

1 CORINTHIANS 8 – STUMBLING BLOCKS

Idolatry is putting anything in the place that God alone should occupy as the proper focus of obedience and worship (Col 3:5). It's giving god-like power to things which aren't.

8:1-3 - Knowledge without love is damaging

- V1 - knowledge on its own leads to pride. Love on its own builds others up.
- V2 – If you think you've figured everything out, yet your supposed knowledge winds up causing others to sin, then you really haven't figured anything out.
- V3 – "In loving God, a person shows that he is known by God – that God recognizes him as his own and as having the right kind of knowledge, because he is exercising it in love to his fellow Christians and to God."
- "Love takes one beyond himself to aid another". Don't put your own desires above others if it may cause them to stumble in their walk with God. Philipians 2:1-8

8:4-6 - The reality of the godhead vs empty idols: An Apology

- V4 – Idols aren't real gods. In fact, many are actually demons (1 Corinthians 10:19-21). Acts 17:22-25; Ephesians 1:20-22; Col 1:16
- V5 – "even if there are..." Paul isn't saying, "even if there were such things as others gods, which we know are actually demons, they are all subordinate to and in submission to the one true God, King, and creator."
- V6 – 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.

8:7-13 - Don't let your personal freedom of conscience cause someone else to sin

- V7 – The problem – some people thought the idols were real gods, causing a spiritual crisis – incurring upon them unnecessary and burdensome guilt. OR, they were so steeped in that former way of life that any action connected to it now in their saved state could cause a serious case of backsliding.
- V8 – The truth of the matter. There are two points being made.
1) It isn't a sin in and of itself to eat meat with a friend or from the meat market that was sacrificed to idols.
2) To eat sacrificed meat is not a practice to be insisted on for maintain Christian liberty." Don't insist on doing certain practices for the sake of exercising your newfound freedom in Christ or showcasing your so called maturity in Christ.
- V9-12 – The big but. Don't use your liberty/right if it causes someone else to struggle and possibly fall into sin
Q: How does that even happen?
A: James 1:14-16
- "Our actions and lifestyle must always consider our influence on others."

- V13 – Be willing to take the hit for the sake of your brethren. Paul says very clearly in 10:31, "whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

There needs to be concessions on both sides of the isle. You should not do something in the name of personal liberty in the presence of someone if it's something they for the sake of conscience refrain from doing themselves. "There are some things we do not do because of others."

Similarly, do not put onto others what you would not do yourself. Don't be unnecessarily pushy or dogmatic in your personal convictions that aren't rooted specifically in scripture. Where there is liberty, let there be liberty. "We may live by some rules that we must not force on other Christians."

James 4:17; Romans 14:23