

OVERCOMING DYSFUNCTIONS OF A CHURCH
A SERIES BASED ON 1ST CORINTHIANS



DIRTY LAUNDRY

Week 1 - Division

Week 2 - Immorality

Week 3 - Legalism

Week 4 - Individualism

Week 5 - Defection

***WHAT IF WE LOOK AT THESE ISSUES THROUGH
THE LENS OF THE GOSPEL?***

OVERCOMING DYSFUNCTIONS OF A CHURCH

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¹ Now regarding your question about food that has been offered to idols. Yes, we know that “we all have knowledge” about this issue. **But while knowledge makes us feel important, it is love that strengthens the church.** ² Anyone who claims to know all the answers doesn’t really know very much. ³ But the person who loves God is the one whom God recognizes.

1 CORINTHIANS 8

POSITIONS ON FOOD

**“Weak”
“Legalists”**

Those who eat idol
meat are entering
into idolatry.



**“Strong”
“Liberals”**

Idols are not real.
Therefore, I can eat
whatever I want.

⁴ So, what about eating meat that has been offered to idols? Well, we all know that an idol is not really a god and that there is only one God. ⁵ There may be so-called gods both in heaven and on earth, and some people actually worship many gods and many lords. ⁶ But for us: There is one God, the Father, by whom all things were created, and for whom we live. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created, and through whom we live.

1 CORINTHIANS 8

⁷ However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. **⁸ Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.** **⁹ But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.** **¹⁰ For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols?** **¹¹ And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died.** **¹² Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.** **¹³ Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.**

1 CORINTHIANS 8

4 Don't we have the right to live in your homes and share your meals?
5 Don't we have the right to bring a believing wife with us as the other apostles and the Lord's brothers do, and as Peter does? **6** Or is it only Barnabas and I who have to work to support ourselves? **7** What soldier has to pay his own expenses? What farmer plants a vineyard and doesn't have the right to eat some of its fruit? What shepherd cares for a flock of sheep and isn't allowed to drink some of the milk? **8** Am I expressing merely a human opinion, or does the law say the same thing? **9 For the law of Moses says, "You must not muzzle an ox to keep it from eating as it treads out the grain."** Was God thinking only about oxen when he said this? **10** Wasn't he actually speaking to us? Yes, it was written for us, so that the one who plows and the one who threshes the grain might both expect a share of the harvest.

1 CORINTHIANS 9

¹⁷ If I were doing this on my own initiative, I would deserve payment. But I have no choice, for God has given me this sacred trust. ¹⁸ What then is my pay? It is the opportunity to preach the Good News without charging anyone. That's why I never demand my rights when I preach the Good News. ¹⁹ **Even though I am a free man with no master, I have become a slave to all people to bring many to Christ.** ²⁰ **When I was with the Jews, I lived like a Jew to bring the Jews to Christ.** When I was with those who follow the Jewish law, I too lived under that law. Even though I am not subject to the law, I did this so I could bring to Christ those who are under the law. ²¹ **When I am with the Gentiles who do not follow the Jewish law,[e] I too live apart from that law so I can bring them to Christ.** But I do not ignore the law of God; I obey the law of Christ. ²² **When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness,** for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some. ²³ I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings.

1 CORINTHIANS 9

¹² If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall. ¹³ The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. ¹⁴ So, my dear friends, **flee from the worship of idols.** ¹⁵ You are reasonable people. Decide for yourselves if what I am saying is true. ¹⁶ When we bless the cup at the Lord's Table, aren't we sharing in the blood of Christ? And when we break the bread, aren't we sharing in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ And though we are many, we all eat from one loaf of bread, showing that we are one body. ¹⁸ Think about the people of Israel. Weren't they united by eating the sacrifices at the altar?

1 CORINTHIANS 10

¹⁹ What am I trying to say? Am I saying that food offered to idols has some significance, or that idols are real gods? ²⁰ No, not at all. I am saying that these sacrifices are offered to demons, not to God. And I don't want you to participate with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and from the cup of demons, too. You cannot eat at the Lord's Table and at the table of demons, too. ²² What? Do we dare to rouse the Lord's jealousy? Do you think we are stronger than he is? ²³ **You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is beneficial. ²⁴ Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others.**

1 CORINTHIANS 10

²⁵ So you may eat any meat that is sold in the marketplace without raising questions of conscience. ²⁶ For “the earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.” ²⁷ If someone who isn’t a believer asks you home for dinner, accept the invitation if you want to. Eat whatever is offered to you without raising questions of conscience. ²⁸ (But suppose someone tells you, “This meat was offered to an idol.” Don’t eat it, out of consideration for the conscience of the one who told you. ²⁹ It might not be a matter of conscience for you, but it is for the other person.) For why should my freedom be limited by what someone else thinks?

1 CORINTHIANS 10

³¹ So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. ³² Don't give offense to Jews or Gentiles or the church of God. ³³ I, too, try to please everyone in everything I do. I don't just do what is best for me; I do what is best for others so that many may be saved.

1 CORINTHIANS 10



THE ONE PRINCIPLE
FREEDOM WITHIN THE
LIMITS OF LOVE

HOW CAN WE APPLY THIS PRINCIPLE TODAY?

1. Instead of asking what is allowed, ask what is beneficial.
2. Instead of being legalistic, we should not judge another brother as long as they do not violate their own conscience or someone else's.
3. Instead of being concerned of our own good, give up our rights for our brothers and sisters.

²⁰ When you meet together, you are not really interested in the Lord's Supper.

²¹ **For some of you hurry to eat your own meal without sharing with others. As a result, some go hungry while others get drunk.** ²² What? Don't you have your own homes for eating and drinking? Or do you really want to disgrace God's church and shame the poor? What am I supposed to say? Do you want me to praise you? Well, I certainly will not praise you for this! ²³ For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread ²⁴ and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

1 CORINTHIANS 11

²⁵ In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it.”

²⁶ For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord’s death until he comes again. ²⁷ So anyone who eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily is guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ **That is why you should examine yourself before eating the bread and drinking the cup.** ²⁹ For if you eat the bread or drink the cup without honoring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God’s judgment upon yourself.

1 CORINTHIANS 11