

ALRIGHT AND WRONG AT THE SAME TIME

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: When is something alright to do for a Christian, yet it could have negative or bad effects on somebody who is watching for that person watching doesn't think Christians should be doing what he/she sees the Christian doing? So, what should the Christian do? It's alright to do it, yet.....? Paul was asked a question like that and he gave an answer that is still relevant for today's Christians.

I. "HARMLESS" PRACTICES TOOK PLACE IN CORINTH

1. People in Corinth would bring animal sacrifices to be offered to idols.
 - Part of the meat of the animals would be used in the sacrifice and the rest of the meat was usually sold at the public market.
2. Parts of the pagan temples were available for public use and therefore were rented out to the public for weddings, parties and community social life.
3. Churches today sometimes rent their family life centers/fellowship halls to non church members for birthday parties, weddings, anniversaries, etc.

II. THE "HARMLESS" PRACTICES CREATED PROBLEMS FOR CHRISTIANS

1. Christians did not recognize the idols nor the idol worship and therefore some had a problem with buying meat at the public market that had been offered to idols.
2. They also had a problem with attending a social event being held in part of the pagan temple, especially if any recognition was given to the partial idol of the temple.
3. What were they to do? Would their buying meat offered to idols or attending a social function in a pagan temple offend God?
4. What about today's times? Can a Christian attend a social function in a place of "ill repute?" What about being asked to financially support some charity that is unbiblical and attending a community affair where liquor is served and dancing is done and the language is sometimes a bit profane?
5. Strong, knowledgeable Christians know that there is nothing wrong with buying meat once offered to idols, nor in attending a social function in a questionable place however weaker Christians are often unsure and have questions about Christians being seen participating in such things.

III. PAUL'S ADVICE APPROPRIATE THEN AS WELL AS NOW

1. It's easy for some Christians to become judges of others when they think that they are more "spiritual" and have more biblical knowledge and therefore condemn anybody who they think is less of a Christian than they are. Yet these are the "weakest" of all Christians.

2. Paul pointed out that love, especially for the new or weaker believer outweighs the wants, desires of the stronger Christian, for he/she would not want to do or say anything that might cause the weaker Christian to become even weaker, even though there was nothing biblically wrong with what he/she might be wanting to do.
3. The stronger Christian should put the weaker Christian's needs ahead of his/her own, even though he/she had every right to eat the meat offered to idols, or to attend an event in a pagan temple, the needs of the weaker Christian to not be tempted or confused in what is right or wrong should take priority.
 - Someone once said, "Sometimes we have to give up our right to be right in order to get right with God..."

CONCLUSION:

1. Today, in our country of America, we don't have to worry about buying meat that has been offered to idols nor about attending some social event in a pagan temple.
2. There are many things mature Christians can participate in without harming their faith but might harm their witness to the weaker ones.
3. There are many things that are alright for the Christian to do, however those same things can be wrong to do if they will affect a weaker Christian negatively.
4. Christian, take a good look at your activities. Is there anything you are doing that might cause a weak Christian or even an unbeliever to question your profession of faith?