

I. Introduction — How Should We Face “Gray Areas”?

A story about differing opinions concerning a crying baby on a train.

We often face issues where it’s hard to say which side is right.

As Christians, what standards should we use to decide, and how should we act?

Today’s passage shows us a guiding principle through the relationship between **freedom, knowledge, and love**.

II. Review of the Previous Passage (8:1–6)

“Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” (v.1)

The Corinthian church was divided over the issue of meat offered to idols.

Those who had the correct knowledge—that idols are nothing—ate freely.

But Paul asked whether that knowledge might cause others to stumble.

More important than knowledge is **consideration born of love**.

III. Main Points

1) Caution in Using Knowledge (vv.7–9)

“Not everyone possesses this knowledge.” (v.7)

People have different standards based on their faith background and maturity.

A “weak conscience” means an immature understanding of faith.

Those accustomed to idol worship still carry past influences.

“Be careful that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak.” (v.9)

→ The exercise of freedom must be **limited by love**.

2) Misuse of Knowledge and Its Consequences (vv.10–12)

When the “knowledgeable” Christian eats in an idol’s temple,

a “weak” believer may misunderstand and compromise with idolatry.

This can lead to spiritual ruin or loss of faith.

“When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.” (v.12)

Example — Smoking or drinking:

Though not directly forbidden, we refrain for the sake of others’ faith.

Example of Person A and Person B:

Small actions can influence someone’s understanding of faith.

→ Our freedom should serve to **help others grow in faith**.

3) Paul's Resolution (v.13)

"If what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again."

For Paul, a Jew, abstaining from meat was a great sacrifice,
yet he prioritized **love and concern** above personal rights.

The goal of right knowledge is not **self-justification**,
but to live in **Christ's love** and **build up the Church**.

We must avoid legalism, yet let love control our freedom.

→ "Knowledge + Love" = A mature walk of faith.

IV. Conclusion — Using Freedom Through Love

Our words and actions are always being watched.

New believers and children learn by observing mature Christians.

Before asserting our rights, ask:

"Will this action cause someone to stumble?"

"Will this choice help my brother or sister grow?"

Self-centered freedom can become a sin against Christ.

Christ gave up His own freedom to save us.

→ We, too, must learn to **relinquish our rights for love's sake**.

V. Application

"Love builds up." (v.1)

Knowledge and freedom become blessings only when guided by love.

In the fellowship of the church, true freedom means caring for one another.

Let us choose a life that values **love for others** above our rights.

The right use of knowledge is to use our freedom
in imitation of Christ's love — to build up others.