

# How to go to Church

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS BOOK 1**  
**EXPLORING 1 CORINTHIANS 8-10**

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lower mountains  
ANGELICAN · PARISH

## Week One: 1 Corinthians 8 - Day 1

### Introduction

The Corinthian church is at risk of losing their salvation in Jesus because they think they are spiritually superior to 'spiritually weak' Paul (Ch 4). They say that they trust Jesus - but they do not want to live Jesus' way of sacrificial love as the apostle Paul taught and modelled to them. Instead they put themselves first and live only for 'today'.

In Chapters 8-10, Paul answers the Corinthian church's question about whether it is right to eat food that has been offered to idols. Paul's answer affects every aspect of our lives today. Paul uses the example of eating food offered to idols to address the bigger issue in the whole letter - that the glory of God and cross of Christ leads us to live for eternity, not today. It leads us to love others, not ourselves, and it leads us to glorify God by telling others about him.



### 1 Corinthians 8:1-8

Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that "We all possess knowledge." But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. 2 Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. 3 But whoever loves God is known by God. 4 So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that "An idol is nothing at all in the world" and that "There is no God but one." 5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"),

6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. 7 But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. 8 But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.



### Exploring the Passage

- What do these verses teach us about knowledge and love?
- What do these verses teach us about God?





## Explaining the Passage

When the formerly idol-worshipping Corinthians became Christians, they came to know that idols weren't real and there was only one God – that Jesus is Lord of everyone and everything including all meat, even meat offered to idols, 8:4-6. In Jesus, the Corinthians were free to eat the meat sold at the market even though most of it would have been offered to idols. *Knowing who God is brings freedom, but how will the Corinthians use the freedom that they have in Christ?*

They had freedom, but there was a big problem. This true knowledge was making the Corinthians arrogant – they were not loving their fellow Christians. We shall see that they ate idol meat even when it was unhelpful for believers who thought idols were real.

The Corinthians didn't understand that the most important 'knowledge' is being known by God – being called by God to love him and enjoy relationship with him. Being known by God changes everything, including how we use the knowledge that God gives us. When God knows us, we love God and we love others by building them up in Christ – even when it means going without our freedoms in Christ for the good of others.



## Going Deeper

- What is the worldly idolatry that recent converts in our circles might have left to follow Jesus?
- How will you use your freedom in Christ to love others?



## Prayer

We can pray using the ACTS model - Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication (asking)

**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, you are the one God, from whom all things came and for whom we live.

**Confession:** Sorry for the many times in which I have chased after the so-called gods of this earth, loving money, status, and material comforts more than I love you. For the many times when I have trusted in my knowledge and forgotten that true knowledge is being known by you.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you for the freedom we have in Christ - the freedom that true knowledge of you, and being known by you brings.

**Supplication:** Help me not to be puffed up and put myself first. May I love and know others, put their needs first, and use my freedom to build up and encourage new Christians.

In the freeing name of Jesus, Amen

## Week One: 1 Corinthians 8 - Day 2

### Recap

Being known by God changes our everyday decisions including what we eat. It humbles us to use our God-given knowledge to build up other believers in love.



### 1 Corinthians 8:4-8

4 So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that “An idol is nothing at all in the world” and that “There is no God but one.” 5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), 6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus

Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. 7 But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. 8 But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.



### Exploring the Passage

- How are the Corinthians right in their knowledge and thinking?
- How are they wrong?



### Explaining the Passage

The Corinthians are right to think they can eat meat that has been offered to idols because idols aren't real and all meat is from God and the Lord Jesus, 8:4-6. But the Corinthians took this knowledge too far. For them it was necessary that they eat meat offered to idols to show that they are truly spiritual – that they knew Jesus was Lord of everything, 8:6. They were wrong to think food will bring us near to God, and that they are worse off spiritually if they don't eat it, 8:8.

Believers who do not share the Corinthian's right thinking – those who cannot separate idol meat from idol worship – are still believers in Christ but they are at risk, 8:7. For them to eat would be going against their conscience and so they would become hardened to sin which could cause them to fall away from Jesus. This would be a terrible thing. We shall see that it is better to give up our freedoms in Christ for the good of others.

Note that it appears the weaker brother is a new Christian who has come to faith from pagan idolatry background (8:7) - not a lifelong Christian who is against any change in the church and offended by different 'new' practices.





## Going Deeper

- The Corinthians tried to bring themselves near to God by eating food offered to idols, what traps of trying to bring yourself near to God do you fall into?
- New believers today may not struggle with eating food offered to idols, but what 'idols' might they struggle with?
- How are you likely to contribute to their stumbling?



## Prayer

We can pray using the ACTS model - Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication (asking)

**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, you are the one God, from whom all things came and for whom we live.

