 John 2:28). Would I want the Lord to come when I am doing this? Would I want the Lord to find me in this place, involved in this activity when He comes?
58. The Adorning Test (Titus 2:10). Will this activity adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour? In doing this will the truths and principles of God's Word be beautified in my life?
59. The "Denying Ungodliness" Test (Titus. 2:12; cf. 1 Pet. 2:11). In making this decision am I saying "NO" in strong, clear and unmistakable terms to ungodliness and worldly lusts?
60. The Hindrance Test (Heb. 12:1-2) Will doing this in any way hinder me from running the race? Would it weigh me down so that I cannot run as I should?
61. The Reproach of Christ Test (Heb. 13:13; cf. 11:26). In making this decision what is more important to me (what do I place more value on)—the approval of men or the reproach of Christ?
62. The Temptation Test (James 1:13-16). Does it make resistance to temptation easier or harder?
63. The "Near to God" Test (James 4:8; cf. Heb. 10:38). Does it draw me nearer to or remove me farther from Christ?
64. The Growth Test (1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; cf. Heb. 6:1-3).  
Will doing this in any way hinder or stifle my growth in Christ? Will it contribute to my growth in Christ?
65. The Fellowship Test (1 John 1:3-4). Would doing this in any way rob me of the joy of having fellowship with Christ?
66. The Worldliness Test (1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4). Am I seeking to do this thing INDEPENDENTLY of God (leaving Him out)?
67. The "First Love" Test (Rev. 2:4). Will doing this make it abundantly clear that Jesus Christ is my first love?