

***“Living In A Christless Culture”***  
***1 Corinthians 10:23-30***

**Introduction:**

1. As We Head Back To 1 Corinthians 10 This Morning:
  - I Want You To Think About The Country & The Culture In Which We Live!
    - It Was Once Founded On Moral / Biblical / Christian Principles!
      - In 1796, President George Washington Stated In His Farewell Address: “It Is Impossible To Rightly Govern The World Without God And The Bible!”
  - Look How Far Our Country & Our Culture Has Come!
    - Instead Of Seeking God & Using The Bible To Help Us Govern Our Lives!
      - We Are Seeing Millions Of Our Future Citizens Being Murdered Through Abortion – And It Is Legal!
      - We Are Seeing A Battle For Morality Being Waged Throughout Our Country – On The Validity Of Homosexual Marriage!
      - And We Continue To See Our Leaders & Politicians Making Decisions & Laws – Not Based On Principles But For Pragmatics!
  - Our Culture Is Becoming More & More Christ-Less & God-Less!
    - But This Is Not Uncommon, Nor Is It Unusual!
      - Most Cultures Are This Way!
      - Our Country & Our Culture Is Extremely Different & Has Been Greatly Blessed!
    - The Christians & The Church In Corinth:
      - Were Living In Christless Society & Culture!
      - In Fact - Their Culture Was Just Beginning To Taste The Influence Of Christianity! And It Was A Shock To Their System!
2. So - As We Continue Here In 1 Corinthians 10:
  - Need To Remember To Whom Paul Was Writing:
    - A Church In A Christless Culture!
  - And As Our Own Country & Culture:
    - Becomes More & More Christless:
      - We Will See That His Instruction Is More & More Important To Our Own Lives!
  - What We Will Look At This Morning Is:
    - How Can A Christian Live In A Christless Culture?
    - How Can A Christian Live In A Culture That Is Becoming More & More Christless?
  - We Will Explore Paul’s Answer To This Question In 10:23-30!
    - Where Paul Is Summarizing & Finishing A Discussion He Began In Chapter 8 - When He Was Asked About How To Handle Things That Were Offered To Idols!
      - What Is A Christian To Do?
      - How Can A Christian Live In A Christless Culture?
    - Read 10:23-30!
3. How Can A Christian Continue To Live In A Christless Culture?

\* There Are Some:

**1. *Principles For Christian Living:***

- 10:23-24 - “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. / Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth!”
  - In These 2 Verses:
    - Paul Is Explaining How He Personally Lived As A Christian In A Christless Culture! No Matter Where He Lived / No Matter Where He Went!
  - Paul Experienced Christian Freedom & Liberty!
    - “All Things Are Lawful For Me!”
      - Or Permitted & Allowed!
    - Paul Is Not Talking About Sin!
      - But About Things That Are Not Clearly Dealt With In Scripture!
    - There Are Many Things In A Culture:
      - That Are Not Sinful To Participate In!
        - **IE:** Like: National Holidays / Technology / Certain Sports & Entertainments / Etc
  - And A Christian Has Been Given Liberty To:

- Live By & Enjoy What Their Culture Has Produced!
- But - As He Taught Previously - There Are Limits To Our Liberty In Christ!
  - And These Are The Principles We Are To Live By - In Order To Honor God & To Help Others!
- “All Things” May Be Lawful & Allowed For A Christian:
  - Even In A Christless Culture!
  - But There Are Three Basic Principles To How We Are To Live In a Christless Culture:
- First Principle For Living: Is It Helpful?
  - That Is - Is What I Do & How I Live Truly Helpful!
    - To The Cause Of Christ & For The Walk Of Christians!
  - 10:23a - “All Things Are Lawful For Me, But All Things Are Not Expedient!”
    - Paul Says - There Are Some Things That I May Be Allowed & Permitted To Do - But Not Everything That I Can Do, I Ought To Do!
      - Because It May Not Be Helpful!
      - “Expedient!” Or Profitable!
  - We Need To Limit What We Can Do:
    - By What Is Truly Helpful!
  - Does It Help?
    - Or Does It Hinder?
      - Your Own Personal Walk With The Lord?
      - Your Testimony & The Work Of The Gospel?
      - The Lives Of Others & Their Walk With God?
  - How Can A Christian Live In A Christless Culture?
    - By Living In A Way That Is Truly Helpful!
      - In A Way That Will Bless & Benefit Others!
- Second Principle For Living: Is It Heightening?
  - That Is - Is What I Do & How I Live Bringing People, Especially Other Christians, Higher?
    - In The Grace & Knowledge Of God?
  - 10:23b - “All Things Are Lawful For Me, But All Things Edify Not!”
    - Again Paul Says - There Are Some Things That I May Be Allowed & Permitted To Do - But Not Everything That I Can Do, I Ought To Do!
      - Because It May Not Be Heightening!
      - “Edifying!” Or Building Up!
  - We Need To Limit What We Can Do:
    - By What Will Help Raise Christians To New Heights!
  - Does It Heighten?
    - Will What You Do Help Develop Other Christians & The Church Of Jesus Christ?
      - This Is Talking About True Spiritual Growth!
        - Did You Know There Are Two Types Of Growth In The Church? Spiritual / Numerical!
      - Acts 9:31 - “Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied!”
        - The Spiritual Is To Come Before The Numerical!
- And Our Focus Is To Help One Another:
  - Grow & Increase!
    - In The Knowledge Of Truth!
    - In Love For God & Others!
    - In Worship!
    - In Service For God & Others!
  - How Can A Christian Live In A Christless Culture?
    - By Living In A Way That Will Help Other Christians Reach New Heights Spiritually!
    - How Are You Living?
      - In A Way That Brings People To New Spiritual Heights? Or In A Way That Drags People To The Old Lows Of Life?
- Third Principle For Living: Is It Honoring?
  - That Is - Is What I Do & How I Live Compatible:
    - With Romans 12:10 - “In Honor Preferring One Another!”

