

**I Corinthians Lesson # 24**  
**The Law of Love in Permissible Activities**  
**Pentwater Bible Church**  
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*I Corinthians 10: 23-24 All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable All things are lawful, but not all things edify. Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor.*

Paul drew some conclusions regarding “meat sacrificed to idols.”

1. The actual eating of the meat is unimportant to a person’s faith and while it is allowed it may not be helpful to the believer.
2. The principle of freedom (everything is permissible; cf. 6:12) was to be regulated by love for others.
3. Activities that are not beneficial or constructive or that do not promote the good of others (cf. 10:33) should be avoided when you are in the company of new believers or those who are weak in the faith and have not grown. Some as we have seen might have been Christians for a long while but implemented rules for their lives, which are outside of Biblical orthodoxy. For those individuals we must come along side of them and provide them with challenging instruction to enable growth. The Bible calls this sanctification.

*I Corinthians 10:25-26 Eat anything that is sold in the meat market without asking questions for conscience' sake; FOR THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, AND ALL IT CONTAINS.*

For a Christian who bought meat at a market with the intent of eating it at home, Paul recommended that selections be made without reservation. First of all it is impossible to know if such meat was part of a sacrifice. Paul simply told the Corinthians not to ask because it didn’t matter. Even if it was sacrificed to an idol it still didn’t matter. God makes all food. No one could contaminate what God had made clean (cf. Acts 10:15) since everything belongs to Him (Psalms 24:1). So if they didn’t ask they would not have to worry about if it was or wasn’t sacrificed to an idol.

*I Corinthians 10: 27 If one of the unbelievers invites you and you want to go, eat anything that is set before you without asking questions for conscience's sake.*

If a believer is accepted into an unbeliever’s home and offered a meal eat whatever is offered to you. Don’t ask any questions. It would be offensive to the host to inquire as to the origin of the food. That is, whether or not it was offered to an occultic god in the pagan temple. God ahead and eat it in a convivial atmosphere which will give rise to an

opportunity to be a witness for Christ. If the focus of the conversation went to an unimportant issue and the guest made it an issue the opportunity to share Christ through a new friendship would be lost.

*1 Corinthians 10: 28-31 But if anyone says to you, "This is meat sacrificed to idols," do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for conscience' sake; I mean not your own conscience, but the other man's; for why is my freedom judged by another's conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I slandered concerning that for which I give thanks? Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

If during the course of the meal another Christian guest raised an objection (cf. 8:7-13) that the food had been part of a pagan sacrifice, the knowledgeable Christian should defer to the uninformed legalism of the weaker brother. To exercise his rightful freedom to eat might cause the brother with the legalistic conscience to follow that example and cause him to sin (cf. Romans 14:14-23). The stronger believer should defer to the weak brother temporarily until the weaker one is counseled and caused to grow.

A knowledgeable Christian did not need to alter his fact-based belief to accord with the conscience of a weaker brother (1 Corinthians 10:29b), but he did need to alter his behavior when in the weaker brother's presence. Otherwise the weak brother might act against his conscience and harm himself (cf. 8:11), which would bring denunciation on the strong brother. What the knowledgeable Christian could enjoy privately with thankfulness became in the presence of the weaker brother a contemptible act eliciting condemnation. Why am I slandered because of something I thank God for? (cf. 8:12; Romans 14:16, 22). This question Paul raised is for us to see that we should allow the weaker brother to have his way for the time being. We know the activity is harmless but until the weak brother grows in Christ he will think it is abominable. Agree with him for his sake and Christ's sake and for the sake of not offending him. Christ never said we couldn't do the activities for which we have freedom. We just must do them judicially and not in front of the weak or legalistic slow growth brothers. This will bring glory to God.

*1 Corinthians 10:32-33 Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved.*

Paul committed his entire life to winning souls for Jesus. Paul would not do anything that would cause a brother to stumble or keep an unbeliever out of the Kingdom. Nothing should ever cause us to lose sight of the desire to bring others along into God's saving grace and slow growth believers into a non-legalistic understanding of Christian liberty

*1 Corinthians 11:1 Be ye followers of me even as I am also am of Christ.*

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