

Bible Contradictions: Eat Idol Meat or Not?

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Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts... For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old,
-2 Peter 3:3-5

Skeptic's Argument:

One who scoffs at God's Word.

For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.

-Acts 15:28-29

But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

-Revelation 2:14

Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

-Romans 14:3

The argument is that Paul contradicts the commandments given in Acts. This kind of argument is frequent in a new-age "Paul vs Christ" movement that is full of heretics that claim Paul (and others, like James) contradicts Christ.

The following is from an anonymous coward that only refers to himself as "the author," refusing to reveal his identity: *"Three times Jesus in the Book of Revelation condemns eating meat sacrificed to idols... However, Paul clearly teaches three times that there is nothing wrong in itself eating meat sacrificed to idols. "*

-Anonymous Author, "Paul's Contradictions of Jesus," *Jesus' Words Only*, retrieved June 21, 2015, [jesuswordsonly.com/books/175-pauls-contradictions-of-jesus.html]

Bible-Student's Answer:

One who takes God's Word seriously.

I just quoted Acts 15, where a council of Christian men, apostles and elders, came together to issue decrees to the churches of what they should and should not be doing and teaching concerning false doctrine that was rising among the congregations. One of these issues was abstaining from meat offered unto idols, and there's one key figure at this meeting we need to emphasize:

And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

-Acts 15:1-2

The anonymous coward aforementioned (who loves darkness rather than light because his deeds are evil [John 3:19](#)) claims that Paul contradicted Christ, but let's take a step back and consider that Paul would have contradicted *HIMSELF* if that were true because Paul was one of those who decreed that Christian brethren ought to stay away from meat offered unto idols.

At this point, the scoffers always point to Romans 14, so let's begin in verse 1:

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

-Romans 14:1-4

If you read this slowly, you'll find something very important missing: Meats offered unto idols! **There is not one place in Romans 14 that meats offered unto idols is mentioned because he's not talking about meats offered unto idols;** he's talking about meats considered clean and unclean according to Old Testament law.

Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.

-Leviticus 11:4-5

For example, in the law, eating rabbit meat was unclean because rabbits chew the cud (i.e. eat that which came from themselves, either by regurgitation or defecation). But after Christ has established the New Testament covenant, there is a change of the law:

For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

-Hebrews 7:12

[Priesthood changes from the line of Aaron/Levitical Law to Melchisedec/Christ's Liberty]

And for this reason, Paul writes:

I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

-Romans 14:14-15

Again, nowhere is it mentioned in Romans 14 about meats offered unto idols. This specific context refers to clean and unclean animals, but anonymous cowards are unable to see this because they are stuck in the milk of the Word and do not read Scripture as the Lord God instructed to those of us who are weaned:

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

-Isaiah 28:9-10

The next place the scoffers reference to is 1Co 8, and normally they start in verse 4, but I'd like to start in verse 1 to gain a context:

Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

-1 Corinthians 8:1

Remember that Romans 14 said, "if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably," meaning that if we want to remain charitable to our brethren, we ought not to do things which bring in confusion, like supposed-to-be-sanctified Christians participating in pagan practices. So keep in mind the subject matter of this chapter is about edifying the brethren concerning things offered unto idols, and with the reminder that Paul had already condemned eating meat offered unto idols in Acts 15, you'll see that Paul is about to go through and give more specific details about why we abstain from them:

As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there

be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.
-1 Corinthians 8:4-6

This is really fascinating to me because the eating of meat offered unto idols controversy is very similar to the pagan rituals (like **Christmas**) controversy so many "Christian" ministries out there attempt to justify, because Paul is explaining the common excuse they use to justify themselves, that to us, we have knowledge that those pagan things are just a fantasy of imagination, and that we serve the True Living God. However, Paul continues to explain that we must recognize that **not all men have this knowledge**:

Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.
-1 Corinthians 8:7

What we need to be concerned about is whether we hinder others by our actions; confusing their conscience and understanding. We may not personally think celebrating Christmas or eating meat offered to idols is sin, but we need to be concerned at how we offend others by sending the wrong message, for example, how people will profess to be Christians, but turn around and bring idols and pagan traditions into their homes.

(Read "Christmas: The Rejection of Jesus" and "Christian Symbols Are Not Christian" here at creationliberty.com for more details.)

But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.
-1 Corinthians 8:8

You don't go to hell because you ate meat offered unto idols, but on the other hand, you put a stumblingblock to others:

But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?
-1 Corinthians 8:9-11

perish (v): to fail entirely or to be extirpated; to be injured

(See 'perish', American Dictionary of the English Language, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved June 21, 2015 [webstersdictionary1828.com])

Perish has a number of meanings, and most often, Christians think perish only means to die or the soul entering hell. Perish *CAN* mean to die or to be eternally lost, but it does *NOT* always mean that. Perish can also mean to fail or be injured, and in this context, the brethren are saved, so it does not mean to perish in hell, nor to die because they don't fall dead at the sight of eating idol meats, but rather he fails and is injured because an elder Christian took actions that were after pagan traditions.

