

January 28, 2018

I Corinthians 8:1-13

Passage not often used – dietary food restrictions are ancient history

Used this Sunday, since our focus is on non-perishable food items

What Paul is confronting goes deeper than food restriction issues, although hunger does play a role

He is challenging church divisions

Here, it is thought, divisions are between

- wealthy and poor
- educated and uneducated
- enlightened and non-enlightened
- with knowledge and without knowledge

Some things are innately human, church or not

Much of our world is divided by same things

Especially wealthy and poor

If that were not so, there would be no need to bring food or warm clothes to share with others

Wealth often translates into educated and knowledgeable

We are enamored by wealth, often judging those with money as good and those without as somehow lacking

While food purity laws are foreign to us, we can relate to those who felt superior to others, because of their so-called knowledge

I know I can sometimes come across as acting superior, because I think I know something better than someone else

This is often the case, when people who are home and food “secure”, deal with those who are not

Our take away from Paul’s writing this morning is a challenge to look at our own selves, at how we respond to those who do not have as many “things” – house, car, food, phone – as we do

Does the knowledge we think we have make us feel superior to others?

Is our attitude toward those home and food insecure judgmental?

- just get a job
- you are lazy

- you are “gaming” the system
- you are unworthy

When we reach judgments like this, what do we really know about a person’s history?

This is what Paul was trying to convey to the know-it-alls in Corinth

By judging, by acting without regard for the other, we can do more harm than good.

This month we are working on growing our awareness, specifically around issues of home and food insecurity

We are taking the first step: recognizing someone is cold and hungry and offering help

For me, the power in this is you are giving freely, unconditionally, without judgment

If the divisions in our world are to be overcome, this kind of non-judgmental generosity has to be our guide

This is what Paul was saying:

“We sometimes tend to think we know all we need to know to answer these kinds of questions – but sometimes our humble hearts

can help us more than our proud minds. We never really know enough until we recognize that God alone knows it all.”

We have been called to serve, not to judge.

Letting go of the need to be right and righteous is how we lived into and share God’s love.

Before we begin to judge our neighbor, remember Paul’s words: “God alone knows it all.”

God alone knows what is in another’s heart

So, if we want to begin to heal the divisions in our lives and in our world, trust that God knows more than you and share the love.

Amen.