



freedom

1 Corinthians 8-11

SCPC term 3 2008

sunday 31st august 2008

study 6 FREE TO SAVE 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1

KEY VERSE FOR SERIES: "nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others" 1 **Corinthians 10:24**

In this passage, Paul draws together his teaching on how to treat food sacrificed to idols, a subject first introduced back in chapter 8. He shows that the broader concern is how our actions effect each other—the gospel is always relevant: Jesus came not to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many. This is the example that we are to follow and that we are to encourage others to see and follow in us (1 Cor11:1)!

In the talk (just to keep things fresh!), Wade is going to focus on the angle of glory presented in 10:31. The issue of whether to serve ourselves or serve each other is in the end an issue of whose glory we're living for. If we're living for God's glory then we'll seek the good others, so that they will be saved and built up in Christ. This is how God is glorified.

some notes on questions

Q1-2. We've seen this idea rear its ugly head before in 6:12. In verse 23 Paul focuses on the effect of our actions rather than on the rightness or wrongness of the actions themselves. In verse 24 he sharpens his point—what is the effect of our actions ON OTHERS?! It is very important to notice that Paul doesn't say "nobody should ONLY seek his own good" but "nobody should seek his own good, BUT (i.e. instead) the good of others".

NOTE: in the NIV, Philippians 2:4 says "Each of you should look not *only* to your own interests, but *also* to the interests of others." The "only" and the "also" probably should be left out!

Q3. The bottom line is that its OK to eat (or drink) anything provided it is done with thanksgiving to God (since it belongs to him) and that no-one we're eating with has a problem with it. To help you understand God's view on idols and idolatry and also of the glory of God, have a read of Psalm 24 which Paul quotes in verse 26.

Q4. Some of the details here are not crystal clear (such as the identity of the person who raises the issue in verse 28—believer or unbeliever), but the main point is clear—if someone else has a problem with you eating food sacrificed to idols we are free not to eat for their good. I can't help thinking though that this would also be a great opportunity to explain to an unbeliever what true gospel freedom looks like!

Q5. Here Paul harks back to chapter 9, reminding the Corinthians and us that our actions should be for the good of many—that they may be saved. This should be our over-riding concern and the one that determines how we should act.

Q6. Jesus is our great example of someone who ALWAYS chose to act not for his own good but for the good of others—that many would be saved! We have also seen that Paul follows Christ's example closely and so urges all Christians to do the same.

Q7-9. These questions give us a great opportunity to focus on MISSION, both individually and corporately. Why not take this opportunity to discuss ways you can support each other in MISSION.