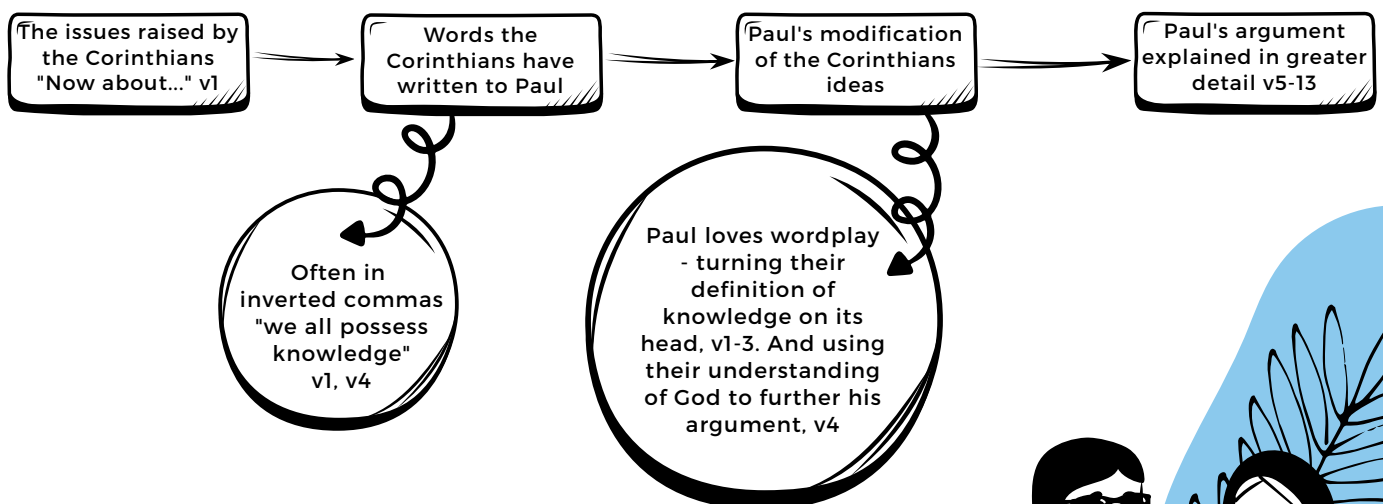
**Confession:** Sorry for the many times in which I have tried to bring myself near to you by what I do.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you for sending your son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, so that I am no better off or worse off depending on what I eat or do, but instead am saved by your grace alone.

**Supplication:** Help me not to trust in who I am or what I do, but in who you are and in what you have done.

In the saving name of Jesus, Amen.

Often it seems 1 Corinthians is 'sporadic' and hard to follow, but there is a logical flow that can be seen below:



## Week One: 1 Corinthians 8 - Day 3

### Recap

The Corinthians rightly knew that Jesus was Lord of all – even food offered to idols. They wrongly thought they were being truly spiritual by eating food offered to idols.



### 1 Corinthians 8:7-13

But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. 8 But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.

9 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak.

10 For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol's temple, won't that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? 11 So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. 12 When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.



### Exploring the Passage

- How does Paul describe other Christians in v11?
- How does Paul describe a Christians sin against another Christian in v12?
- What conclusion does Paul's love of Christ, and as a result his love of his brothers and sisters in Christ, lead him to make in verse 13?



### Explaining the Passage

Believers who incorrectly thought that eating idol meat was participating in idol worship were at risk of the sin of turning away from Jesus – of committing spiritual idolatry and not worshipping Jesus alone.

Believers who correctly knew that they were free to eat meat offered to idols were at risk of sinning against weaker believers by destroying the faith of these believers - this is to sin against Christ.

Christ calls those with correct knowledge to love the weaker believer by going without meat. Paul says he won't ever eat meat again if it is necessary for the salvation of the weak believer, 8:13. **Because Jesus is Lord, Paul uses his freedom in Christ for the salvation of the weak Christian - the new believer at risk of falling away.**

Living for Jesus is all about the ordinary stuff of life. Our actions affect each other. When Jesus is our Lord we will be driven by love of him to make our everyday decisions asking 'how will this action build up, or destroy, the faith of fellow believers for whom Christ died?'



## Going Deeper

- How does the entertainment you enjoy, the way you use your money etc, effect the salvation of fellow believers - especially new Christians?
- What do you do - and what can you do - that is helpful in building new believers and those of risk at falling away up in the faith?



## Prayer

We can pray using the ACTS model - Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication (asking)

**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, you are the one God, who has had pity on our humble state and made us commendable in your sight. You are the God who scatters the proud and lifts the humble.

**Confession:** Sorry for the many times in which I have insisted on putting myself first, and hurt my brothers and sisters for whom your son died. Sorry for the many times in which, by wounding them, I have sinned against Christ.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you for the freedom and forgiveness I have in your son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and for whom we live.

**Supplication:** Give me the mindset of Christ, help me to follow the example of Paul as he follows the example of Christ, that I may give up my own freedoms to love those for whom Christ died.

In the compassionate name of Jesus, Amen.



## Week One: 1 Corinthians 8 - Day 4

### Review

Today we will read all of chapter 8 and summarise the key point.



### 1 Corinthians 8

Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. 2 Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. 3 But whoever loves God is known by God. 4 So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that “An idol is nothing at all in the world” and that “There is no God but one.” 5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), 6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

7 But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when

they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. 8 But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.

9 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. 10 For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? 11 So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. 12 When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.



### Exploring the Passage

- What is Paul’s key point in one sentence?

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## Explaining the Passage

Use your freedom in Christ for the salvation of weak believers - new Christians and those at risk of falling away.

In Christ we know we are free to do many things. But when Jesus is our Lord, our passion will be the salvation of other believers. We will seek to love others – to build them in up in Christ even if this means going without our own rights.

Our everyday decisions affect each other. We glorify God and serve Christ as Lord when we ask, 'how will this decision that I am making affect the salvation of fellow believers?'

Paul uses his freedom for the salvation of the weak Christian. This is Paul's demonstration of the lordship of Christ. What we give up is little compared to Jesus' death.

Our reaction is often 'but ...', or 'don't tell me I can't ...'. We are a 'rights and freedoms' culture that dislikes restrictions so we feel this keenly. If this is our reaction, we need to check ourselves. Do we think our salvation is only for ourselves or do we think it is for the good of others?

The whole of chapter 8 can be summarised by Paul's conclusion in 1 Corinthians 10:31 - "*So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*"



## Going Deeper

- In what areas of your life are you loving yourself and not Christ as you use your freedom to serve yourself and insist on your rights?
- What changes do you need to make to how you approach Sunday Morning? The 'weak believer' is a new Christian who is at risk of falling away - often this will be our children and young people who are still growing in the faith. What practical steps can you take on Sundays and during the week to serve our children and young people?



