

The Natural Man (Law) vs. The Spiritual Man (Law) The Weak Conscience

Conscience = (suneidesis *soon-i'-day-sis*) the soul as distinguishing between what is morally good and bad

Last week we saw what the conscience is and its effects on man

We looked at Romans 2:14-16

I. The Gentiles didn't have The Law of Moses

II. Some obeyed the Law of Moses

III. Then when someone obeys the Law without the law they use their conscience to determine their laws or behavior.

IV. God will use Jesus Christ (The Word) to judge man

I Corinthians 8

Introduction: Paul is beginning to discuss an obvious situation that plagues this church.

This young church probably had no knowledge of the agreement of Acts 15:28-29.

The church officials had met to solve the problems inside of the churches.

This problem was eating meat that had been offered to idols

The situation was that the gentile world of that day worshiped idols, and in a city like Corinth, for example, the people would take their best animals and offer them to their pagan gods. They were very clever about this. They would take the animal in and make an offering of it, and the gods, which were "spiritual," ate the "spiritual" animal. Then the people would take the meat and sell it in the meat markets at the heathen temples. That was the place to buy the best steaks in that day—the filet mignon and the porterhouse and New York cuts.¹

I Corinthians 8

I. We are to build people through love to become a better Christian (I Corinthians 8:1-6)

1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

A. Knowledge Puffeth up – Charity (love) Edifieth

Edifieth = (oikodomew oikodomeo) to restore by building, to rebuild, repair

2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

B. Be careful – Know-it-alls only think they **know-it-all!**

3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

C. The lover of God is **Known** of God

We ought to govern by **love** rather than **knowledge**

NOTE: This is in regard to individual living not governmental! This is the game that the current liberals wish for us to govern our country by, Political Correctness, but there has to be absolutes in governmental living just as in individual living! He's telling us that our

¹McGee, J. Vernon, *Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers) 2000, c1981.

Absolute is God and His Word in our current government we have agreed to allow our Biblically Based Constitution to be our Absolute!

4 As concerning therefore the **eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know** that an idol is nothing in the world, and that **there is none other God but one.**

5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

D. There is only **one God**

***Since the idol is **nothing** in the eyes of God then there is no valid **violation**.**

II. The Confusion of the Conscience (I Corinthians 8:7-9)

7 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

A. Some men don't **know** - that the idol is nothing in the eyes of God then there is no valid violation. Therefore, they are offended if they see someone who claims to be a Christian eat the meat that was offered to idols.

B. Their conscience being **weak is **defiled****

Weak = (asyenhv asthenes *as-then-ace*) feeble

Defiled = (molunw moluno *mol-oo '-no*) to pollute, stain, contaminate

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

C. Commendeth = (paristhmi paristemi *par-is '-tay mee*) to bring to

***MEAT DOESN'T BRING US TO GOD - JESUS DOES!**

- I'm not better than **you** because of my convictions and you're no better than me because of **your** convictions
- If we are satisfied that our convictions **LINE UP WITH THE BIBLE AND GOD** don't be bothered by someone else's convictions even if differ from ours.
- If we allow ourselves to **look down** on someone when our convictions differ from another's then we have a weak conscience - **They are probably not at the same **spiritual** level that we are.**
- They will **never** reach our level if we offend them

Proverbs 18:19 A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city: and *their contentions are* like the bars of a castle.

D. Paul's admonition (I Corinthians 8:9-13)

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty (**freedom** to do as one pleases) of yours become a **stumblingblock** to them that are weak.

A. Don't allow thing that, **you feel**, may not be wrong become a **stumbling block** to the weaker Christian.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

B. They in turn will become Embolden to do those things that they should not.

To the man with the weak conscience if they see you eat that they feel that you are worshipping idols.

Embolden = (oikodomew oikodomeo) to **restore** by building, to rebuild, repair

* If others see you then they will be encouraged to worship idols because **to them** if you eat that meat you are worshipping idols.

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

- Though you know that you're not doing anything wrong – you may **harm** a less mature brother if you do something that they would perceive to be improper.

Perish = (apollumi apollumi *ap-ol'-loo-mee*) render **useless**

- They will be rendered **useless** as a Christian

III. The confused conscience becomes a smitten conscience making them to be rendered useless as a Christian

12 But **when ye sin so against the brethren**, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

A. It then becomes a SIN to you - If we do this to a brother we wound their weak conscience

Wound = (tuptw tupto *toop'-to*) to strike, **beat**, smite

Weak = (asyenhv asthenes *as-then-ace'*) **feeble**

James 4:17

17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

B. Paul's decision = rather than **risk** the possibility of offending a brother I won't eat meat