



1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1

“All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. For “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.” If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— I do not mean your conscience, but his. For why should my liberty be determined by someone else’s conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks? So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

"Despite this passage, the issue of personal freedom in matters that are non-essential, and the limitation of freedom for the sake of others, continue to haunt the church. Usually the battle rages over what constitutes non-essential. Conservatives on these issues simply fail to reckon with how “liberal” Paul’s own view really is. Hence Paul is seldom heard for the sake of traditional regulations. On the other hand, the assertion of freedom to the hurt of others is not the biblical view either. However, in most contemporary settings the “offended” are not unbelievers or new Christians, but those who tend to confuse their own regulations with the eternal will of God.”

Joel B. Green

“If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures...like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

C.S. Lewis