## Prayer

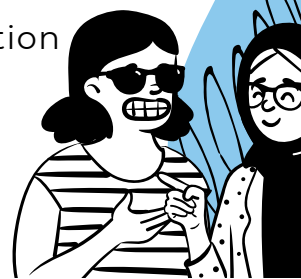
**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, you are the one God, from whom all things came and for whom we live.

**Confession:** Sorry for the many times I have used my freedom in Christ to pursue my own gain or to make myself look good.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you that in you I have true knowledge - that I can live with boldness and hope knowing that I am known and loved by you.

**Supplication:** Help me to use my freedom in Christ for the salvation new believers and those at risk of falling away.

In the awesome name of Jesus, Amen.



## Week Two: 1 Corinthians 9 - Day 1

### Introduction

In Chapters 8-10, Paul answers the Corinthian church's question about whether it is right to eat food that has been offered to idols. Paul's answer affects every aspect of our lives today. Paul uses the example of eating food offered to idols to address the bigger issue in the whole letter - that the glory of God and cross of Christ leads us to live for eternity, not today. It leads us to love others, not ourselves, and it leads us to glorify God by telling others about him.

We have seen in chapter 8 that Paul urges Christians to follow his example and love weak believers. He wants them to give up their freedoms in Christ for the salvation of those new to the faith or at risk of falling away. Now we see Paul encourage them to use their freedom to love other groups as well.



### 1 Corinthians 9:1-14

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord? 2 Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you! For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

3 This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me. 4 Don't we have the right to food and drink? 5 Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas? 6 Or is it only I and Barnabas who lack the right to not work for a living?

7 Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk? 8 Do I say this merely on human authority? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? 9 For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned?

Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. 11 If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? 12 If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?

But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 Don't you know that those who serve in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? 14 In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.



### Exploring the Passage

- Why didn't Paul accept payment from the Corinthians when he came to Corinth to preach the gospel? See especially 9:12b.
- What is Paul teaching about how he uses the freedom he has in Christ?



### Explaining the Passage

The Corinthians did not like Paul's gospel lifestyle of forgoing his rights the sake of the weak believers.

Paul reminds the Corinthians that they came to know Jesus because he limited his freedoms for their sake, 9:3-14. The world (9:7), the Law (9:8-13), and the Lord (9:14) all confirm Paul's right to receive financial support as a gospel worker. But Paul gave up his right to payment for the sake of the Corinthians hearing the gospel – 9:12b.

Corinthian culture valued paying philosophers who were gifted speakers. In Corinth, Paul deliberately earned money from tent-making so he could offer the gospel free of charge. He did not use eloquent speech (2:1). Paul was prepared to risk the Corinthians looking down on him as weak and unspiritual so that they would understand the grace of the gospel. Paul forgoes his rights when they are an obstacle to people hearing the gospel.

Paul was criticised for how he lived. We expect opposition from outside the church. But the bigger difficulty is criticism from Christians when we do gospel things. Gospel decisions often involve opening yourself up to criticism from Christians - as we adjust what we do on Sundays to be more welcoming and as we change our own lives and behaviours.



### Going Deeper

- What 'rights' and freedoms do you insist on at church? *The freedom to be in growth group with my close friends? The right to have the building look the way I want? The freedom to speak to my friends after the gathering? The freedom to participate and attend on my terms when it suits my schedule? The right to sit with the same people in the same place every week?*



### Prayer

**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, you are love, and love is from you. You love my friends and family more than I could ever know.

**Confession:** Sorry for when I don't love you, my friends, or my family, and prioritise my comfort and need to be right over their knowledge of you.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you for the many saints who have endured hardship so that I may know you and the hope you offer.

**Supplication:** May I endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. In the patient name of Jesus, Amen.

## Week Two: 1 Corinthians 9 - Day 2

### Recap

For the sake of the salvation of the Corinthians, Paul gave up his right to receive payment for preaching the gospel to them.



### 1 Corinthians 9:15-23

But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me, for I would rather die than allow anyone to deprive me of this boast. 16 For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me. 18 What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make full use of my rights as a preacher of the gospel.

19 Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.



### Exploring the Passage

- Why doesn't Paul make use of his rights and freedoms?
- What does Paul do with his freedom?
- What is the driving motivation in Paul's life?



### Explaining the Passage

At his conversion, Paul saw Jesus and he was commissioned by Jesus to be an apostle. He would proclaim Jesus to Gentiles and Jews, and suffer as he did so – see Acts 9:15-16. Paul was single-mindedly devoted to preaching the gospel, 1 Corinthians 9:15-19. This meant Paul gave up his rights and made himself 'a servant to all' so that people might hear the gospel and be saved, 9:19-22.

In Bible terms, all of humanity is summed up by the words 'Jew' and 'Gentile'. Jews are those 'under the law' and Gentiles are those 'outside the law'. Paul changed his culture, food, customs, clothes – whatever wasn't opposed to the law of Christ – depending who he was ministering to so that they would hear the gospel.

True gospel freedom involves being a servant to others so that they might be saved.



## Going Deeper

- What does it look like for you to 'become all things to all people' so that you can share the blessings of the gospel with them?
- What activity could you do with a friend or family member that you don't necessarily enjoy? So that like Paul, you can use your freedom to love those who don't yet know Jesus.



## Prayer

**Adoration:** God Almighty, you became weak for the weak, that we may become strong. You took on flesh that we may have Spirit. You became like us, so that we may become like you.

