

Monday Quotes



Grain

“Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?” –Unknown

Field

⁴ Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” ⁵ Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords— ⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. ⁷ It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸ “Food will not bring us close to God.”^[a] We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹ But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰ For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹ So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed.^[b] ¹² But when you thus sin against members of your family,^[c] and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling,^[d] I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them^[e] to fall.” 1 Corinthians 8

Thoughts

How Paul explores this question when discussing a controversial topic in Corinth: Christians eating food that had been offered to idols. Some Corinthian Christians claimed it did not matter. They knew they were saved by God’s grace and felt no connection between the food and the supposed gods it was offered to. Paul realized there were other Christians in the same community who understood eating the food offered to idols as synonymous with worshipping them. To those who felt free to eat the food, Paul in so many words said, “Hey, spiritual hot shots, your community is completely divided over this issue. Would it hurt you to eat something else for the sake of love and unity?”

Next Sunday, Paul’s letter is coupled with a reading from St. Mark, in which Jesus is casting out demons. Jesus’ voice was necessary and clear. We’re also called to exorcize demons of pride, hatred, and bias. Needed speech directing us to the Holy can be soothing, but sometimes offensive. However, Paul seems to be warning about how we exercise our freedom and public voices to deal with adiaphora, matters not worth our energy. You can ask Theologian Google more about adiaphorism and Christianity.

What do we take in for the sake of unity? When do we choke on our silence? When have we crossed the line between speaking our truth and being antagonistic? There, of course, are no carte blanche answers. By grace, we are called to discern what it means to be freed in Christ, so that our unexpected interactions and our long-term strategies are based in God’s love. Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy