

## Session 9.

### Chapter 8 and 9, Witness of Truth:

**Our Witness Is Where We Are, What We Are, and How We Are!**

**Jesus witnessed everywhere He ventured...at the house of a sinner and in the house of God.**

**(1) Chapter 8...Our Witness to the Weaker (Less Mature) Christians.**

**Note: The “mature Christian” is one who knows he is nothing without Christ, humble with the highest of integrity, and never afraid of admitting his or her frailties and faults.**

**(2) Chapter 9...We Are Free In the Lord, but Not Free to Do As We Please... “We Have a Responsibility to Be a Witness To The Lost.”**

**1 Corinthians 8:** “Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. <sup>2</sup> Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. <sup>3</sup> But whoever loves God is known by God. <sup>4</sup> 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.” <sup>5</sup> For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. <sup>8</sup> But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. <sup>9</sup> Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. <sup>10</sup> For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? <sup>11</sup> So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. <sup>12</sup> When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup> Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.”

**Deals with a problem which may seem extremely remote to us....but was intensely real to the Christians at Corinth and demanded a solution.**

**The Problem for the Christian in Corinth:**

**Whether or not to eat meat which had been offered to idols.**

- **Sacrifice to the gods was an integral part of ancient life.**
- **It might be of two kinds, private or public.**

**(In neither case was the whole animal consumed upon the altar.**

**Often all that was burned was a mere token part as small as some of the hairs cut from the forehead).**

- ✓ **Private Sacrifice....the animal was divided into three parts.**
  1. A token part was burned upon the altar.
  2. The priests received as their rightful portion the ribs, the ham and lift side of the face.
  3. The worshippers himself received the rest of the meat.  
Could use it for banquets...feeding others. Sometimes at weddings...feast being at the house of the host....or even in the temple of the god to whom the sacrifice had been made.

**The problem confronting the Christian was.... “Could he take part in such a feast? Could he possibly take upon his lips meat that had been offered to an idol?”**

**If not....the Christian would have to remove himself from participating in almost all social functions.**
- ✓ **Public Sacrifice (Common)...the animals were divided into the same type portions as private...3 parts.**
  - ❖ A small portion of the animal used for burnt offerings in the temple....the priests got their share....and the rest went to the magistrates and others.
  - ❖ What the magistrates did not need, they sold to the shops and markets.
  - ❖ What the Christian never knew was when he might be eating meat that had formed part of a sacrifice to the idol.
  - ❖ The people in Corinth believed that demons and devils gained entry through food. They, in turn, would dedicate the animals to a god before it was slaughtered....and if was not dedicated to a god before it was slaughtered, it was blessed in the name of a god before it was eaten as a defense against taking in demons or devils in their bodies.

**To the Christian in Corinth...or any other Greek city, this was a problem.**

**Paul’s advice falls into different sections:**

- **In chapter 8...Paul lays down the principle that:**
- ✓ *However safe the strong and enlightened Christian may feel from the infection of heathen idols and even if he believes that an idol is the symbol of something which does not exist at all, he must do nothing which will hurt or bewilder a brother whose conscience is neither so enlightened nor so strong as his.*
- ✓ *Remember.....we are gaining in knowledge of the Word every day...but, knowledge puffs up and love builds up. Knowledge puffs up when we think we are one of the elite who has a direct line to God. Love always wins out....because true love never fails to win in the end.*

## **Chapter 9.**

### **Questions from the Constituents....the Church Goers at Corinth!**

*Are there questions that you want to ask the Lord that you just haven’t understood in this life?*

*Paul was getting an “ear full”... (reading this letter) from the Corinthians....*

**Have you ever had some questions you wanted to ask the Evangelist...but he left before you had the chance to ask him?**

**Remember...these new Christians did not have a Bible to read and study. How did they get their questions answered?**

**One question was:**

**“Why should we listen to this man (Paul)...he was not a disciple chosen by the Lord...and was he there when our Lord died?”**

**Answer: 1 Corinthians 9:1-3,** “Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord? <sup>2</sup> Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you! For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me.”

**Paul’s answer: I am an apostle because:**

- **“I have seen the Lord”...this is the supreme test of an apostle...that they have witnessed the resurrection of the Lord**

(Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 4:33).

