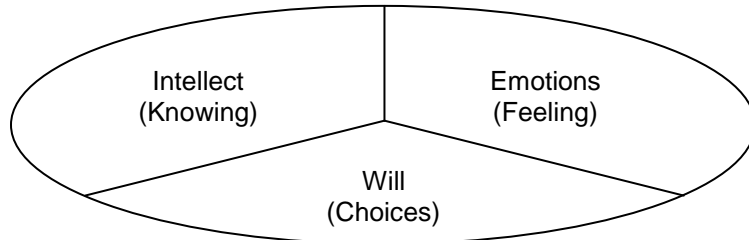


Part 7: Knowing the Way of Love

INTRODUCTION – Anatomy of Love

1 Corinthians 13; Romans 5:8; John 3:16; 1 John 3:16



Love is...

DINE IN – Now About Meat Sacrificed to Idols...

1 Corinthians 8-10

THINGS TO NOTICE...

- Paul uses an A-B-A structure, with chapter 9 being an extended treatment of two illustrations (himself and Israel).
- Three situations are addressed: 1) eating meat at temples, 2) buying meat at the market, and 3) eating meat when a guest in someone's home.
- Knowledge (*gnosis*) of grace gives some the delusion of independent authority/freedom/rights/power of choice (*exousia*) that can destroy others if not applied with love (*agape*).
- Paul hesitates to legislate; he convinces through reason and inspires through example.
- There ARE ethical absolutes, but they are not the focus of love. Proactively caring for each other is Paul's focus, which will lead to right behaviour.
- Paul will eventually prohibit a specific behaviour (dining at idol temples – see **10:14-22**), but he first uses the situation to teach the way of love.
- Paul considers it possible to “ruin/destroy” a Christian brother or sister. This is the same word he uses elsewhere to refer to complete destruction, whether physical or eternal (**1:18; 2 Corinthians 2:15; etc**).

- Again we see how Paul's teaching fits with Jesus' teaching—that we sin against Christ when we sin against others (**Matthew 25:45**).
- You are never seized by a uniquely strong temptation. You can resist. God has guaranteed this.
- Fleeing temptation and following other believers is the dual-directional solution God provides.
- Christ-followers grow best through imitation. Therefore, surround yourself with people who will lead you toward Jesus.

TAKE OUT – I'll Have That to Go Please

Knowledge and love support each other. Love without knowledge is sentiment. Knowledge without love is hypocrisy. Our goal should be to grow in both together.

CONCLUSION – Knowing Love OR Loving Knowledge?

Love or knowledge—
which are you stronger/weaker in?

Q & Eh? Text 647.330.2789 or email ask@themeetinghouse.ca

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS

Warming Up...

1. C.S. Lewis wrote, “Love, in the Christian sense, does not mean an emotion. It is a state not of the feelings but of the will; that state of the will which we have naturally about ourselves, and must learn to have about other people.” Talk about how Jesus' teaching and example challenge our culture's approach to love?

Look to the Book...

2. Review the sermon notes first, then read **1 Corinthians 8**. a) What verse or idea stands out to you? Why? b) What could be some possible contemporary equivalents to the Corinthians' ethical issue of dining at pagan temples or eating food sacrificed to idols? c) It seems the Corinthian Christians were so secure in their knowledge that God is all powerful and loves them so much, that they were in denial about other crucial realities, like spiritual battle (**10:20**), the importance of fighting temptation (**10:12-14**), God's judgment (**10:6-11**) and the possibility of spiritual backsliding (**8:11**). Do you think you might tend to avoid any of the same teaching as the Corinthians did? What could be some drawbacks to that?

So What?...

3. Chapters 8-10 contains important ethical principles such as: Knowledge puffs up but love builds up; don't let your freedom cause another to stumble; sacrifice your rights to win others for Christ; every temptation comes with a way out; whatever you do, do it for God's glory; Christians grow best through imitation, etc. Brainstorm: Talk about ways you can apply any of these principles to situations or decisions that are or might become part of your life.

The Meeting House | Sunday, April 3/10, 2011 | Bruxy Cavey

Notes are available online at themeetinghouse.ca/teaching