

**LIFE IS GOOD: WHAT MAY A CHRISTIAN DO?**

1 COR 8; 9:1; 10:23-24, 31-33

The Apostle Paul uses a 1<sup>st</sup> century dietary custom as a vehicle to address and establish a standard for a much deeper theological question: What may a Christian do?

**I. The Liberated Christian is Free to Act**

1 Cor 9:1 *Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?*

1 Cor 8:9 *Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak.*

1 Cor 10:23 *"Everything is permissible-- but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible"-- but not everything is constructive.*

1 Cor 6:12 *"Everything is permissible for me"-- but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"-- but I will not be mastered by anything.*

**II. The Liberated Christian is Free to Act for the Benefit of Others**

Paul does not limit the scope of our freedom. He qualifies it by stating the purpose for which it is given.

1 Cor 10:23-24 *"Everything is permissible"-- but not everything is beneficial.*

*"Everything is permissible"-- but not everything is constructive. 24 Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.*

Freedom in Christ means . . . . . that we are free to act in such a way that benefits and edifies others.

**If you are liberated and free to do something, you are likewise equally free to choose not to do it!**

Not all people are equally strong in the understanding and practice of their faith!

1 Cor 8:4-12

**III. The Liberated Christian is Free to Act for the Glory of God**

1 Cor 10:31-33 *31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God-- 33 even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.*

**CONCLUSION:** God has liberated us in Christ to enjoy life and has enabled us to make individual choices regarding our actions and behavior. He has not restricted us to a legal "grocery list" of "do's" and "don'ts" but instead has provided a higher standard inspired by the Holy Spirit that leads us to act in the best interest of others and bring Glory to God through our actions and behavior. By employing this standard, we experience a deep sense of purpose and fulfillment in our personal lives and enable others by our example to experience life that is not only truly good, but Eternal! Are your life choices setting the example for others and bringing Glory to God?

**1 Corinthians 8:1-13**

8:1 Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. 2 The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. 3 But the man who loves God is known by God. 4 So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one. 5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"), 6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. 7 But not everyone knows this. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. 8 But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. 9 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. 10 For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol's temple, won't he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols? 11 So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. 12 When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.