Paul stated in his conversion testimony that “He has seen the Lord” (if he saw Him then he is a witness to the Lord’s resurrection).

Paul stated in 2 Timothy 1:12, “I know whom I have believed...” Not “I know what I believe.”

**Faith in the New Testament almost always concerns indisputable trust in a person...not faith as an indisputable trust in a philosophy...**

- **My ministry has been effective.**

The Corinthians themselves are proof of that.

Paul called them his “seal” of apostleship.

**Seal: the seal meant the guarantee of genuineness.**

Grain being sent on a ship...has a seal placed on the bag to guarantee that it is what it says it is.

A will must have seven seals placed on it as it or it is not legitimate.

**Has Jesus placed His seal on you? Are you guaranteed to possess what**

**you claim as proof of who you are in Christ?**

**Another question:**

**“How do we know that he is not just wanting our possessions or support?...He doesn’t even minister here in Corinth anymore.”**

**Paul’s answer:** **1 Corinthians 9:4-14**, “Don’t we have the right to food and drink? <sup>5</sup> Don’t we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord’s brothers and Cephas<sup>a</sup>? <sup>6</sup> Or is it only I and Barnabas who lack the right to not work for a living? <sup>7</sup> Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk? <sup>8</sup> Do I say this merely on human authority? Doesn’t the Law say the same thing? <sup>9</sup> For it is written in the Law of Moses: “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.”<sup>b</sup> Is it about oxen that God is concerned? <sup>10</sup> Surely he says this for us, doesn’t he? Yes, this was written for us, because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. <sup>11</sup> If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? <sup>12</sup> If others have this right of support from you, shouldn’t we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. <sup>13</sup> Don’t you know that those who serve in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? <sup>14</sup> In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.”

**“I have every right as a minister of the gospel of Christ (in whom I owe everything) to receive support from those in which I have ministered and counseled....but I will not require nor expect to receive anything from the churches in which I have preached.”**

**Paul uses ordinary human analogies to prove his point.**

- **The soldier does not provide his own rations; planter of the vineyard (farmer) shares in the fruits/vegetables.**
- **The shepherd of the flock gets his food from the flock.**
- **The ox who works the threshing machine is not muzzled...but is allowed to eat the grain (Deut. 25:4)**
- **The priest who serves in the temple receives his share of the offerings.**

**There are five main offerings:**

1. **The Burnt-Offering** (the priest receives the hides)
2. **The Sin-Offering** (only the fat is burned...the priest receives the flesh).
3. **The Trespass-Offering** (only the fat burned...the priest gets the flesh)
4. **The Meat-Offering** - consisted of flour, wine and oil...and only a small portion of the animal (the priest received the rest).

5. **The Peace-Offering** - the fat and the entrails were burned; the priest received the breast and the right shoulder. The rest went to the worshipper.

**The priest also received the first fruits...and the tithe.**

The tithe (1/10) went to the Levites; but the tithe of the tithe was given to the priest.

**Note: Needless to say....the priest had the opportunity to eat like a king.**  
Many died early deaths due to eating too much meat.

**Paul did not want the Church to think he was in the ministry for profit... He would do nothing that would bring discredit on the gospel or hinder it. No one could ever say to Paul, “I cannot hear what you say for listening to what you are.”**

**Question from Congregation:**

“But....every man that is worth something is paid for his knowledge....you cannot be genuine if you don’t ask for pay. Why are you so concerned with us if you are not wanting something for it?”

The Greeks despised manual labor. They felt there were two classes of people...the cultured and the uncultured; the “haves and have nots”; the ones to be served and the ones who serve.

**Paul knew where he had been...and he knew where he was going....in this life and the life to come!**

**Paul’s answer, 1 Corinthians 9:15-23**, “Don’t we have the right to food and drink? <sup>5</sup> Don’t we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord’s brothers and Cephas<sup>[a]</sup>? <sup>6</sup> Or is it only I and Barnabas who lack the right to not work for a living? <sup>7</sup> Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk? <sup>8</sup> Do I say this merely on human authority? Doesn’t the Law say the same thing? <sup>9</sup> For it is written in the Law of Moses: “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.”<sup>[b]</sup> Is it about oxen that God is concerned? <sup>10</sup> Surely he says this for us, doesn’t he? Yes, this was written for us, because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. <sup>11</sup> If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? <sup>12</sup> If others have this right of support from you, shouldn’t we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. <sup>13</sup> Don’t you know that those who serve in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? <sup>14</sup> In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.”