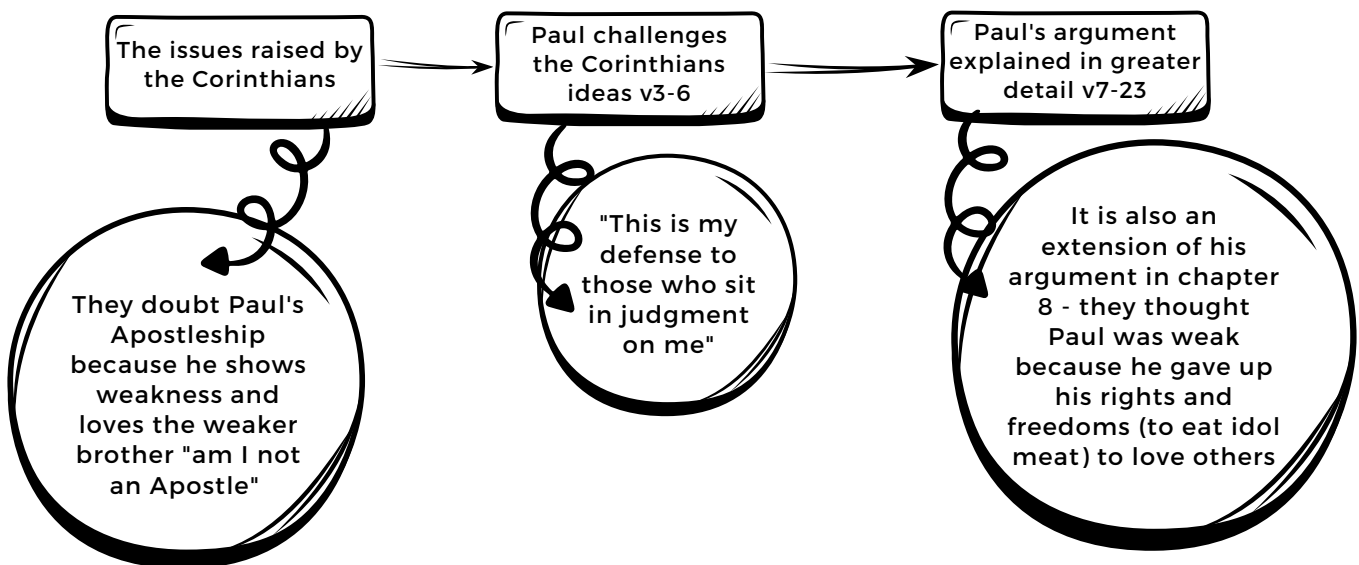
**Confession:** Sorry for the many times I have insisted on being strong so that I look good. Sorry for when I have thought I have to be strong so you look strong.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you for sending your son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. He is the servant of all who makes a way for all the children of God to enjoy their reward in heaven with you.

**Supplication:** Help me to use the freedom you give me to be a servant of all. Help me be weak for the weak, be driven to be all things to all people, so that some may be saved and you may be glorified.

In the glorious name of Jesus, Amen.

Again we see a logical flow similar to chapter 8:



## Week Two: 1 Corinthians 9 - Day 3

### Recap

Paul gave up his rights and became a servant of unbelievers for the sake of their salvation.



### 1 Corinthians 9:22-27

To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 26 Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. 27 No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.



### Exploring the Passage

- What lessons can we learn from athletes as we forego our rights for the salvation of others?
- What lessons can we learn from athletes as we run our own race of faith?



### Explaining the Passage

Runners run the race. Their aim is to finish the race to receive the prize. Running the race affects all of their life – they are self-controlled and disciplined in everything. They don't risk disqualification.

Like runners, Christians have a future goal – the gathering of all believers in the new creation. This goal directs our actions now – we live for the salvation of others. Like Paul we will be self-controlled and disciplined in setting aside our freedoms now so that others are saved. We look forward to enjoying the blessing of salvation with others in the new creation.

The Corinthians have taken their eyes off the goal. They live now as though the future blessing of the new creation has already arrived, (recall 4:8). They aren't living for the 'not yet'. We need to run the race according to the pattern Paul gives us – run in the right direction, keep running (not sit around, get distracted), reach the end – forgoing our freedoms so that non-believers may be saved, and so that we continue in the faith.



## Going Deeper

- What are you doing to get people into the new creation with you?
- In what areas of your life do you need to adopt the freedom of self-control, discipline, and routine to ensure that you nurture and grow your own faith?



## Prayer

**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, you have promised an imperishable wealth to those who run the race of faith. You have shared of your very glory and love.

**Confession:** Sorry for the many times in which I have not been self-controlled, where I have run aimlessly, and boxed as one beating the air.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you that because of what Jesus has done you will welcome me and give me the prize of glory. Thank you that I will sit on the throne at your right hand with Christ forever, hearing your words, "well done good and faithful servant".

**Supplication:** Help me to discipline my body and keep it under control. To run the race, that both I and those I tell about you, would take hold of the prize of glory.

In the name of our conquering King Jesus, Amen.



## Week Two: 1 Corinthians 9 - Day 4

### Review

Today we will read all of chapter 9 and summarise the key point.



### 1 Corinthians 9

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord? 2 Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you! For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

3 This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me. 4 Don't we have the right to food and drink? 5 Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas? 6 Or is it only I and Barnabas who lack the right to not work for a living?

7 Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk? 8 Do I say this merely on human authority? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? 9 For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? 10 Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. 11 If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? 12 If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?

But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 Don't you know that those who serve in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? 14 In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

15 But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me, for I would rather die than allow anyone to deprive me of this boast. 16 For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me. 18 What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make full use of my rights as a preacher of the gospel.

19 Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 26 Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. 27 No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.



## Exploring the Passage

- What is Paul's key point in one sentence?
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## Explaining the Passage

Use your freedom in Christ for the salvation of non-believers.

Paul gave up his rights for the salvation of the Corinthians. Paul became a servant of all types of people so that they might be saved. When we follow the example of Paul we won't live as though the new creation has arrived now. We will give up our rights now in order that others may be saved to enjoy the new creation with us.

