

## Problem of Questioned Things 219

epistle to the Corinthians are largely devoted to these matters. Some of the questions raised were about abuses concerning which there was very explicit command from God. Regarding other matters there was no such command, and so Paul is advising them as in his judgment is best. And he feels that he is being guided in his advice by the Spirit of God.

He says that if doing something causes his brother to stumble he will not do that thing while the world stands. The passion of service burned that into his heart. The love for the Master who had sent him to serve was yet greater. The eager longing to win men up to the highest life overruled all his own tastes and preferences.

His controlling principle in settling all such questions was *love*; a tender, intensely practical love for all men. Love is the great test of the Christian life. Knowledge puffeth up; we all know that, and are constantly reminded of it. *Love buildeth up.* We need more of that.

Paul says, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient." It is not wrong to do certain things, but it is not best. It is not a question of right and wrong here. That test belongs lower down. Up here it is a matter of doing only what is *best*, and rigidly leaving the rest. Some of these questioned things are not necessarily wrong, but they clearly are *not best*. And if we judge a thing to be wrong then it is wrong for us, for we are doing the thing we think to be wrong. The hurt to the character is as great as though it were wrong.