**There is kind of an outline of Paul’s conception of his ministry in this passage as he passionately answers this question and criticism:**

**(1) He regarded his ministry as a privilege.**

- The one thing he would not do is take money for working for Christ. This was Paul...and he had just made it clear to them that there was reason to pay the preacher for giving of time, talents and the gift of light brought to them in counsel.
- Paul felt in was an opportunity for service.
- A privilege to serve others for God's sake.

**(2) He regarded his ministry as a duty.**

- Paul did not choose this ministry...it had chosen him (he could no more stop doing it than he could stop breathing).

**(3) In spite of the fact that he would take no payment, Paul knew that he received daily a great reward.**

- The satisfaction of a job well done.
- What more can one ask for....than to have:
  - ✓ Mended one shattered life,
  - ✓ Restored one wanderer to the right way,
  - ✓ Healed one broken heart,
  - ✓ Brought one soul to Christ.

A reward than cannot be measured in financial terms, but its joy is beyond all measurement.

**(4) Paul's method of ministry was to become all things to all men.**

- The art of accommodating himself to others....seeing their point of view and being able to converse in their language.
- Paul would not patronize people; he made every effort to understand them...and talk their language.
- He worked alongside them.

**Paul....the master missionary, who won thousands for Christ, saw how essential it was to become all things to all men.**

**Our first essential is...is to know Christ.**

**We love our family, our country, even ourselves! But, our first love should be for the Christ who gave us eternal life.**

**Question from the congregation.... "Why is it so important that we drive ourselves crazy by trying to do good and not enjoying it? We are Christians...but we are suffering by not being able to take part in the activities here in Corinth!"**

**Paul's answer:** **1 Corinthians 9:24-27**, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.  
<sup>25</sup> Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.  
<sup>26</sup> Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a

boxer beating the air.<sup>27</sup> No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

**He insists to those Corinthians who wanted to take the easy way that no man will ever get anywhere without the sternest self-discipline.**

Because Corinth was where the Isthmian games were held (a great athletic event held in their beautiful stadium), Paul used the analogy of an athlete who has to train with intensity to win his contest. And the athlete went through this rigorous training and self-discipline to win a crown of laurel leaves that will wilt in a few days.

**How much more....should the Christian discipline himself to win the crown which is eternal life.**

**Paul's philosophy of life is stated here.**

• **Life is a battle.**

- ✓ A flabby soldier cannot win battles;
- ✓ A slack trainer cannot win races or fights.

**We must regard ourselves always as men engaged upon a campaign...pressing onwards to a goal.**

• **To win the fight and to be victorious in the race demands discipline.**

- ✓ Discipline our body...keep fit to stay in the race.
- ✓ Discipline our mind...we must place in it wholesome and worthwhile knowledge and reason...to counter the evil one with scripture and steadfast truth, and unyielding faith.
- ✓ Discipline our soul....facing life's sorrows with endurance; facing trials (even temptations) with the strength God gives; facing disappointments with courage.

• **We cannot save others unless we master ourselves....**

**The Greek's first rule of life was "Man know thyself."**

- ✓ We cannot serve others until we have mastered ourselves.
- ✓ We cannot teach what we do not know.  
We cannot bring others to Christ until we ourselves have found Him.
- **We must know our goal....and know the worth of our goal.**
- ✓ Aiming and having a mark to achieve.  
Too many people are aimlessly flaunting around.....they are drifting anywhere instead of going somewhere.
- ✓ Just to have a goal of going anywhere....is to be certain that you will go nowhere.  
The difference is the answer being "no where" or "now here."
- ✓ The appeal of Jesus was, "look what you are missing if you don't take my way." He knew what the creation (God's creation) was going to miss if they did not receive the free gift....

**It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!**

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