- 10:24 - "Let No Man Seek His Own, But Every Man Another's Wealth!"
  - Not Just Talking About The "Wealth" Of Others, But The "Life" Of Others!
  - And We Need To Honor Others:
    - And Focus On Their Needs / Concerns Even More Than Our Own!
- We Need To Limit What We Can Do As Christians:
  - By What Is Honoring & Thoughtful Of Others!
    - Especially Other Christians, Whose Conscience Might Be Weaker Than Ours!
- This Takes Humility!
  - Philippians 2:3-5 - "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. / Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. / Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus!"
- How Can A Christian Live In A Christless Culture?
  - By Reflecting The Mind / Life Of Christ In That Culture & To Every Person Around Them!
- This Is The Principle That Must Govern Our Lives:
  - If We Are Christians Living In A Christless Culture:
  - As John The Baptist Said In John 3:30 - "He Must Increase (That Is - Jesus), But I Must Decrease!"
  - Your Life Is Not All About You!
    - It Is About God / Christ / Others!
    - **IE:** We Are To Be Like Chandeliers In The Middle Of A Dark, Christless Culture! Where The Light Of Christ & The Gospel Changes Us & Beautifies Us & Then Spreads The Light Out To Others!
- These 3 Principles Are Important In A Christless Culture:
  - Be Helpful / Be Heightening - Edifying / Be Honoring - More Focused On The Spiritual Needs Of Others, Than Of Your Own Freedoms & Comforts!

\* There Are Some:

**2. Practices For Christian Living:**

- In These Next Few Verses:
  - Paul Gives Some Practical Answers To The Questions That Were Given To Him By The Church In Corinth!
    - And These Answers Were Only Given After He Spend Nearly 3 Chapters Laying The Foundation / Principles For His Answer!
- 10:25-28 - "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: / 26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. / 27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. / 28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof!"
  - Why Didn't Paul Just Come Out With His Answers To Their Questions To Begin With?
    - Because The Issue Is One Of The Heart, And Not Just Of Your Habits!
    - Paul Was Concerned With Teaching Us How To Deal With All Areas Of Our Christian Lives!
  - So These Answers:
    - That Deal Specifically With The Issues Of Eating Meat Offered To Idols - A Problem For That Church In That Christless Culture:
      - Will Help Us Know How To Deal With Other Issues That We Face In Our Christless Culture!
- Remember God's Provision!
  - 10:25-26 - The First Issue:
    - Going To The Meat Market To Buy Meat That You Will Eat In Your Home - And That Meat Had Likely Been Offered In Sacrifice To An Idol!
  - What Does Paul Tell Them?
    - "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: / For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof!"
  - To The Corinthians In Their Christless Culture:
    - If You Have A Common Physical Need: To Eat!
    - And There Is A Common Place To Buy: Shamble!
    - Then Don't Worry About Whether Or Not The Meat Was Offered To Idols Previously!
    - Instead: Use What God Has Given To You!
      - And Live Where God Has Placed You!

- You Cannot Control Everything That Goes On In The Marketplace!
- Just Don't Ask Questions Or Investigate:
  - Where The Meat Came From!
- To Other Christians In A Christless Culture:
  - If You Have A Common Need!
  - And There Is A Common Place To Buy!
  - Then Don't Worry About How Your Money Is Used By That Company!
  - **IE:** Need Some Things Around The Home - Go Out And Get What You Need - Not Asking Questions About Where Your Money Goes - May Even Go To Support Sinful Lifestyles (Probably Does)! You Have The Liberty To Go Or Not Go There!
- Remember God's Provision!
  - 10:26 - "For The Earth Is The Lord's, And The Fulness Thereof!"
  - A Quote From Psalm 24:1!
  - All That Is In The World Has Been Given To Us By God!
    - By His Grace & As A Gift!
    - To Provide For Our Needs!
    - To Use / To Enjoy!
    - 1 Timothy 6:17 - "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy!"
- So - Even In A Christless Culture:
  - You Can With A Clear Conscience Enjoy What God Provides For You, Even Through That Culture!
  - Just Do So With A Grateful Heart!
    - Not Investigating Things In Detail!
    - And Receive Them As God's Gift To You!
- Remember God's Possession!
  - 10:27-28 - The Second Issue:
    - Going To Eat At A Feast Where The Meat Offered To You Was Likely Offered In Sacrifice To An Idol!
  - What Does Paul Tell Them?
    - 10:27 - "If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake!"
  - To The Corinthians In Their Christless Culture:
    - If You Are Invited By An Unbeliever To A Meal / Feast!
      - And This Would Have Been Common - There Were Labor Guilds / Unions - Feasts Were A Common Way To Get Together / Socialize / Transact Business! **IE:** Common Now As Well! Business Parties! Some Voluntary / Others Mandatory!
    - If You Decide To Go - Again An Issue Of Liberty:
      - Then Don't Worry About Whether Or Not The Meat Was Offered To Idols Previously!
      - Just Don't Ask Questions Or Investigate:
        - Where The Meat Came From!
      - BUT - 10:28 - "But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake!"
        - If Someone Tells You That The Meat Was Sacrificed To An Idol - Don't Eat It!
          - They May Tell You: To Inform / To Investigate - Test / To Impress You!
        - For The Same Of:
          - Testimony - To Unbelievers!
          - Conscience - Of Christians!
        - Don't Eat It!
  - To Other Christians In A Christless Culture:
    - If Something Is Being Sold / Placed Before You:
      - And "A Portion Of The Proceeds Will Go To Support \_\_\_\_\_" – What Is The Blank?
    - If Something Is Known To Directly:
      - Support / Serve Something Clearly Unbiblical / Sinful / Wrong - Do Not Participate In It!
- Remember God's Possession!
  - 10:28b - "For The Earth Is The Lord's, And The Fulness Thereof!"

- Same Quote From Psalm 24:1!
  - Different Emphasis!
- All That Is In The World Belongs To God!
  - He Alone Deserves The Glory For It!
- Isaiah 42:8 - "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images!"
- So - Even In A Christless Culture:
  - You Can Live Out & Practice Your Christian Walk:
  - By Remembering:
    - God's Provision!
    - But Also God's Possession!
    - "For The Earth Is The Lord's & The Fulness Thereof!"

\* There Is Also:

### 3. *A Purpose For Living:*

- 10:29-30 - "Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience? / For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?"
  - We Need To Be People That Are Concerned!
    - About The Right Things!
    - And How Our Lives Affect Those Around Us!
      - Not Just Unbelievers - Testimony!
      - But Believers - Church!
  - Paul Lived With Concern!
    - We Must Too! Purpose For Living!
- Concern For Conscience!
  - 10:29a - "Conscience, I Say, Not Thine Own, But Of The Other!"
  - Even With Our Freedom / Liberty In Christ:
    - We Need To Have A Concern For The Conscience Of Other Christians!
    - Who May Still Be Dealing With & Struggling With Some Issues In Their Life / Walk With Christ!
      - They Have A Weaker Conscience Than You!
  - Need To Be Concerned For Them!
    - And You Need To Defer To Them & Their Conscience!
    - You May Not Have An Issue / Problem - But Does Another Christian Who You Know & Will See You? Will It Cause Them To Struggle? Even Sin?
  - This Is Part Of Our Purpose For Living:
    - A Concern For The Conscience Of Others!
- Concern For Conduct!
  - 10:29b - "For Why Is My Liberty Judged Of Another Man's Conscience?"
  - Here - Paul Is Stating Something That He Does Not Want To Happen!
    - If He Were To Go Along With His Liberty, Without Care Or Concern For Others!
  - In Effect He Is Asking:
    - "Why Should I Permit - By The Use Of My Liberty - Someone To Call My Conduct Into Question?"
      - And Judge Him & Think That He Is Wilfully Sinning!
  - We See Here Acts 24:16 In Action:
    - "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men!"
  - He Didn't Want To In Any Way:
    - Offend The Church / Other Christians!
    - More Importantly - The Testimony Of God & The Gospel!
    - So - He Was Willing To Limit His Liberty Out Of Love!
  - This Is Part Of Our Purpose For Living:
    - A Concern About Our Conduct For Christ!
    - Acts 24:16!
- Concern For Character!
  - 10:30 - "For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?"
  - Here Again - Paul Is Stating Something That He Does Not Want To Happen!

- If He Were To Go Along With His Liberty, Without Care Or Concern For Others!
- Again He Is Asking:
  - “Why Should I Permit – By The Use Of My Liberty – Someone To Call My Character Into Question?”
  - And Speak Against Him & His Ministry & Even His Master, The Lord Jesus Christ!
- Even Though We Experience God’s Grace / Gifts:
  - In Many Practical Things In Our Lives!
  - It Is Better To Give Something Up, Than For Your Character & The Character Of Your Lord, To Be Spoken Against!
- We Have A Purpose For Living In Our Christless Culture!
  - And We Need To Be Concerned About How The Way We Live / Act Is Received In The Culture & In The Church!

**Conclusion:**

1. It Is Never Easy For A Christian To Live In A Christless Culture!
  - But - This Is How God Chooses To Shine His Light In The Darkness!
    - He Uses His People!
    - Remember:
      - These Principles For Living!
      - Your Practices For Living!
      - Your Purpose For Living!
    - And Remember Matthew 5:14-16 - “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. / Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. / Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven!”

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