

1 Corinthians 10:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

Analysis

For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof—Paul quotes Psalm 24:1 (LXX) to provide theological grounding for v. 25's permission. All creation belongs to God: **the earth** (tēs gēs, τῆς γῆς) and **the fulness thereof** (to plērōma autēs, τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῆς, "everything that fills it")—animals, plants, resources. Nothing in creation is inherently unclean or off-limits because of pagan misuse.

This monotheistic confidence liberates Christian conscience. Idolaters may dedicate animals to false gods, but their rituals don't change ownership—everything still belongs to the true God. The meat itself isn't defiled by idolatrous context (contra Jewish food laws that Paul has relativized for Christians). What matters is whether eating involves fellowship with demons (temple context) or grateful reception of God's provision (market context).

Paul's citation also echoes Jesus's teaching that foods don't defile (Mark 7:18-19). The new covenant relocates purity from external rituals to heart allegiance. Because the earth is the Lord's, Christians can receive all food with thanksgiving (1 Timothy 4:4-5), provided eating doesn't involve idolatrous context (temple meals) or harm others (weaker brother's conscience). Creation is good; context determines appropriateness.

Historical Context

Jewish dietary laws (Leviticus 11, Deuteronomy 14) prohibited many foods and regulated meat preparation. Early Christians debated these laws' applicability

(Acts 15, Galatians 2:11-14). Paul's citation of Psalm 24:1 reflects the Jerusalem Council's conclusion: Gentile Christians aren't bound by Mosaic dietary laws, though they should avoid obvious idol-association (Acts 15:29). God's ownership of creation grounds freedom from food taboos while maintaining boundaries against idolatry.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing God's ownership of all creation affect your stewardship of food, possessions, and natural resources?
2. What freedoms does Psalm 24:1's truth grant you that religious legalism might deny?
3. How can you maintain both confidence in creation's goodness and vigilance against idolatrous misuse of God's gifts?

Interlinear Text

τοῦ	γὰρ	κυρίου	ἡ	γῆ	καὶ	τὸ	πλήρωμα	αὐτῆς
G3588	For	is the Lord's	G3588	the earth	and	G3588	the fulness	thereof
	G1063	G2962		G1093	G2532		G4138	G846

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 24:1 (References Lord): The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

Psalms 50:12 (Parallel theme): If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.

Job 41:11 (Parallel theme): Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him? whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.

Exodus 19:5 (Parallel theme): Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

Deuteronomy 10:14 (References Lord): Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.

1 Timothy 6:17 (Parallel theme): Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

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