

1 Corinthians

Food Sacrificed to Idols—1 Corinthians 8:1–13

Topics: Believers, Example, Freedom, Idolatry, Knowledge, Love, Sin, Temptation, Unity

Open It

1. When have you refused to participate in an event that everyone else seemed to be enjoying?

1 Corinthians 8:1–13 (ESV)

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

²If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know.

³But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

⁴Therefore, 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.”

⁵For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—

⁶yet 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.

⁷However, 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.

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

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

¹⁰For 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?

¹¹And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died.

¹²Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.

¹³Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Explore It

2. What’s the problem with knowledge? (8:1–2)
3. Why is it more important to be known by God than to know about God? (8:2–3)
4. What importance does God attach to idols? (8:5–6)
5. Why were the Corinthian Christians continuing to struggle over the matter of idols? (8:7–8)
6. How could the exercise of a believer’s freedom hurt a weaker Christian? (8:9)
7. What overriding principle should govern our freedom? (8:9–13)

Get It

8. In what way can knowledge puff up a person?
9. What are some customs in our society that weaker Christians often need to avoid?

Apply It

10. What is one attitude or action in your life that you need to limit at this point? How?