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Love Builds Up

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **July 13, 2014**

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Introduction: IN this chapter another subject is discussed, which had been proposed by the church at Corinth for the decision of the apostle: *Whether it was right for Christians to partake of the meat that had been offered in sacrifice to idols?* On this question there would be doubtless a difference of opinion among the Corinthian Christians. When those **sacrifices** were made to **heathen gods**, a part of the animal was given to the **priest** that officiated, a part was consumed on the altar, and a part (probably the principal part) was the property of him who offered it. This part was either eaten by him at home, as food which had been in some sense consecrated or blessed by having been offered to an idol; or it was partaken of at a feast in honour of the idol; or it was in some instances exposed for sale in the market, in the same way as other meat. Whether, therefore, it would be right to partake of that food, either when invited to the house of a heathen friend, or when it was exposed for sale in the market, was a question which could not but present itself to a **conscientious Christian**. The *objection* to partaking of it would be, that to partake of it either in the temples or at the feasts of their heathen neighbours, would be to lend their countenance to idolatry. On the other hand, there were many who supposed that it was always lawful, and that the **scruples** (doubts, hesitation from the difficulty of **determining** what is right or expedient) of their brethren were needless.

(Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

1 Corinthians 8:1-2, Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge **PUFFETH UP**, but **CHARITY EDIFIETH**. And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

Puffeth up defined 5448, to inflate, (figuratively) make PROUD (haughty).

Proud, 1. Having inordinate (excessive) self-esteem (high value or estimation; favorable opinion); possessing a HIGH or unreasonable conceit (ideas, opinion) of one's own excellence, either of body or mind. 2. Arrogant (making or having the disposition (frame of mind) to make exorbitant (excessive; extravagant) claims of rank or estimation; giving one's self an undue degree of importance).

Haughty, PROUD and DISDAINFUL [full of disdain { a feeling of contempt and aversion: turning away, dislike; the regarding anything as unworthy of or beneath one; scorn: disrespect, irreverence.}] 1913 Webs. Dict.)

Charity defined 26, agape, pronounced ag-ah'-pay: LOVE, affection or benevolence; a love-feast.

Benevolence, friendly, kindhearted, CARING frame of MIND to DO GOOD and PROMOTE the WELFARE (good fortune, happiness, WELL-BEING) of others

Edifieth defined 3618, to be a house-builder, construct or (figuratively)

confirm (to strengthen; to settle or establish [fix what is wavering, doubtful or weak]),

edify (to instruct and improve the mind in knowledge generally, and particularly in moral and religious knowledge, in faith and holiness.).

NOTE: *We all have knowledge ...* This was the conceited declaration of the questioners from Corinth who evidently indulged themselves in the pagan temples without regard to weak brethren; ...and the first thing Paul did was to nail down the fact that **"knowledge" without love** was the grossest ignorance. **Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up ...** is the way this stands in the Greek (English Revised Version margin); and it is a shame that our translators changed it. **Knowledge without LOVE only puffs up** the one who fancies he is wise and does nothing for others, whereas love builds up both its possessor and others. **Thinketh that he knoweth ...** All earthly knowledge is partial and fragmentary. ...In thinking that they knew everything and at the same time despising the brethren they denominated as ignorant, the Corinthians indeed knew nothing as they should have known. (Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/*)

Proverbs 16:19, BETTER it is to be of an **humble** spirit with the **lowly**, than to divide the spoil with the **proud**.

Ecclesiastes 4:13, BETTER is a poor and a **wise child** than an old and **foolish** king, who will no more be admonished.

Thought 1. A Christian can get out of, and stay out of the trap of pride if they will steadfastly look at three sets of truths. ONE, everything we have that's good, to include knowledge, was RECEIVED from our Father through the work of his Holy Spirit, who also is our Teacher and Comforter. And we will have to give account of what was given to us. TWO, we are what we are by the grace (influence and gifting) of God. And THREE, we must achieve and maintain the mind of Christ, which is to be LOWLY in heart, and through humility seek to always please our Father, loving like he loves, aware of the danger of pride Satan tries to get us into by his tricks.

1 Corinthians 8:3, But if any man **love God**, the same is **known** of him.

Love defined 25, agapao ag-ap-ah'-o; to love (in a SOCIAL or MORAL sense).

Social, pertaining social DUTIES. True self-love and social are the same.

Moral, **1.** relating to the practice, manners or conduct of men as social beings in relation to each other, and with reference to right and wrong.

NOTE: This verse ends surprisingly with "the same is known by him," instead of "the same knows him," as might have been expected; and Farrar was probably correct in the observation that: Paul did not wish to use any terms which would foster the already overgrown conceit of knowledge which was inflating the minds of his Corinthian converts. Furthermore he felt that "God knoweth them that are his" (2 Timothy 2:19).

Also, as Morris said, "The really important thing is not that we know God, but that he knows us!" (Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/*)

2 Timothy 2:19-21, Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord **knoweth them** that **are his**. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a **great house** there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and **SOME** to honour, and **SOME** to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

1 Corinthians 8:4-6, 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**. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) 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.

God defined 2316, the supreme (Highest in authority, Highest) **Divinity**.

