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freedom

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# Right with God

2 tablets, covenant contract. A second copy on the other tablet. Making a deal with somebody to both have the same contracts. You promised by this day you would do this. Keeping both of your ends of the deal.

Israel most of the time is not alright with God, but apart from Him. Little golden era of David and Solomon and then everything falls apart.

Jeroboam makes 2 golden calf’s, just had David and Solomon and you're already turning south. In exile, most of the people are gone from the 10 tribes, they stay in Syria 722BC. 586BC Babylon comes in and takes everybody that is somebody in captivity. 70 years was the prophesy of Jeremiah. Daniel recognizes that and starts praying for release, Ezra, Nehemiah and Hosea?

When Judah comes back, not Israel, because they are gone. When Judah comes back they recognize they have violated God’s Law and didn't want to do that again. They put a box around it, 613 commandments in the written Law. Then they keep adding on additional traditions, back the fence up to here to make sure you don’t touch it.

# Evading the Law by traditions

Against the law to eat the meat of unclean animals. Pigs in your livestock, they ran into the abyss sea of the Jewish people. Sabbath day’s walk, it was a day of rest. You’re not allowed to work, but how far people had to be away from the ark of covenant. There is a distance that is allowed, but no more because then it is considered work. Not in the Bible, because the Pharisees are trying to approach the Law like a lawyer. Who is my neighbor?

Santa Claus bag, water bag on the camel. Started off with good intentions, but as always it went into ridiculousness.

Almost everybody in New York is either Jewish or Italian. People would pay him on Saturday to do light work for them. Not allowed to flick on a light switch, light a fire. They would hire a gentile to do that for them. It’s almost like a slave, the gentile is clearly breaking the law, but I am not. New York City is the largest concentration of Jewish people in the world except Israel, 3rd if you include it. Orthodox in many of the neighborhoods you will see a wire or a ribbon go along all their houses. A synagogue in this neighborhood and that shows a ribbon that you’re following the Law according to the Sunday walk.

Quite possible there was a blood cross on the doors during Passover, mezuzoth instead of mezuzah.

Matthew 23:1-8 (ESV) Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger. They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others.

Matthew 23:13-19 (ESV) “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

“Woe to you, blind guides, who say, if anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? And you say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.’ You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?

# Religion fence around sin

We don’t have the same, but something similar. We have this thing called sin, we call it bad and that we shouldn’t do that. In a similar way religion goes around sin and tries to make it right. Nothing in the Bible that says you can’t play cards, but religion says it can lead to things.

Vast parts of the NT are about how we as Christians are about figuring out how Jewish we have to be?

# Eating food and sacrificing to idols

Paul’s pattern was very simple, preach to the Jews in the synagogue, kicked out. Then the gentiles and Greeks in the community some would get saved. Each church has both of them in their churches! Suggest to you it is very similar to taking a Jewish person who was living like this: almost like Amish people. Half Amish and half pagans/wick Californian hippie people.

Paul comes back to Jerusalem to make sure that what he is doing is not wrong. What do they have to do? Some are saying all 613, others say variations thereof. Paul says let’s get together and figure this out! Conclusion of the council, 2 witnesses sent with them, not just their part of the story, but the whole thing.

Acts 15:22-28 (ESV) Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers, with the following letter: “The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the brothers who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. Since we have heard that some persons have gone out from us and troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions, it has seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements:

Holy Spirit and the Church agreed that this was right!

Acts 15:29 (ESV) that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”

What things do they tell gentile Christians to do or not to do? Don’t eat meat sacrificed to idols, don’t eat blood.

This is after the vision of Peter! Do you agree these are the 4 things they said? Emphasis on the church, elders and apostles and Holy Spirit. We all know there are a few things we ignore in this room. Paul has to work this situation out! He is on the front lines.

When there is a subject change you need to know people came with questions or a letter was sent and this was the answer to that.

1 Corinthians 8 (ESV) Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” This “knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up. If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.” For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”— 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.

However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so, by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Paul says no big deal, but Acts 15 told me: “don’t!” Anyone see a conflict here? Be very careful when you preach that you're not just grabbing something and preach this. If I used Acts 15 I can be full of vigor and new. Knowledge of what? Making someone stumble, the weaker brother is stumbling. People at us all the times claim to be so mature, but they’re the ones getting offended.

Paul almost slid it from the table, now it is about our conclusion. Is that what the Bible teaches? Is that what Paul teaches?

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (ESV) For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

What is important? The gospel, saving people and do this. The gospel is super important! Paul’s flexibility, to the Jews I did this. Many of his opponents called him spineless, he would act as who he was with. We would say people pleaser. It sounds like it based on these words, doesn’t it sound like what Peter did in Galatians?