The whole of chapter 9 can be summarised by Paul's conclusion in 1 Corinthians 10:31-33 -

*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— 33 even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.*



## Going Deeper

- What does it look like for you to seek the salvation of others?



## Prayer

**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, to you alone belongs the honour and glory.

**Confession:** Sorry for when I have sought my own glory and caused offence to you, your church, and to others.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you that all can be saved in you.

**Supplication:** Help me to seek not my own good, but the good of many, that they may be saved.

In the saving name of Jesus, Amen.

## Week Three: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 - Day 1

### Introduction

Paul urges Christians to follow his example and love weak believers. To give up their freedoms in Christ when necessary for the salvation of those new to the faith or at risk of falling away. He also encourages them to use their freedom to love those who are not yet believers - and to ensure that they run the race of faith.

Paul opens 1 Corinthians by reminding us that God saves and keeps us in the faith – recall 1:8-9. One way God does this is by giving us warnings in his word to encourage us to ‘run the race’ God’s way, 9:24-27.



### 1 Corinthians 9:24-10:6

24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 26 Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. 27 No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. 2 They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 3 They all ate the same spiritual food 4 and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

6 Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.



### Exploring the Passage

- How are the people of Israel in the Old Testament an example for believers in Christ today?

Chapter 10 is the logical conclusion of chapters 8 and 9.





## Explaining the Passage

The Corinthians were at risk of being like the Israelites – a rescued people that failed to reach their destination of the promised land, 10:5.

The Israelites were saved by God. They were baptised – that is, they thoroughly experienced God's rescue (the sea) and his presence (the cloud). The Israelites ate and drank God's food, in other words, they belonged to God. Just as we are rescued by Jesus so were the Israelites ('the Rock was Christ'). God blessed the Israelites with salvation but most of them rejected God – they desired evil. God scattered their bones in the wilderness.

Israel provides an important warning to us to keep running the race, to keep on trusting Jesus and so live in obedience, love and service of him. We are not to take our eyes off the goal and live as though the present world is all there is. Past faith won't save you – faith must continue.



## Going Deeper

- What amazing things has God done in your life that you can be quick to forget?
- What habits - like an athlete's regular training - can you implement to help you keep your eyes fixed on Jesus?



## Prayer

**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, you rescued your people from Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. You guided them with a cloud and parted the Red Sea. You gave them manna in the wilderness and brought forth water from a rock.

**Confession:** Sorry for when I forget your miraculous works and saving grace, desiring evil like the Israelites and running aimlessly into the wilderness.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you for rescuing me from slavery to sin, for taking me from death to life as I am baptised into Christ's death and resurrection, and for hydrating me with the life giving water that is your son.

**Supplication:** Help me to learn from the example of the Israelites, and to not follow their example, but instead to follow the example of Paul as he follows the example of Christ.

In the miraculous name of Jesus, Amen.

## Week Three: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 - Day 2

### Recap

We are not to be like most of Israel who rejected God's rescue and chose evil desires. We are to run the race as we wait for the new creation by continuing in Christ – turning from evil desires and forgoing our rights for the salvation of others.



### 1 Corinthians 10:6-11

6 Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry." 8 We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died.

9 We should not test Christ, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. 10 And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

11 These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come.



### Exploring the Passage

- What evil did the Israelites desire?
- How did God respond to the evil of the Israelites?



### Explaining the Passage

The sins that Israel committed back then took place as examples for us 'on whom the culmination of the ages has come', 10:6 and 11. This is the age of receiving God's gift of salvation and proclaiming the gospel to the world. It is not the age to live for this world and sinful desires as Israel did.

Paul gives four examples of how Israel desired evil when they were in the wilderness on the way to the promised land:

- Idolatry – see Exodus 32:1-10
- Sexual immorality – see Numbers 25:1-5
- Testing the Lord – see Numbers 21:1-7
- Grumbling particularly against God's appointed leader – see Numbers 14:1-4 and 16:1-5.

The Corinthians were looking like Israelites. They committed idolatry and sexual immorality, did not trust God's promises, and they grumbled against God's appointed leader Paul, just as the Israelites grumbled against God's appointed leader Moses – e.g. 1 Corinthians 5:11, 6:15-20, 4:8-20 and 9:1-2.

We will fail to finish the race and reach the goal if we reject God and pursue evil desires. This is the age for salvation – let's make God, and proclaiming his gospel, our priority.



### Going Deeper

- What parts of your life reflect that you are living in the age of receiving and proclaiming God's gift of salvation?
- Where are you being an 'Israelite' or 'Corinthian' by putting other things before God, being sexually immoral, not trusting God's promises, and grumbling against God's appointed leaders?
- Talk to a trusted friend today if God has put it on your heart to bring a hidden sin to light. Confess your sin to God, knowing that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."



### Prayer

**Adoration:** Lord of History and God of Nations, you saved your people from Egypt and made a nation out of the slave.

**Confession:** Sorry for when I, like Israel, look longing back to Egypt and put other things before you. Sorry for when I defile myself and the body of Christ with sexual immorality, doubt your goodness and promises, and grumble against those whom you have appointed to serve your people and preach your word.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you that the history of Israel is my instruction and not my future. That I look forward to life with you now and forever - knowing that you are faithful and just and will forgive my sins and purify me from all unrighteousness.

**Supplication:** Help me to continue learning from those who have gone before me. To continue confessing my sin and bringing light into the dark pockets of my life. That you may glorified as I receive and proclaim your salvation.

In the merciful name of Jesus, Amen.



## Week Three: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 - Day 3

### Recap

God has saved us. As we look forward to the new creation, we are to run the race – we are not to pursue evil as the Israelites did but instead seek the salvation of others.



### 1 Corinthians 10:11-13

11 These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. 12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.



### Exploring the Passage

- What does this passage teach us about the temptations that we face?
- What hope does this passage give when we feel overwhelmed by sin?



### Explaining the Passage

We are to be careful of Israel's example so we don't fall as Israel did. The temptations you experience are no different to those experienced by the Israelites. 'No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind' is not a comforting statement of 'you are experiencing normal humanity'. Rather it is a warning – look what happened to the people who dealt with these things before. What you are doing isn't anything new and don't think the outcome will be different for you. If you turn from God to ongoing sin, the outcome will be no different for you than it was for the Israelites.

But take heart there is a way out because God is faithful. The way out is to continue in the gospel - the good news that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus – trusting Jesus and being a servant of the gospel.

The Corinthians didn't want to take the way out God provided because they didn't want to follow the example of the apostle Paul. Don't be like the Corinthians. Listen to the warnings the apostle Paul gave to the Corinthians about the Israelites so that you do not fall away from Jesus.



### Going Deeper

- When was the last time you listened to a rebuke and changed your behaviour as a result of God's call on your life?
- How would your life look different if you responded to the last rebuke or challenge you received?



### Prayer

**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, you are our rescuer, you shine light in the darkness, make a highway in the desert, and bring the sinner home.

**Confession:** Sorry for shutting my ears and my heart to your words of challenge and rebuke, for being too proud to change and admit I am wrong, for failing to be careful of your instruction and warning.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you that because you are a faithful God you have kept your promise and provided a way out. For sending a deliverer to crush the devil and save me from your anger at my sin and rebellion.

**Supplication:** Help me to be careful. To listen to your words and your warning so that I don't fall, knowing that you have the strength to endure and are always with me.

I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, my Lord and my Light, Amen.

## Week Three: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 - Day 4

### Review

Today we will read all of chapter 10:1-13 and summarise the key point.



### 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. 2 They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 3 They all ate the same spiritual food 4 and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

6 Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry."

8 We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. 9 We should not test Christ, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. 10 And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

11 These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. 12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! 13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.



### Exploring the Passage

- What is Paul's key point in one sentence?

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## Explaining the Passage

Use your freedom in Christ for the sake of your own salvation.

Do not turn from God back to the way of idolatry and sinful rebellion as Israel did. If you do, you will fall and you will face the same judgement that they experienced in the wilderness. Rather the way of escape is to continue in the gospel and be a servant of the gospel. Run the race God's way as you look forward to the goal of your salvation.

Again we see that 10:1-13 can be summarised by Paul's conclusion in 1 Corinthians 10:31-33,

*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.*



## Going Deeper

- Where do you need to be careful so you don't fall?
- What do you need to start doing, not for your own glory, but for God's glory?



## Prayer

**Adoration:** Faithful God, you are the same yesterday, today, and forever. You provide a way out for those who call upon your name.

**Confession:** Forgive me for the many times I have failed to be careful and have ignored your warnings and commands. Forgive me for when I have let the love of this world drown you out, for when my sexual immorality has hurt myself, you, and the people of God. Forgive me for when I have doubted your promise and grumbled against you and my brothers and sisters whom Christ died to save.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you that because you are a faithful God you have kept your promise and provided a way out - that I may not be overthrown in the wilderness or destroyed by the destroyer. Thankyou for sending a deliverer to crush the devil and save me from your anger at my sin and rebellion.

**Supplication:** Help me to be careful and listen to your words and your warning so I don't fall. Help me know that you have the strength to endure and are always with me. May I never thirst or hunger as I eat and drink continually from the life-giving water and bread of life that is your son and my Lord.

I pray this in the name of Jesus, who alone has the words of eternal life, Amen.

## Week Four: 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1 - Day 1

### Introduction

In Chapters 8-10, Paul answers the Corinthian church's question about whether it is right to eat food that has been offered to idols. Paul's answer affects every aspect of our lives today because Paul uses the example of eating food offered to idols - and in this section also the issue of the Lord's Supper - to address the bigger issue in the whole letter - that the glory of God and cross of Christ leads us to live for eternity, not today. It leads us to love others, not ourselves, and it leads us to glorify God by telling others about him. To live like this is to follow Paul's example as he follows Christ's example.



### 1 Corinthians 10:14-22

Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. 15 I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. 16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? 17 Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.

8 Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar?

19 Do I mean then that food sacrificed to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? 20 No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. 22 Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy? Are we stronger than he?



### Exploring the Passage

- What are the two meals (tables) that are compared in this passage?
- What does it mean to 'participate' in the blood and body of Christ?



### Explaining the Passage

The Corinthians thought they were demonstrating their freedom by eating in the idol temples (not just eating meat offered to idols, but in the temple itself). But Paul says they need to stop and consider whether they are committing idolatry, 10:14-15.

Paul compares two meals – eating at the Lord's table and eating at the table of demons, 10:21. The key word is 'participation' – if you eat you belong to whoever owns the table. If you eat at the Lord's table you are saying Jesus is your Lord – Christ died and rose again for your salvation and you belong to his people, 10:16-17. If you eat the pagan sacrifice in the temple you are participating with demons who stand opposed to God, 10:20. By eating in the temple the Corinthians may not be showing their freedom, but showing where they really 'belong'.



## Explaining the Passage (continued)

When we celebrate the Lord's Supper we are participating in the death and resurrection of Jesus, with whom we were co-crucified and with whom we co-rise from the dead. There is a spiritual reality behind the physical symbol.

Paul agrees with the Corinthians that "an idol has no real existence", 8:4, 10:19-20. But Paul says there is a spiritual reality behind the idol that is demonic, deceptive and enslaving. When you worship an idol, the devil has you worshipping something other than Jesus. To do this is to adulterously provoke Jesus to jealousy, 10:22. You cannot serve Jesus and demons – to do so is to risk your salvation just as idolatrous Israel did.

