

Study 16. 1 Cor 10:23-11:1

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Big idea: following Christ's example will mean laying down our rights for the good of others

Introduction

What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?

Observation and interpretation

Read 1 Cor 10:23-24. How do we decide if the use of a right is beneficial or not-beneficial?

At this point you may need to remind people that this is continuing a discussion that started in chapter 8 about food sacrificed to idols in the temple.

Read 1 Cor 10:25-26

- In 1 Cor 10:19-21 Paul forbids the Corinthians to eat meat sacrificed to idols. But now he is fine with it. Why is Paul suddenly happy not asking too many questions about where the meat in the market came from?
- How does the quotation from Psalm 24:1 ("The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it") support Paul's case that you can eat meat in good conscience?

Paul is adamant that Christians can have no part in eating meat *in the temple* (1 Cor 10:19-21). However this case study in chapter 10:23-11:1 concerns meat which has potentially come from the temple but is now for sale in the marketplace (in "plain packaging", so to speak, without any explicit link to idol worship). It is highly likely that much of the meat you'd buy in the market had come from the temple. And Paul himself may have been seen eating meat from the market. But for Paul there is no danger of idolatry here - just some quality steaks. Unless of course someone raises the issue...

Read 1 Cor 10:27-30

- This hypothetical involves an invitation to eat at someone's house. Why might Paul choose not to eat this time?
- Why does Paul feel the need to clarify in verse 29-30 that he is refraining from eating for the *other* person's sake?

Read 1 Cor 10:31-11:1

- What does "do it all for the glory of God" mean in this context?

- What precisely is the example which Paul wants the Corinthians to follow? (You might like to look at 2 Timothy 2:8-10 and Philippians 2:1-11)

Application / Implications

Can you think of a modern situation where you might put aside your rights for the sake of someone else's conscience?

What does this mean for a Christian view of "rights" in our legal and social arena? Is it ever right to insist on rights?

Consider this hypothetical. Two housemates have moved into a small place in Redfern. Chris does not drink alcohol, but Sam does. Sam has started keeping bottles of wine in the house to serve to dinner guests. Chris has repeatedly asked Sam not to store it in the house: "As someone who doesn't drink alcohol, I find it offensive that you store this Demon's Drink here." How could both Sam and Chris apply this passage to their situation?

Prayer ideas

- Pray in thankfulness for the gifts of God you have received today.
- Pray for those in our church who are struggling with the pull back into idolatry of all sorts.
- Pray that we would be ready to lay down our rights as Christ lay down his.