

Sunday, June 18, 2017—I Corinthians 10:31-33: Giving None Offense (The Church of God?)

Introduction/Review

- Last Sunday during our time together we studied verses 24 through 30. In this section, we saw Paul giving particular instructions regarding the eating of meat offered in sacrifice unto idols and the conscience.
- This morning I would like to conclude our study of chapter 10 by looking at verses 31-33.

I Corinthians 10:31

- **Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.**
- Verse 31 is the first verse of the last paragraph found in chapter 10. As such it serves the purpose of brining Paul’s teachings expressed in the passage to a conclusion.
- When confronted with food scarified to idols, wine, or any other questionable or uncomfortable situation what should a believer do? Follow the course of action that will bring glory to God.
 - Ephesians 1:12
 - Philippians 1:11
 - Colossians 3:17
- In the context Paul is emphasizing the fact that a believer’s action ought to have a positive and beneficial effect upon other people. As we saw last Sunday this includes both believers and unbelievers.
 - I Corinthians 10:23-24—remember that Paul’s decision-making model places a premium on seeking “another’s wealth.”
- I Corinthians 10:31—these are not always easy considerations. Therefore, Paul’s conclusion “whatsoever ye do” would include eating or not eating in the context but doing “all to the glory of God.”

I Corinthians 10:32

- **Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:**
- *Give none offence*—the verb “give” is a present imperative. In other words, Paul is commanding the Corinthians and by extension us to not give offence to three groups of people.

- In the context, what is a believer supposed to be mindful not to offend? Another man's conscience.
 - I Corinthians 10:25-29
- In seeking “another’s wealth” believers are to be sensitive with respect to unbelievers as well as believers thus Paul’s threefold division of humanity in verse 32: Jews, Gentiles, and the church of God.
 - I Corinthians 8:12-13—these verses deal with not offending the conscience of believer i.e., a member of the church of God in I Cor. 10:32.
- *Gentiles*—is a translation of the Greek word *Hellēn*, which occurs 27 times in 26 verses in the Greek text supporting the KJB. Of these 27 occurrences of *Hellēn* it is rendered as “Greek(s)” 20 times and “Gentile(s)” 7 times. The word refers to either of the following 1) a Greek by nationality or 2) all nations that are not Jews. In either case the word is used to refer to non-Jewish persons.
 - John 7:35
 - Romans 1:16
 - Romans 2:9-10
 - Romans 10:12
- The idea that a “Greek” is a special kind or type of Gentile has caused much confusion in the body of Christ in recent days.
- *Church of God*—is a reference to the body of Christ. Some who ascribe a particular/unique meaning to the word “Greek” as opposed to “Gentile” have also taught that the phrase “church of God” is a reference to the “Little Flock” and not the church the body of Christ. This argument is made on account of Galatians 1:13
 - Galatians 1:13—in this context Paul is recounting his activities in Acts 7-9 before he got saved. Did Paul persecute the “church of God” that was in existence at that time? Yes. Was that “church” which he persecuted at that time the “Little Flock” or the believing remnant of Israel spoken about in the gospels? Yes. Does this mean that every time Paul uses the phrase the “church of God” he is speaking about or to the “Little Flock?” NO!
- Some appear, however, to be saying “Yes.” Some even appear to be arguing that the Corinthian epistles are written to the “Little Flock.”

- I Corinthians 1:2
- II Corinthians 1:1
- II Peter 3:15-16—is used to close the loop on this argument. According to those making this argument, Paul wrote unto Peter’s audience i.e., “the Little Flock” in verse 15. The phrase “church of God” is used in Galatians 1:13 to refer to the “Little Flock.” Therefore, Paul wrote I & II Corinthians to the “Little Flock” i.e., the “church of God.”
- First, this line of argumentation confuses what Paul may have written to Peter’s audience with Holy Spirit inspired “scripture.” We already know from our studies of I Corinthians that Paul wrote other things that were not inspired and were therefore not included in the canon.
 - I Corinthians 5:9
- A second problem with this line of argumentation is that it applies a meaning to the phrase “church of God” that breaks down when applied to other verses containing that phrase.
 - Acts 20:28—was the church at Ephesus a “Little Flock” assembly as well? Paul calls them the “church of God.”
 - I Timothy 3:5 (15)—is Paul instructing Timothy in how to identify leadership in the “Little Flock?”
- The phrase the “church of God” needs to be understood within the context it is used. Paul uses the phrase to refer to both the body of Christ as well as the Jewish kingdom church i.e., the “Little Flock” that he persecuted during the early Acts period before his conversion. The context determines the particular usage.
 - I Corinthians 15:9—in this case Paul is referring to the believing church of Acts 7-9 that he persecuted i.e., the “Little Flock.”
- I Corinthians 10:32—Paul wrote I & II Corinthians to the body of Christ i.e., the “church of God” of this dispensation. In summation, believers should not do anything which would hinder the Jews from trusting the finished word of Christ. Likewise, our lifestyle among the Gentiles should be such that it will attract them to Christ. Lastly, our behavior before believers should be to encourage and edify them.

I Corinthians 10:33

- **Even as I please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking mine own profit, but the [profit] of many, that they may be saved.**

- This verse concludes the thought on what Paul has been discussing since chapter 9 and what he has been seeking to illustrate in chapter 10.
 - I Corinthians 9:19-27
 - I Corinthians 10:1
- Paul sought to keep his body in subjection by not seeking his own profit but the profit of many that they may be saved.