1 Corinthians 10:14-22 (ESV) Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. Consider the people of Israel: are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar? What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

If you eat food offered to demons you're partaking with this. No matter how you think Communion works, Paul says you participate in Christ. Somehow. At bare bones, I have participated with that idol which is in fact demonic, because it is not the true God. He is now saying I cannot eat any food!

# What is the issue? Freedom!

1 Corinthians 10:23-33 (ESV) “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.

I didn’t give you any context, there is context and then it will make more sense. 3rd world market, all kinds of smells experiences and everything. Brush the flies off and it is awesome. Almost everywhere they didn't have packaged meat. Is it possible that a butcher feels like he needs to worship his idol every time his cleaver down? Unless you butcher your own stuff, there is nothing. In the grocery store you got to eat, bless it and eat it.

Pagan cities would have temples to idols everywhere, they would have free for all dinners to get people involved. Often you could get free meals there, Paul is saying you can’t go into the temple and eat the meat, because clearly that meal has been dedicated to that idol and that God. Just like Communion, the altar you’re participating with that God which in sense is a demon. Even though that is completely different than Acts 15

I’ve shown you the evolution of ideas and doctrine, Acts 15, but Paul felt free to find a solution that in his mind didn't violate what the guys had told him. For us it is about the whole council of this. Paul modify it somewhat more by the time he writes Romans, he says don’t do something that will cause a brother to stumble. He is concerned about participating with demons, Corinthians made that really clear.

Jesus was going after ceremonial food and cleansing, Jesus was going after people’s hearts, opposed to the traditions of man. Paul has a completely different context, Jesus was in Palestine, Paul was in pagan central. People that have never heard the idea of Christianity ever. Serve multiple gods, sacrifices, it was full on pagan pagan pagan.

When you're invited over you make a point to tell them that they’re eating this from the demons. Joining because you know.

# What parts of the Nt do apply to us?

Modern Christians, someone throws OT verses at you. Do I have to do that or not? Christ’s Law is loving one another.

1. Confirms

Some OT laws are confirmed in the NT. 10 commandments sort off. But Jesus said in the sermon on the mount. Do not commit murder, don’t even have anger in your heart. Do not commit adultery, Jesus said don’t even look. He didn’t confirm, but made adjustments

1. Adjusts
2. Cancels

Circumcision, Paul says it is all about the heart, not just following the Sabbath rules. Although the Sabbath was made for man, so I encourage you to think about that!

1. Not mentioned

How many of you have tattoos? Raise them really high. Leviticus 19:28 (ESV) You shall not make any cuts on your body for the dead or tattoo yourselves: I am the Lord.

Where are tattoos in the new testament? Nothing confirms, what do we do with the OT that aren't mentioned? Ask the Holy Spirit, some of you asked and God said yeah go do it. Your conscience is clean before the Lord so we should be okay with it, then right?

Is a tattoo causing anyone to stumble? Sure thing! Weak brothers that stumble. Religion and offence than in the faith. Just a factor, still in your parent’s house honor them! Abide by their wishes, whether you agree with it or not!

# Homosexuality

No immorality in a loving monogamous relationship. Between a married man and woman. Forgot their God, active partner and passive partner clarifying that neither this nor that shall inherit the Kingdom of God.

OT makes it clear that all people out of bounds sexually are that. News or webpage how can you believe that? Can eat pork and can’t eat shellfish. Come back and think from it in another perspective.

Peter: we’re allowed to eat everything! Cancelled by that, everything is clean. Homosexuality thing, NT confirms this. We’re still saying this. Almost all areas of morality and ethics the NT confirms. Some of people who want to argue want to know everything.

Newscaster, are you quoting something over and over and over instead of actually reading the Bible?

# Should we legalise marijuana?

Seems to be a principle, alcohol don’t get drunk. Drugs and alcohol are not in control of all of my faculties. Some drugs do that as well. Prescribed medication we’re supposed to take? Most drugs you take are a variant of heroin. Take a little wine to Timothy. Seems to suggest that a natural pain remedy, had something physical and alcohol might help that. A doorway seems to be opened there, in surgery I would like some of that.

Pharmacy comes from pharmacy which means witchcraft. Most cultures have understood that when you take mind altering substances there is some type of contact with the spirit world that starts to happen, something to be considered. Why are we doing this? Escape a reality is that a healthy Christian approach? Wounds, stress in my life?

OT rules, NT variations and options. God will guide us into the best places.