

## Exegetical Notes – 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1

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**Introduction:** There was correspondence between Paul and the Corinthian Church about which we have no record. Apparently, in a letter which we do not have, the Corinthians had written to Paul asking him to address certain concerns. Beginning in Chapter 7 of 1 Corinthians, Paul begins to answer the questions the Corinthian Elders had addressed to him as an Apostle. The third of these questions is about eating food which was offered to idols. The answer to this question begins in chapter 8:1 and ends in chapter 11:1. The concluding principle is that whatever a Christian does must be done to bring God glory.

### 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1

#### Verses 14-22

***Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. <sup>15</sup> I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. <sup>16</sup> Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? <sup>17</sup> Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.***

***<sup>18</sup> Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar? <sup>19</sup> Do I mean then that food sacrificed to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? <sup>20</sup> No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. <sup>21</sup> You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. <sup>22</sup> Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy? Are we stronger than he?***

- Notice the “therefore.” This is the conclusion of Paul’s answer to the Corinthians’ question about eating food sacrificed to idols. It contains several concluding principles which wrap up his answer to this question.
- Principle #1: Christians should flee from idolatry. Idolatry is worshipping anything as god other than YHWH. It is giving the place which belongs to God to anything other than God.

- Paul points out that when Christians eat the Lord's Supper, they are participating in a sacred act and binding themselves to Christ in a significant and meaningful way. He will deal with this concept more fully in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.
- He points out that when Jews offer sacrifice to God in the temple they share in a Holy act. It is sacred to them.
- What is true for Christians in the Lord's Supper and for Jews in temple sacrifice is also true for pagans. When pagans offer sacrifice to idols, even though the idols are not real gods, they believe that they are doing a sacred thing. In truth, they are doing an evil thing. A thing which is actually incited by demons. Therefore, Christians need to be careful about eating food which is sacrificed to idols. To participate in these sacrifices is to anger God because it is yielding to demons.

#### **Verses 23-24**

***<sup>23</sup> "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but not everything is constructive. <sup>24</sup> No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.***

- But the Christians argue back, "Christ has set me free. I can do anything I like. I am no longer a slave to sin." While Paul supports the principle that Christians are free from sin, he points out to them that freedom is not license. Not all behavior is constructive or beneficial.
- Principle #2: Christians should always act to promote the good of other people. They should not insist on their rights but should do that which brings other people to Christ.

#### **Verses 25-26**

***<sup>25</sup> Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, <sup>26</sup> for, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it."***

- Christians may eat the meat sold in the meat markets controlled by the pagan temples because the earth and all that is in it belongs to the Lord. This is the simple answer to the Corinthians' question.

#### **Verses 27-30**

***<sup>27</sup> If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. <sup>28</sup> But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, both for the sake of***

***the one who told you and for the sake of conscience. <sup>29</sup> I am referring to the other person's conscience, not yours. For why is my freedom being judged by another's conscience? <sup>30</sup> If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for?***

- So, if you are invited to go to a non-Christian home for a meal and you decide to go, eat what your host puts before you without question.
- However, if your host or someone else at the meal points out that you are about to eat sacrificed meat, do not eat it. Because you will be judged by the person who pointed out this fact and your witness to them may be harmed by what you do. Your freedom is not the issue. Your witness is!

### **Verses 31-11:1**

***<sup>31</sup> So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. <sup>32</sup> Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— <sup>33</sup> even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved. 11 <sup>1</sup> Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.***

- Principle #3: Do everything to bring glory to God.
- Do not deliberately cause someone to stumble.
- Do not seek to exercise your rights for your own benefit.
- Follow the example which Paul himself sets as he attempts to be Christ to all people. Do everything to bring glory to God.

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