

1 Corinthians: The Body of Christ vs. A Body in Crisis
New Pilgrim Baptist Church Bible Study
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Unity Over Worship (1 Cor 8-11)
“Putting God and Family First” 1 Cor 8

Historical Background

We have to be reminded that Christianity was new in a world filled with polytheistic worship. It was part of the community culture and part of the lives of those who worshipped idols. It was as normal as brushing one’s teeth and taking a bath. But Christianity called for these people to leave all of these gods behind, to worship a new way, to live with a new pattern. This involved giving up the food that was slaughtered by the priests of the false gods meant for sacrifice to idols. The priests sacrificed the food meant for the various deities and then would serve that food to others. Paul warns that those who left the idol’s temple and sees a believer eating food that had been previously offered to a false god might feel compelled to go back and worship the god he left behind.

- **Love trumps knowledge (vv. 1-3)**

Paul begins with the line, “now concerning food offered to idols” or literally “idol things.” He attacks the arrogant sense of “knowledge.” That is, some people said they were able to eat idol food because they “knew” that idols were imaginary. But he corrects this sense of knowledge and says that what matters is whether or not we know God and, more importantly, the real God knows us. We are known by God when we love God above all else.

- **The reality of idols and people’s perceptions of them (vv. 4-5)**

People believed in the idols they worshipped. Whether they exist or not, the fact that people believe in them requires recognition about them to prevent issues.

- **There is only one God and one Lord (v. 6)**

There *is* only one God and one Lord in reality. God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ are the real God who rule heaven and earth.

- **Because God is in charge and in control, and the family of God matters most, stay away from idol food and consider your brother or sister’s weakness before you consider your own desires (vv. 7-13)**

Paul makes it clear, we are to put our worship of God above all else which involves considering the feelings and thoughts of others before you consider your freedom to eat idol food.