Thought 1. This information tells us there is one HIGHEST God: above all others in power and authority: that being our Father! And since he gave his Son at his right side the authority he now possesses, he by virtue of having it to give and being Father is the highest. Jesus is God the Son! But is not as high in authority.

Ephesians 4:4, 6, There is... ..**ONE God** and **Father** of all, who is **above** (higher in place, greater, exceeding) all, and through all, and IN you all.

Romans 14:16-20, Let not then your **good** be evil spoken of: For the kingdom of God is not **meat** and **drink**; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for **peace**, and things wherewith one may **edify** another. For meat destroy not the work of God.

1 Corinthians 8:7, Howbeit there is **not** in every man that **knowledge**: for **some** with **conscience** (recognition) of the IDOL unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their **CONSCIENCE** being **weak** is **defiled** (soil [make unclean]).

Conscience defined 4893, co- perception, i.e. moral consciousness (internal sense or knowledge of guilt or innocence): --**conscience** (The faculty, power, or inward principle [source] which decides as to the character of one's own actions, purposes, and affections, warning against and condemning that which is WRONG, and approving and prompting to that which is RIGHT. 1913 Webs Dict.)

NOTE: When a man violates his **conscience**, he assaults the central monitor of his spiritual life; and regardless of whether or not the conscience is **properly instructed**, the violation of it is a spiritual disaster. This is why a person who THINKS a certain action is a sin may not safely take such action. (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

Acts 24:16, And herein do I **exercise** myself, to have ALWAYS a **conscience** void of offence toward God, and toward men.

Romans 14:20-23, All things (**all manner of**) indeed are **pure**; but it is **evil** for that man who EATETH with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. **Hast thou faith?** have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that **doubteth** is **dammned** (**condemn** [judge to be wrong, or guilty]) if he **eat**, because he eateth not of (from) faith: for whatsoever is not of FAITH is sin.

1 Corinthians 8:8-11, 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. But take heed lest by any means this **liberty** of yours become a **stumblingblock** to them that are **weak**. 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; And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother **perish**, for whom Christ died?

NOTE: In a sense, it was absolutely immaterial where the meat came from, whether sacrificed to idols or not; because **salvation** is simply not a matter of **diet** at all. Christ took away all prohibitions, "making all meats clean" (Mark 7:19); and Paul himself wrote that "every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, etc." (1 Tim. 4:4); but for a Christian who had **not learned** such vital truth, and who considered it sinful to eat certain things, it was definitely a sin for him to do so. In the situation at Corinth, therefore, it was not a question of determining what was right or wrong, merely in the abstract sense.

Many of the Corinthian Christians, so recently **won over from paganism**, still had lingering impressions of the **reality of idol gods**; and, besides those, there were many of Jewish background whose entire lives and training were absolutely incompatible with any kind of indulgence regarding meat offered to idols. For both classes, it was **against their conscience** to eat such things.

There positively has to be a vein of sarcasm (satire) in this. What kind of "knowledge" did any Corinthian have that could justify sitting down in the degrading festival carried on in an idol's temple? "Many of these functions were often accompanied by shameful licentiousness (looseness, orgies)." (Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/*)

1 Corinthians 8:12, But when **ye sin** so **against** the brethren, and **wound their weak conscience**, ye SIN against Christ.

NOTE: Whatever is done to the church, even in the person of its **weakest** and most insignificant members (as men count insignificance), is done to Christ. Paul learned this on the Damascus road, and he never forgot it. Was it right to override the scruples of young and weak Christians by indulgence of the appetite for meat? A million times NO! To do so was an unmitigated sin against the Redeemer himself. (Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/*)

Romans 15:1, We then that are STRONG ought to **BEAR (endure** [put up with; to tolerate]) the **infirmities (scruple of conscience)** of the weak and not to please ourselves...

1 Corinthians 8:13, Wherefore, if **meat** make my brother to **offend (trip up (fig., stumble or entice to sin, apostasy))**, I will **EAT** no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to **offend (stumble)**.

NOTE: If meat, etc. Paul here proposes his own views and feelings, or tells them how he would act, in order to show them how they should act in these circumstances. *Make my brother to offend.* **Lead him into sin**; or shall be the cause of leading him into **error** and **guilt**. It does not mean, if the eating of meat should enrage or irritate another; but if it is the occasion of his being led into **transgression**. How this might be done is stated in 1 Corinthians 8:10.

I will eat no flesh, etc. My eating meat is a matter of comparative unimportance. I can dispense with it. It is of much less importance to me than happiness, a good conscience, and salvation are to my brother. And the **law of LOVE** therefore to him, **requires** me to deny myself rather than to be the occasion of leading him into sin. This is a noble resolution; and marks a great, disinterested, and magnanimous spirit. It is a spirit that seeks the good of all; that **CAN** deny itself; that is supremely anxious for the glory of God and the salvation of man, and that can make personal comfort and gratification subservient (subordinate) to the good of others. It was the principle on which Paul always acted; and is the very spirit of the **self-denying** Son of God. *While the world standeth.* Greek, For ever. The phrase, "I will *never* eat meat," would express the idea. *Lest I make*, etc. Rather than lead him into sin, by my indulging in eating the meat offered in sacrifice to idols.

(Source: *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/*)