



S. D. Gordon
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“In every man's life there is a throne. And when self is on the throne, Christ is on the cross. But when Christ is on the throne, self is on the cross.”

Acts 16:1-5 Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. ²He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. ³Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek. ⁴And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. ⁵So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

- Timothy's mother was a Jewish believer, but his father was Greek.

2 Tim 1:5 when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.

- Timothy had grown spiritually since his conversion during Paul's and Barnabas' first missionary journey and was well spoken of by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium.
- Paul saw great potential in Timothy and because of the Jews who were in that region, saw to it that he was circumcised.

After having fought the Judaizer's efforts to force the new gentile believers to become Jewish proselytes, isn't Paul now being hypocritical by having Timothy to be circumcised?

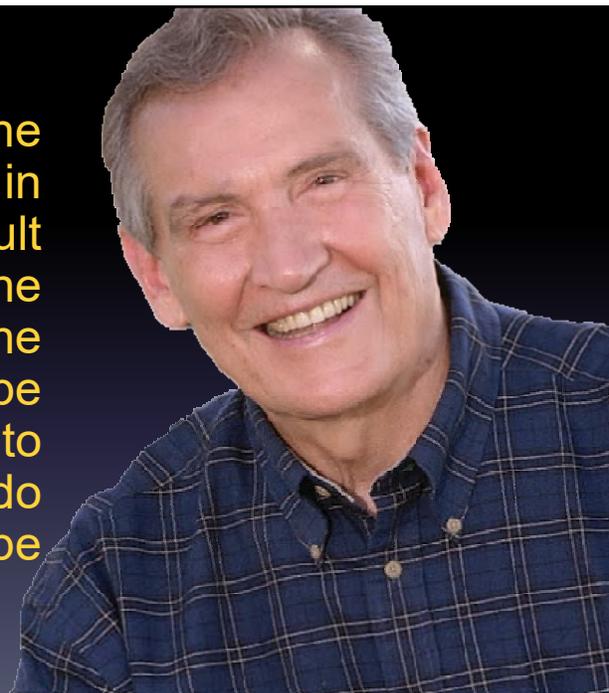
1 Cor 8:1,7-13 Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. ... ⁷and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. ⁹But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. ¹⁰For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? ¹¹And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? ¹²But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

1 Cor 9:19-23 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; ²⁰and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; ²¹to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; ²²to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. ²³Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.

1 Cor 10:23-24,29,31-33 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. ²⁴Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being. ... ²⁹"Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. ... ³¹Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. ³²Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, ³³just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

So, how can a person who considers himself spiritually mature avoid offending a weaker, more immature believer?

“A child delights in what he has. A youth delights in what he does. An adult delights in what he is. The more mature you are, the more you will desire to be something – not just to have something or to do something, but to be something.” Adrian Rogers



Rom 14:1 Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things.

1. Spiritual maturity acquires knowledge

1 Cor 8:1,8 Knowledge puffs up ... ⁸But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.

1 Cor 9:19-23 For though I am free from all men,

1 Cor 10:23 All things are lawful for me,

2. Spiritual maturity uses knowledge properly

1 Cor 8:1 Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

1 Cor 9:19-23 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all,

1 Cor 10:23 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify.

1 Cor 8:11 And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

3. Spiritual maturity honors God by respecting others

1 Cor 10:24,29,31 Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being. ... ²⁹"Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. ... ³¹Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Cor 9:19,22-23 I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; ... ²²I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. ²³Now this I do for the gospel's sake

1 Cor 10:33 just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

4. Spiritual maturity does not produce careless living

Rom 14:7 For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.

1 Cor 10:32 Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God,

1 Cor 8:7,9-11 and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ... ⁹But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. ¹⁰For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? ¹¹And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

1 Cor 10:29 “Conscience,” I say, not your own, but that of the other.

Rom 14:15 Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died. ... ²¹It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.

5. Spiritual maturity recognizes the severity of hurting others

1 Cor 8:12 But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

Paul's conclusion:

1 Cor 8:13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

1 Pet 2:16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.