Often, for a new Christian, this type of action causes them to think they can just do whatever they want, that sin may abound. Obviously, that's a bad thing.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?
-Romans 6:1-2

So Paul has explained that, to us who have knowledge and understand that idols are nothing, we may not believe that we sin, but he goes on to explain that we do:

But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.
-1 Corinthians 8:12-13

Paul is explaining how specifically we sin when we take the meat offered to idols because we offend others, forgetting to be charitable by thinking about their needs and their consciences first and foremost before ourselves. When we yoke ourselves up with pagan concepts, others see this, we wound them, and thus we also offend Christ, whose children we are.

After reading this slowly, it is absolutely absurd, to the point of insanity, that someone would attempt to use 1Co 8 as an example that Paul contradicts the commandment of not eating meat offered to idols, especially since Paul said at the end that he would be willing to give up all eating of meat in this life so long as he could help his Christian brethren in charity and edification by not showing them any example of eating meat offered to idols. This works in perfect correlation to the commandments given in Acts 15, and the abominations listed in Revelation, but for those who splash around in the milk of the Word because they cannot gain understanding, they will not take the time to read the chapters, understanding the context, taking precept upon precept and line upon line.



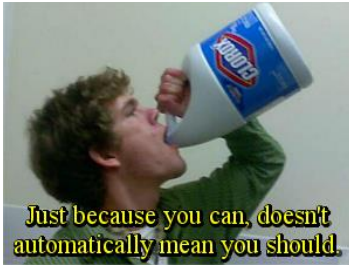
If you don't think it could get any worse, keep reading. I've read these scoffers use 1Co 10 to say the Bible contradicts itself.

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

-1 Corinthians 10:23

Remember 1Co 8:1 earlier -- for the edification and charity to our brethren, we work to abstain from things that would put a stumblingblock in their way.

expedient (adj): fit or suitable for the purpose; proper under the circumstances
(See 'expedient', American Dictionary of the English Language, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved June 21, 2015 [webstersdictionary1828.com])



Just because you can, doesn't automatically mean you should.

Even though it might be lawful for us to do something, that doesn't automatically mean it's good for us to do it. There's nothing in Scripture that says you can't watch television or drink bleach, but that doesn't mean it's good for us, nor others around us. We must consider that our actions not only affect ourselves, but also others who see us, and the results are offense to Christ if we create a stumblingblock that causes destruction to others.

*Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.
-1 Corinthians 10:24*

Again, not to focus on what benefits ourselves, but what benefits others.

Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

-1 Corinthians 10:25

shambles (n): the place where butcher's meat is sold

(See 'shambles', American Dictionary of the English Language, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved June 21, 2015 [webstersdictionary1828.com])

There was typically meat sold in the marketplace that came from farms, but sometimes, pagan priests would send meat to be sold at the market that they could not consume themselves to turn a little extra profit. There was no distinction between these two meats, so knowing exactly where it came from was nearly impossible, and Paul is explaining that when you don't have knowledge of it, it's acceptable because the Lord God does not hold us accountable for what we don't know; He only holds us accountable for what we know or refuse to learn.

If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

-1 Corinthians 10:27

This has nothing to do with food safety, like we experience today in much of our meat coming from artificially fattened cows in unclean environments. This has to do with knowledge of the meat being used in pagan rituals, and if you don't have the knowledge, then the Lord does not hold you accountable for what you don't know.

However, we need to keep reading:

But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

-1 Corinthians 10:28

Paul just backed up what he, and the others, said to the churches in Acts 15: Don't eat meat offered unto idols. If you have knowledge of pagan activity on the meat, don't eat it for the sake of those others who believe not because they don't have the proper conscience they need, as Paul continues to say:

Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

-1 Corinthians 10:29

This is why I have a problem with people who write me saying, "You point out Christmas is pagan, but here's what it means to me..." -- those people have no conscience for others, but are selfish in attempting to justify sin as righteousness. This is why I have a problem with people who write me saying, "You point out 501c3 is the Devil's church, but here's what I think about it..." -- those people have no conscience for others, but are selfish in attempting to justify sin as righteousness. This is why I have a problem with people who write me saying, "You point out that 'Christian' rock teaches false doctrine, but here's the way I see it..." -- those people have no conscience for others, but are selfish in attempting to justify sin as righteousness. These people professing Christianity selfishly write me simply to try and make an excuse for wicked activities and traditions they love, rather than examining how their actions are viewed by the rest of the world.

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

-2 Corinthians 13:5

It is because of this, Paul finishes this chapter:

Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

-1 Corinthians 10:32-33

If you're among Jews, eat as the Jews eat, if you're among Gentiles, eat as the Gentiles eat, but if they offer you food that was sacrificed to idols, do not eat it, as is explained by the Lord Jesus Christ, and His inspiration given to Paul in the letters to Rome and Corinth. Let's take a stand to do what's right over what's convenient for ourselves, being charitable to our brethren, and to the world, by sanctifying ourselves from the wickedness of this world to live righteously in the flesh to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

-John 14:15