If you think you are above falling into idolatry you will be complacent in the use of your Christian freedoms. You will put your belonging to Jesus at risk. And you won't be committed to saving people for the new creation.



## Going Deeper

2 Peter 1:3-4 says "His [God's] divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."

- As someone who participates in the divine nature, in the blood and body of Christ, what changes do you need to make to your life?
- Where are you claiming to participate in the divine nature, but really participating with the demons who stand opposed to God as you join with them in sexual immorality, selfishness, greed, and the desire for comfort and living for self?



## Prayer

**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, you have graciously provided a way for me to participate in the body and blood of Christ - the body that was broken for me - the blood that was shed for me.

**Confession:** Forgive me for when I run from your table and eat instead at the table of demons. When I provoke you to jealousy and repay your mercy with evil. When I forsake the cup poured out for me, and instead drink from the cup of demons and the corruption of this world.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you that the blood of Christ was poured out once for all. That Christ drank the cup of your wrath once for the forgiveness of all sin.

**Supplication:** Help me enjoy the food of your table, the joy of your family, and to not provoke you to jealousy. May I be jealous for your glory. In the name of the suffering servant and glorious King Jesus, Amen.

## Week Four: 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1 - Day 2

### Recap

Our everyday decisions not only affect the salvation of weak believers and unbelievers – they also affect our own salvation. We are to live God’s way and not head back to idolatry and the way of sin.



### 1 Corinthians 10:23-30

23 “I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but not everything is constructive. 24 No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.

25 Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, 26 for, “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.”

27 If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go,

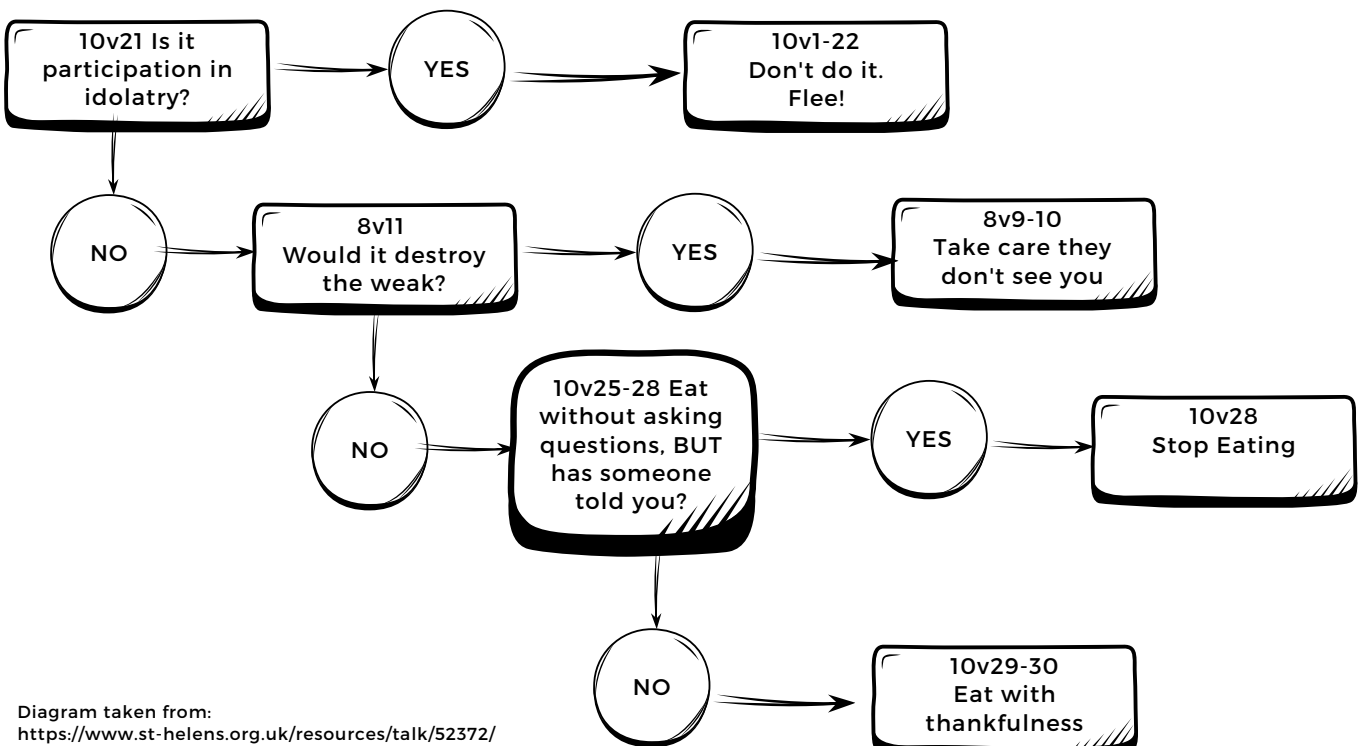
eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience.

28 But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, both for the sake of the one who told you and for the sake of conscience. 29 I am referring to the other person’s conscience, not yours. For why is my freedom being judged by another’s conscience? 30 If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for?



### Exploring the Passage

- When is it appropriate to eat meat offered to idols and when isn’t it? Why?
- What question should be asking ourselves as we consider whether we should do something?





## Explaining the Passage

In Christ, we are to use our freedom for the sake of the salvation of others, 10:23-24. What this looks like requires careful consideration. For example, when it comes to eating meat that has been offered to idols Paul says:

- Don't eat food at pagan sacrifices in the temple because that is participating in idolatry – 10:14, 21
- Do eat meat from the market which most likely would have been offered to idols because idols don't exist and all meat belongs to God – 10:25
- Do eat the meat when an unbeliever invites you for a meal. However, if someone raises the issue of pagan sacrifice and they think you are worshipping idols by eating the meat, then forgo the meat – not for your sake but for the sake of their salvation. Eating idol meat won't harm you, but it will fail to make the gospel clear to your friend – 10:27-29.

