

## INTRODUCTION

- \* Paul's first epistle (letter) to the church of Corinth was written in order to assist them in dealing with various issues with which they were struggling.
- \* Living in a hedonistic, licentious society can have an affect upon the "set-apartness" of the individual believer and gathering of believers.
- \* Paul continues to deal with the balance of Christian liberty in this next section of his epistle with a consideration of "meat offered unto idols" and by contrasting the dynamics knowledge and love.
- \* As we consider the dynamic of "knowledge," we need to consider a larger issue that Paul has been addressing throughout the epistle. In the days of the early church, there was a prevalent Greek philosophy called Gnosticism. Gnosticism was a philosophy of dualism - that there was a clear separation between the physical and the spiritual. That which was physical was evil. That which was spiritual was good. The spirit side of man required special, or exclusive, knowledge that would awaken the individual to a spiritual liberation. Those with this special knowledge received direct revelation from the Spirit which then had greater significance than God's recorded word. Hence, only those with this special knowledge were truly saved. All others were ignorant (a-gnostic ... without knowledge). *We see Paul dealing with this in chapters 12-14.*
- The concept of dualism also affected the Gnostic views on the incarnation and resurrection of Christ. Since that which is physical (or material) is evil, God could not have truly been incarnate. Rather, Christ was only a spiritual being. Hence, the resurrection was not a physical resurrection but merely allegorical. *We see Paul's dealing with this in chapter 15.*

## INSTRUCTION

### I. THE E\_\_\_\_\_ OF KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE (v. 1-3)

A. Revealed In Our Relationships With O\_\_\_\_\_ (cf. Phil 2:3-5; 1 Cor 14:4)

B. Revealed In Our Relationship With G\_\_\_\_\_ (cf. Gal 4:9; John 10:14,27; 2 Tim 2:19; Matt 7:23; 25:12)

### II. THE T\_\_\_\_\_ OF KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE (v. 4-12)

#### A. The Case for Knowledge (v. 4-6)

##### 1. THE ARGUMENTS

a. The Foundational C\_\_\_\_\_:

b. The Foundational T\_\_\_\_\_:

##### 2. THE ASSERTION:

#### B. The Case for Love (v. 7-12)

##### 1. THE ARGUMENTS

a. The E\_\_\_\_\_ of Weaker Brethren (v. 7-8; cf. Romans 14)

b. The O\_\_\_\_\_ to Weaker Brethren (v. 9-11)

i. *THEIR P*\_\_\_\_\_

ii. *THEIR P*\_\_\_\_\_

##### 2. THE ASSERTION (v. 12):

### III. THE R\_\_\_\_\_ REGARDING KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE (v. 13)

## INTROSPECTION

- \* WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY?
- \* WHICH TAKES A GREATER PRECEDENT - YOUR PHYSICAL DESIRES OR THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF OTHERS?
- \* ARE THERE ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU ARE PARTICIPATING THAT THE LORD HAS BROUGHT TO YOUR MIND THAT SHOULD BE LET GO FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE AROUND YOU?
- \* IS YOUR LOVE FOR GOD SOMETHING THAT IS EVIDENCED CLEARLY IN YOUR LIFE?
- \* IS THERE A NEED TO "CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK" ... AND, THEREFORE, ACT?

## **INTERACTION ... Thoughts & Questions to ponder for later discussion**

- \* Paul used the illustration of "meat offered unto idols" to discuss the contrast between knowledge and love. What contemporary illustrations would/could he have chosen if he was writing to believers in our church?
- \* How far should we take this principle of sacrificing our liberty for the benefit of others? Are there limitations that apply to the areas of "offenses"?
- \* The impact of this passage is easier seen applied in a personal situation, but how do we apply it in a church-wide situation (i.e. at church events and functions)?