



# freedom

1 Corinthians 8-11

SCPC term 3 2008

## sunday 14th september 2008

### study 8 FREE TO REMEMBER 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

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

We saw last week that beneath the presenting issue of problems in Corinth with headcoverings, the critical issue was the dishonouring of Jesus. This week we similarly find that while the presenting issue is problems with the Lord's Supper, the critical issue is once again the dishonouring of Jesus. In this way we see that the two halves of chapter 11, while looking on the surface to address quite different topics—actually have the same underlying concern. Indeed, Paul is still preaching Christ and him crucified—as he has been since the opening verses of the letter—and as he stated in 2:2—is what he is *always* preaching. Every issue Paul has tackled in this long and rich letter has been brought back to the one theme and problem—the Corinthians have forgotten the cross. But this is amazing—they have even forgotten it in the very meal Jesus gave for the explicit purpose of remembering it! But let's be careful here, once again, to not settle for recognizing the blindness of the Corinthian church, but to examine ourselves (11:28) that we might uncover and repent of our own blindspots in forgetting Jesus.

#### some notes on questions

Q1. Paul has called them to follow his example in seeking the "good" of others (10:33). But he can't even find a single word on their conduct of the Lord's Supper that fits such "goodness".

Q2. As we have seen since chapter 1 ("I follow...") and in chapter 6 ("everything for ME...") the Corinthians pre-occupation with themselves has obscured Jesus right out of the picture. It's *me* church not *his* church and a *me* supper not *his* supper—the Lord's Supper.

Q3. Just as the men (as we saw last week) were parading their social status as they prayed and prophesied in church, so also in the meal the haves and have-nots were segregated in the Lord's Supper! It's hard to fathom such blatant disregard for each other—but let's be careful here. Sins of 'omission' (the good we fail to do for others—rather than commission—the wrong we actually do) are harder to spot—because you can be doing "nothing" and be doing absolutely the wrong thing. Our challenge will be to identify such sinful attitudes in our lives: perhaps there is much obvious "good" we should be doing for each other that we are failing to do.

Q4. Jesus' death! It's all about the cross. A church that truly remembers the cross will never be a 'me' church but a 'Jesus' church—and it will never be divided along lines of social status or anything about us—because in the cross we are all saved the same way—empty handed, clinging to the cross. The cross is God's 'level'.

Q5-6. When we remember Jesus and his death on the cross we will have a right view of ourselves as sinners forgiven by him and a right view of each other as also forgiven by him. In short, when we recognize and cherish Jesus' body in his death (broken for us) we will recognize and cherish his body the church. If we persist in forgetting/not recognizing the cross as the place our judgment was taken—we are at risk of condemnation (v32) because only the cross saves.

Q7-9. Focus on question 8—the Lord's Supper has often been seen as a very 'private' thing where we reflect individually... while self-examination is important, how do we need to be careful from this passage to make sure we are thinking of others in this meal? In question 9, consider the role of proclamation' in our remembering of the cross (verse 26) especially as we build to a year of mission.