



## SURRENDER YOUR RIGHTS

OCTOBER 1, 2023



## WORSHIP

God is Great, House of the Lord, Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me, Build My Life - Christ Be Magnified Medley

## WELCOME

In your observation, what are some of the most popular or common "rights" that people fight for nowadays?

## WORD

**1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-9, 13**  
 (ALSO READ 1 CORINTHIANS 9)

Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies. <sup>2</sup> If anyone supposes that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know; <sup>3</sup> but if anyone loves God, he is known by Him. <sup>4</sup> Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one. <sup>5</sup> For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, <sup>6</sup> yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him. <sup>7</sup> However not all men have this knowledge; but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. <sup>8</sup> But food will not commend us to God; we are neither the worse if we do not eat, nor the better if we do eat. <sup>9</sup> But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak...<sup>13</sup> Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble.

Many people are "allergic" when they hear the words, **SURRENDER YOUR RIGHTS**. When you go online, you will see people fighting for "my rights", including the right to "cancel" others. Surrendering our rights mean that we are choosing to love God and others in our response even if it looks like we are on the losing end. Sometimes, because of our knowledge, we feel we have the right to be right. We surrender our rights to:

**1. To Build Others Up (1 Corinthians 8:1-3)**

Paul talks about this where he says that knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies (**1 Corinthians 8:1**). He didn't say that knowledge is bad, but there's a danger that it makes you proud. Knowledge is important, and Paul writes about it ("do you not know...") in several places all in **1 Corinthians**. The wrong kind of knowledge leads to arrogance which tears others down. While the right kind of knowledge leads to love and building others up (**1 Timothy 1:5, 1 Corinthians 13:1-2**). Our knowledge of God should transform us and help others become more like Christ. To those who will listen (to knowledge), **TEACH IT**. To those who will argue, **SEEK TO UNDERSTAND**. To those who will disagree, **LEARN TO BE GRACIOUS**. If you love God, what really matters more than knowledge, is that God knows you (**1 Corinthians 8:3**).

**2. To Protect Others (1 Corinthians 8:4-13)**

Sometimes, because of our maturity in Christ, we feel like we have the right to do things that are not necessarily sinful but may make others stumble. In Paul's time, there were three practices that they were debating: Jewish holidays, drinking of wine and eating meat that was sacrificed to idols (**v.4**). One group felt that if they ate meat sacrificed to idols, they are worshipping the idol. Paul explained that there is really no idol, or other gods because there is only one true God (**v.5-6**). Today we also have questions on what is okay or not okay for Christians (drink alcohol, what to wear, what to watch, or listen to, etc.). For some believers, their conscience is "weak" and may stumble when you do certain things when they are around (**v.7-8**). So those of us who feel the liberty to do some of those things, we need to make sure we don't cause others to stumble (**v.9-10**). Knowledge, if not used with love, can destroy and we sin against Christ (**v.11-12**). To protect my brothers and sisters in Christ, if an action causes them to stumble, others may but I may not (**v.13**).

The kind of person with a "weak conscience" that Paul was talking about is less mature in the faith. They feel easily guilty and condemned. Those who are more mature have more flexibility; they don't mind "gray areas" but the weak don't like gray areas (it's always black and white). It leans towards being more legalistic, but the strong don't feel the need to evaluate everything in that way. There's a danger too for the strong because their mindset can seem licentious. We all need to be careful and grow in maturity! The weak needs to mature, and the mature needs to "carry" the weak (**Romans 14:1-3**). In churches, we need this guideline: "In essentials, unity, in non-essentials, liberty, in all things, charity and love" (St. Augustine/John Wesley/Greg Laurie).

# 4Ws WHAT'S WRONG WITH US?



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### WORD

#### 3. For the Gospel (1 Corinthians 9)

Sometimes, because of our service to God, we feel we have the right to something. Paul says that he serves God, and he has certain rights, but he needed to defend himself from those who were examining him (1 Corinthians 9:3-6). Paul gives five arguments why he has rights as an apostle: 1-Common practice (1 Corinthians 9:7), 2-Scriptural precept (1 Corinthians 9:8-10), 3-Intrinsic justice (1 Corinthians 9:11-12) 4-Jewish custom (1 Corinthians 9:13) and 5-Christ's command (1 Corinthians 9:14). Paul argues that he has rights, but he surrendered them for the sake of the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:15). Paul was proud of the fact that he serves for free but has nothing to boast of and his reward is the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:16-18). Why is the gospel his reward? Paul is saying that God desires for His church to support His workers, but Paul is not after the support nor the prestige of being God's worker. He is compelled to share the gospel and to be able to do it for free is reward in and of itself. Paul surrendered his rights so that he may "win more" for the Lord (1 Corinthians 9:19-22). May we all be like Paul who does all things for the sake of the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:23)!

If the gospel is your starting point, you will grow in knowledge that leads to love. If the gospel is your starting point, you will be willing to let go of your rights to protect others. "A salvation that does not lead to service is no salvation at all" (Catherine Booth). If you have experienced the gospel, are you willing to do whatever it takes to bring that gospel to others?

What does the gospel mean to you? We can give hope to a world that is broken. There is nothing more powerful, meaningful, or helpful to a person's life than the gospel. If you come from a place that's broken, you understand that the gospel is about God's love, and how terrible sin is (Romans 6:23). Sin is so terrible, God gave (surrendered) His only Son to save us (John 3:16). Knowing that, isn't it such a small thing to surrender your rights? If you have become judgmental, if you have a hard time surrendering your rights, then you may have forgotten the gospel. The gospel is never meant to be just kept; if you receive it, you should never stop giving it away. The gospel is a gift we have the privilege of being used to give. It is the greatest gift, it is free, it is believing in Jesus (Romans 10:13).

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

##### 1. Self-Check.

What is the proper mindset for using knowledge to build others up?

##### 2. Setting It Right.

What are some things "others can" but you may choose not to do for the sake of protecting others' conscience? Is there something you need to change?

##### 3. Living It Out.

Who is God challenging you to share the gospel to and what will it cost to do it?

### WORKS

#### PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for those who feel that they must always fight for their rights, that they may know that God can be their Heavenly Father who will be the One to fight for them as they surrender their rights to Him. Share Christ to them and be an example of someone who surrenders your rights to build up others, protect them, and for the sake of the gospel.

### WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

#### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

#### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort, salvation for people who experienced devastating earthquake, grappling with floods and wildfires that destroyed homes and businesses, lost loved ones.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; conflict in African, East Asian and Middle East countries to stop.

#### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, leaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

#### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

#### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

### MEMORY VERSE

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 9:23

<sup>23</sup> I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.