

## THE CRISIS OF MODERN IDOLATRY

1 Corinthians 8:1-8

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Intro:

- \* Explosion of knowledge today... great but by itself is not enough.
  - Bible knowledge is dangerous by itself...
- \* **Began this study 1 Corinthian with 7 challenges for the believer...**
  1. The **challenge** of **relationships**... God / vertical... others / horizontally (we all wrestle)
  2. The challenge of **sin**- how to have victory
  3. The challenge of **marriage**- single or married (we saw how to deal with any situation)

Tonight another major challenge...

4. The challenge of **materialism** (we were on Paul's mind when he wrote it)

**Human nature has NOT changed but the things have.**

- \* **This is a hard passage UNLESS you have an idea what was going on in Corinth.**

**Historical background:**

(Because if you understand what is going on - you can understand why God put the passage here.)

(So we can understand that **there is a message for us today**)

8:1

- People would go everyday to a temple & offer food / offering of some type  
Made deals with meat markets to sell surplus

8:4 **Why so important- issue whether believers could eat meat offered to idols.**

- **Greeks believed that:**

1. Demons were all @ them in the AIR
2. Their primary way to get **into people was to attach to food you ate**- then they could control you
3. They **devised the idea if food was brought to the temple & dedicate it to the pagan**

**god**

2 things would happen:

- 1) Appeasing the pagan god
- 2) Purifying the food for consumption

- There were thousands of gods in Greek culture.

- If you were had a need you could go to meat market & buy meat to offer (in a hurry)

- \* SO what happened in Practice?

**2 extremes:**

1. **Legalist**- enough bible to be believable- setting the standards (suits & ties) not in the bible  
There are times to dress up.
2. **License**- all ok,

- \* Important so we live by the truth of PRINCIPLE in the bible.

\*\* **Culture changes but human nature & God's truth does NOT change.**

- \* The more we are committed to the bible when grey areas come along we will better equipped...  
So we can dig principles out of our TOOL box- and we can live.

- \* Why we are dedicated to teaching you biblical truth - not a bunch of rules & regulations.

**Let's take some time and deal with the real issues in chapter 8 - toward idols**

- \* Knowledge not the issue-  
Not what they did or didn't know

**Remember**

**1 Cor. 6:12** "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."

- \* Why we live by principle not rules & regulation (not clearly defined SIN)

- \* Why we live in the middle

(the issue not right or wrong, BUT does it build me up; does it control me? Then it is sin.)

**Rom. 14:17** "For the kingdom of God **is not meat and drink**; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

\*\*\* **There are two real issues (one we will look at next week)-**

1. Love of God putting limits on us- so we do no harm to other believers
2. Tonight, **new or immature believers have two limitations** that are very real when they come into the Christian life.

**1. They have incomplete knowledge 8:7a**

- a. So many time new people base their life on what they feel, think or something other than what the bible teaches- Because they have incomplete knowledge

**2. They have a weak or defiled conscience. 8:7b**

Truth to understand:

**Although salvation is *immediate*, transformation is a *process*.  
These people struggled with tradition & habits from their past.**

**So today why is this important for us?**

- \* Idolatry is as BIG if not BIGGER today here in Las Vegas as is was in Corinth in Paul's day.
- \* The only thing that has changed are their names & the way we adore them.
- \* You say I haven't seen anybody bowing down to any statues or cutting meat into three parts.

Listen to:

**Eph 5:5** "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, **who is an idolater**, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

Redefinition of IDOLATRY 21st century style... covetousness.

**Col 3:5** "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:"

**Long biblical word covetousness another way for today is MATERIALISM.**

- \* Not being satisfied with what you have & thinking by getting more you will be satisfied & fulfilled.
- \* Idolatry is anything or anyone that comes between us & God.
- \* We have a lot of modern gods today- we don't call them Venus or Zeus, or Jupiter... We call them Toyota, Lexus, Dodge...
- \* When our quest for things becomes MORE important than your walk with God we have lapsed into modern IDOLATRY; we call Materialism.
- \* High places OT- good king came along would tear down the high places.

\* **For us today do you have any high places?**

- \* In our church many different stages of spiritual maturity- newer people sometimes want to go to extremes.

Because **some older Christians make out like you are not as spiritual if you don't get rid of the tv, or whatever you struggled with and were delivered** from as a new believer.

- If you had a problem with education being your god- don't keep your kids from school, etc.

\* **What we need is NOT more information but transformation...**

- \* Paul said in **8:1 knowledge without love promotes pride**. (we have to be careful here)

"**Puffed up**"- "**full of air**, to inflate, to fill with pride"

**Six times in NT** 1 Cor 4:6, 18, 19; 5:2; 13:4; Col. 2:18 (7th 8:1 "puffeth up")

"**Charity edifieth...**" - "builds up" (some thing solid) to be a house builder"

Henry, "Without holy affections all human knowledge is worthless."

- \* **Like talk sports radio** - they know more than the ones that played the game

\* "It's not what you know but WHO you know." **8:2-3**

\* **Knowledge ALONE is not enough!- WHO, WHO, WHO you know... see 8:4-6**

- \* Not the Lord's divinity, BUT the connection to God...  
The POSITION not the NATURE of God.

- \* IN him- the Father... by him- the Son

Remember

1. **TRANSFORMATION is a PROCESS...**

1 Cor 8:7-8 Means we need to be patient with new believers because they might not have as much information as we have.

2. Most believers are coming to Christ from paganism (five groups of people today)

We are dealing with another culture today as a church: