

LESSON 9

DIVISIONS OVER FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS

1. INTRODUCTION

- (a) If possible, talk to a member of the S.D.A. church and find out what kinds of food they are not allowed to eat. Try to find out why they are not allowed to eat these foods.

Then find out why other churches do not have these food laws. Are there any types of food or drink that members of your church are not allowed to take.

(NOTE: You will find some help in answering these questions in :-

Leviticus 11: 1-23.

Mark 7: 18-19 ; Romans 14: 14)

- (b) Find out about any food taboos in your village. For example, are there any foods that women who have just given birth are not allowed to eat? Are there foods that you may not eat before going to your yam garden? Are there some foods that young girls may not eat? Try to find out why people are not allowed to eat these foods.

2. THE PROBLEM AT CORINTH

Read I Corinthians 8: 4-7.

It was the custom to offer sacrifices to "gods" in the Temples of the city, and then to sell some of the meat in the meat market. A Christian might be invited to eat with a friend and be given meat which had been offered to an idol.

In the Corinthian church, there were different opinions about whether you should eat it or not.

Exercise: Complete these sentences:-

ONE SIDE (Read I Corin. 8: 4-6) Some said you could eat the food because

THE OTHER SIDE (Read I Corin. 8: 7) Some said you should not eat it because

Which side was Paul on?

Read I Corin. 10: 25-27.

Paul thought that

3. PAUL'S ANSWER TO THE QUARRELLING

Paul clearly agreed with one side of the quarrel, BUT he pointed out that there was something much more important than who was right and who was wrong.

Read carefully I Corin. 8: 9-13, and 10: 23-31.

When should they not eat the meat? (If it will hurt someone else)

What is more important than eating or not eating?
(Treating your brother with love)

4. Today we do not eat food offered to idols; but there are still different opinions among Christians about some foods, and about drinking alcohol or kava, and about whether or not to follow custom taboos.

- * Paul makes it clear that we should respect other people's beliefs. (see Romans 14: 1-10).
 - * Before we eat or drink anything, we should think about the effect on other people. Love for others is more important than eating or drinking (Romans 14: 13-21).
5. Finish with a discussion of food which is good for your health and food you should not eat because it is bad for your health.