

1 Corinthians 10:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

Analysis

For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?—This verse continues the potential objection from v. 29. If I eat food **by grace** (chariti, χάριτι, "with thanksgiving/gratitude"), recognizing God's provision and giving thanks (as Jesus taught, 1 Timothy 4:4-5), why should I be **evil spoken of** (blasphēmoumai, βλασφημοῦμαι, "blasphemed/slandered/spoken evil of") for it? Why should grateful reception of God's gifts be criticized?

Paul's point is precisely that thanksgiving (eucharistia) legitimates eating when done in faith, recognizing God's ownership (v. 26). However, this theological truth must be balanced with practical love. While you can eat known idol-food with clear conscience (because you're thanking God, not idols), doing so when it harms others or confuses witness contradicts love's demands. Right theology doesn't override relational wisdom.

The tension is real: Christian freedom includes eating all foods with thanksgiving, yet love sometimes requires abstaining from permissible things. Paul doesn't resolve the tension by eliminating freedom or ignoring others' consciences. Instead, he subordinates both to a higher principle: God's glory (v. 31). When freedom's exercise causes offense that hinders gospel or harms souls, glory-seeking demands self-limitation despite theological correctness.

Historical Context

Early Christian table fellowship was controversial—Jews criticized Gentile Christians for eating unclean foods; Gentiles criticized Jewish Christians for food scruples. Paul navigates these tensions by affirming freedom (grace permits eating with thanksgiving) while constraining it by love (consideration for others' consciences). The ultimate criterion isn't individual rights or others' opinions but God's glory and gospel advance.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How can you maintain robust confidence in Christian freedom while remaining sensitive to how exercising it impacts others?
2. When have you needed to limit theologically justified freedom for the sake of love or witness?
3. What role does thanksgiving play in sanctifying otherwise neutral activities?

Interlinear Text

εἰ	δὲ	ἐγὼ	χάριτι	μετέχω	τί	βλασφημοῦμαι	ὕπὲρ
if	For	I	by grace	be a partaker	why	am I evil spoken of	for that
G1487	G1161	G1473	G5485	G3348	G5101	G987	G5228
οὗ	ἐγὼ	εὐχαριστῶ					
for which	I	give thanks					
G3739	G1473	G2168					

Additional Cross-References

Romans 14:6 (Parallel theme): He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

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