

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR FREEDOM 1 Corinthians 8

What is even more precious than political liberty is spiritual freedom. That is the privileged position of every child of God. Liberty from condemnation...guilt...legalistic religion...expectations of perfection...powerful patterns of sin.

Galatians 5:1

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."

YOUR FREEDOM IN CHRIST IS BASED ON TRUTH AND GUIDED BY LOVE.
USE IT TO SERVE HIS PURPOSES.

The danger of knowledge: it can make one self-focused.

The action of love: it makes one others-focused.

PART I. YOUR SPIRITUAL FREEDOM IS BASED ON GOD'S TRUTH.

I. IDOLS ARE NOTHING. (v. 4a)

1 Samuel 5:3-4

³When the people of Ashdod rose early the next day, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the LORD! They took Dagon and put him back in his place. ⁴But the following morning when they rose, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the LORD! His head and hands had been broken off and were lying on the threshold; only his body remained."

Isaiah 44:12-20

¹²The blacksmith takes a tool and works with it in the coals; he shapes an idol with hammers, he forges it with the might of his arm. He gets hungry and loses his strength; he drinks no water and grows faint. ¹³The carpenter measures with a line and makes an outline with a marker; he roughs it out with chisels and marks it with compasses. He shapes it in the form of man, of man in all his glory, that it may dwell in a shrine. ¹⁴He cut down cedars, or perhaps took a cypress or oak. He let it grow among the trees of the forest, or planted a pine, and the rain made it grow. ¹⁵It is man's fuel for burning; some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows

down to it. ¹⁶Half of the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal, he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says, 'Ah! I am warm; I see the fire.' ¹⁷From the rest he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships. He prays to it and says, 'Save me; you are my god.' ¹⁸They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand. ¹⁹No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, 'Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?' ²⁰He feeds on ashes, a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, 'Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?'"

II. THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD. (vv. 4b-6)

He has revealed Himself distinctively to us:

1. He is our "Father."
 - 1) He is personal.
 - 2) He has authority.
2. He is the "one Lord, Jesus Christ."
 - 1) He is the God-man.
 - 2) He carries out God's purposes.

Implication: meat offered to idols is kosher!

CONCLUSION of PART I

1. God's truth defines everything else.
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
2. God's truth will set me free—or it will condemn me.

A basic principle: I practice what I believe to be true.