

1 Corinthians: True Freedom is Peace in Christ

March 6, 2011

Finish off Chapter 7 and marriage. . . then . . .

Point made to this point.... **Knowledge and good judgement are necessary and impinge salvation.**

- 2. 15 - The promise of knowledge and good judgement.
- 3.3 & 18 - Lack of knowledge causes division and strife in the church (False doctrine/building)
- 5. - Not knowing and performing church discipline destroys both sinner and congregation.
- 6. - Knowing to recognize sin and deal with sin in one's self.
- 7. - Knowing the nature of marriage and its relation to faith (some from Paul, some of the Lord).

In all most of what's handled above, there is no choice, but God appointed order (Catechism). What God appoints can't be rejected without rejecting God. Ignorance of these things is dangerous and leaves a congregation a carnal organization run by the whims and desires of sinful men promoting error and sin as "love," rather than the revealed will and guidance of God in Christ's love. But God's Word does not give specific commands in many areas of life. Thus he grants freedom. But freedom is a gift that can be used properly or abused.

Chapter 8: LOVE (Christ) Determines the Proper Use of <Freedom>

Adiaphora: (v. 8) matters not covered by a command or prohibition/order from God, yet are still under Christian judgement; that is, should I, or shouldn't I, what does it matter? **On meat offered to idols.**

KNOWLEDGE: (Puffs up - when abstracted from God). What would that look like in the practice in Corinth of eating meat offered to idols? (See Acts 10.9-15)

This knowledge is bound to the love of God, but can the love of God be abstracted from the love of others? (See 1 John 4.17-21)

LOVE: Does not use freedom and the knowledge it gives to lead a weak conscience into sin. What is a weak conscience? (See Romans 14.14ff) What is the care that is to be given to the weak? When does the conscience pass from being weak, needing special care so as not to break it to being errant in need of correction (Rom. 14.16)?

So love does not use freedom to draw others to violate their conscience and encourage them to do what they believe is wrong because their conscience is weak. A Christian should only give his efforts and pursue doing what he KNOWS IS PLEASING TO GOD. **If he is not sure its pleasing to God (his conscience is weak), he MUST NOT DO IT, or he will be sinning.**

But love also addresses that weak conscience with instruction (Luther says in spiritual battles there will always be collateral damage among the weak). A person who is challenged in his conscience must also use this as motivation to be strengthened (learn), to be less fleshly in his thinking and more spiritual discerning to be delivered from his weakness, strengthened and then to help others who are weak.

For next week, please read 1 Corinthians 9