

KNOWLEDGE PUFFS UP-LOVE BUILDS UP

1 Corinthians 8:1-3 “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.”

An issue arose in the Corinthian church regarding whether it was proper or improper for a Christian to eat meat that had been sacrificed to an idol. Some members felt that because they knew that idols were nothing, eating meat sacrificed to them was harmless. Others, however, felt that to eat such meat was an offense to God and fellow believers. Those who based their thoughts on what they knew were apparently arrogant, conceited and strongly promoted their views.

Within the Christian church today are members who have received significant Biblical instruction. They not only know what God’s word says but they believe they apply His word properly to everyday life situations. One could say they place their emphasis more upon the “letter of the law” than the “spirit of it.”

Verse 1 of today’s devotion addresses all of us who are believing Christians. St. Paul’s words “Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up” should cause all of us to examine how we use the Biblical and spiritual knowledge we have. What we know may indeed be correct, but how we use it may make all the difference in the world.

Using God’s word with love, St. Paul says, is the key. St. Paul expands on this in chapter 13, “If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.” Knowing the right words, but speaking and applying them to our own life and that of others without love, St. Paul says, gives off all the wrong messages.

What does this love look like? St. Paul continues in chapter 13, “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things,

endures all things. Love never ends.” This is the love you have received from God through Christ Jesus.

Prayer: Lord, bless me with the wisdom to know Your word and speak it in love and with a winsome way for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

Love in Christ is strong and living, Binding faithful hearts in one;
Love in Christ is true and giving, May His will in us be done.

Love is patient and forbearing, Clothed in Christ’s humility,
Gentle, selfless, kind, and caring Reaching out in charity.

Love in Christ abides forever, Fainting not when ills attend;
Love, forgiving and forgiven, Shall endure until life’s end.
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