Paul stresses the freedom we have in Christ – 10:23, 25, 27, 29, 30. We can enjoy these freedoms with thankfulness. But above all Paul stresses sacrificial love – that we build up and seek the good of our neighbour, 10:23-24.



## Going Deeper

- What parts of your life do you need to give more thought to? Where have you just said 'it'll be alright' without thinking of how the decision will affect your faith, brothers and sisters who Christ died for, those who are yet to come to faith, and God himself?

## Prayer



**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, the earth is yours, and everything in it.

**Confession:** Sorry for when I seek my own good and not the good of my neighbour. When I forget that not all things are helpful and build up.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you for the freedom you give me to live in your response to your goodness.

**Supplication:** Help me decide everyday to love you and your people. To prayerfully consider and wrestle with how I show my love for you and build up the church.

In the name of Jesus, our sacrifice and saviour, Amen.

## Week Four: 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1 - Day 3

### Recap

In Chapters 8-10, Paul has been teaching us that we make godly decisions in everyday life by asking:

Does this worship God or is it idolatry?

Does this seek the good of weak believers and unbelievers?



### 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—

33 even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.



### Exploring the Passage

- What is to be our goal in life?
- How does this passage summaries everything Paul has taught so far in 1 Corinthians 8-10?



### Explaining the Passage

These verses summarise the principles Paul has taught in Chapters 8-10. We glorify God in all of life, including the mundane of eating and drinking, by serving others so that they will hear the gospel and may be saved. We do this even if this means we are disadvantaged by going without our freedoms in Christ. We do this for all people – ‘Jews, Gentiles and the church of God’ covers all of humanity. To live like this is to follow Paul’s example as he follows Jesus’ example.

Authentic Christians will follow the example of Paul’s cross-shaped lifestyle. The Corinthians wanted the things of heaven, all God’s promises for the future, now. They did not like the deny-yourself-and-take-up-your-cross-like-Jesus lifestyle. As a result, they were risking the future salvation of weak believers, unbelievers and even themselves.



### Going Deeper

- What does it look like for you to glorify God by living so that others hear and see the gospel in your life this week?
- How will it require you to be like Paul and not seek your own good?



### Prayer

**Adoration:** Father in Heaven, all power in Heaven and Earth belongs to you. To you the church on earth sings 'Glory'. To you belongs all the glory.

**Confession:** Forgive me for when I have sought my own good and not your glory. When I have loved myself and not you or your people. For when I have followed the example of the world and not your son.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you that you have given your glory to Jesus, and that he has shared it with me.

**Supplication:** Help me to live for your glory in everything I do, not seeking my own glory, that many may be saved. Help me follow the example of Paul as he followed the example of Christ.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and forever will be. Amen.



## Week Four: 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1 - Day 4

### Review

Today we will read all of chapter 10:14-11:1 and summarise the key point.



#### 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1

Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. 15 I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. 16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? 17 Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.

18 Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar? 19 Do I mean then that food sacrificed to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? 20 No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. 22 Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

23 "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but not everything is constructive. 24 No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.

25 Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, 26 for, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it."

27 If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. 28 But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, both for the sake of the one who told you and for the sake of conscience. 29 I am referring to the other person's conscience, not yours. For why is my freedom being judged by another's conscience? 30 If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for?

31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— 33 even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.



#### Exploring the Passage

- What is Paul's key point in one sentence?

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## Explaining the Passage

We glorify God by living in a way that others hear and see the gospel in our lives.

We consider the impact of our decisions in everyday life on the salvation of others. When we do this, we will look like Paul – we forgo our own good for the salvation of others.

Paul shows us what it looks like in 1 Corinthians 4:11-16, *"To this very hour we [apostles] go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. 12 We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; 13 when we are slandered, we answer kindly. We have become the scum of the earth, the garbage of the world—right up to this moment.*

*14 I am writing this not to shame you but to warn you as my dear children. 15 Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16 Therefore I urge you to imitate me."*



## Going Deeper

- When was the last time you chose comfort and your own 'good' over sharing the gospel?
- When was the last time you gave up your 'own good' for the salvation of others?
- What will it cost you to share the gospel this week?



## Prayer

**Adoration:** Lord Jesus Christ, you drank the cup of the Lord's Wrath so we can drink the cup of blessing from the table of the Lord. Your body was broken, that we may participate in your death.

**Confession:** Forgive me for when I have provoked you to jealousy. For when I have hurt you by defiling my body, by drinking the cup of the demons of this world, and by causing my brothers and sisters, who you died for, to stumble. For sinning not only against them but you as well.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank you that in spite of all this, you chose to work through me and in me, to make your glory known throughout the earth.

**Supplication:** Help me to follow the example of Paul and other mature Christians in my life. Help me to be wise in my decision making, seeking not my own good, but the good of my neighbour, that the church may be built up, that others may know your saving hope. Amen.

**Recommend Resources:**

The following resources have enabled the completion of this booklet and are helpful for further exploring 1 Corinthians -

**Andy Gemmill**

Talks from St Helen's Partnership Summer School 2009 -

<https://www.st-helens.org.uk/resources/series/4317/>

And CrossPreach -

[https://www.crosspreach.com/speaker/3539/andy\\_gemmill](https://www.crosspreach.com/speaker/3539/andy_gemmill)

**St Helen's Bishopsgate**

Central Focus Review Evenings, 1 Corinthians, 2020 -

<https://www.st-helens.org.uk/resources/series/5213/>

**Peter Orr on 1 Corinthians 15:58**

<http://thebriefing.com.au/2014/09/the-work-of-the-lord/>