

# Sermon Notes



## 1 Corinthians 8

### Corporate Prayer Time

1. LORD, please help us to do the “one another’s” well (*“love one another”, “pray for one another”, “encourage one another”, “serve one another”, “admonish one another”*). Guide our community groups and bless each of our community group leaders.

2. LORD, in the last days people will be *“lovers of self, arrogant, abusive...”* (2 Timothy 3:2). Please give us the wisdom and strength to love others well.

3. LORD, thank you for the freedoms we have in our country. Please give our government wisdom in navigating the tensions in the Middle East and in Russia. Help many to come to know you in the midst of uncertainty.

### Big Idea: Let love guide you in the ‘gray’!

1. What does the Bible say?
2. What are my vulnerabilities?
3. Could this behavior cause someone else to stumble?  
*“I’m free in Christ; tempered by love.”*

### I. Love is Greater than Knowledge (v. 1-3)

Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” This “knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up.<sup>2</sup> If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know.<sup>3</sup> But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

### Galatians 5:14

“For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

### II. Knowledge is Greater than Ignorance (v.4-6)

<sup>4</sup> Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.” <sup>5</sup> For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—<sup>6</sup> yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

## **Romans 14:14**

"I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean."

## **Romans 14:23b**

"For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin."

1. *What does the Bible say?*
2. *What are my weaknesses?*
3. *Could this behavior cause someone else to stumble?*

## **III. The Strong Should Help the Weak (v. 7-13)**

<sup>7</sup> However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. <sup>8</sup> Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. <sup>9</sup> But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.

**Conscience:** your sense of right and wrong.

Clear: "*my conscience is clear.*" (Paul)

Seared: "*grieve*" / "*quench*" the Holy Spirit.

Over-Sensitive: a breach in your past.

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## **III. The Strong Should Help the Weak (v. 7-13 continued)**

<sup>10</sup> For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? <sup>11</sup> And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. <sup>12</sup> Thus, sinning against your brother, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup> Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

**Big Idea:** Let love guide you in the 'gray'!

# Study Guide



## 1 Corinthians 8

**Big Idea: Let love guide you in the 'gray'**

1. Is it ok to smoke marijuana, watch R-rated movies, drink alcohol, wear skin-tight clothing, have a tattoo, and have unfiltered access to the internet (*all at once, Ha*)? The truth is that some of these things are not as 'black and white' as we might think. We see right and wrong through various lenses. How should we decide what to do in the 'gray' areas of life? Discuss.

2. Love is Greater than Knowledge. Read 1 Corinthians 8:1-3.

What was happening in Corinth regarding meat sacrificed to idols? Give an example of how "*knowledge puffs up*", and an example of how "*love builds up*". How can we be careful that our attitudes towards others are edifying and not harmful? Discuss.

3. Knowledge is Greater than Ignorance. Read 1 Corinthians 8:4-6.

Paul is telling the Corinthians that there is nothing to fear because of what an amazing and loving God we have. Read the following passages:

Galatians 5:1- Free in Christ

Romans 14:14- nothing is unclean

Romans 14:23- you must have faith

Discuss the way Satan (accuser), through the "*tree of the knowledge of good and evil*" tries lead us into shame, so that we believe that we are a "failure"! Give examples of how you discern between God's conviction and Satan's accusations.

4. The Strong Should Help the Weak. Read 1 Corinthians 8:7-13.

Our conscience is what tells us right from wrong. Share what it might be to have a clear conscience, a seared conscience and an over-sensitive conscience. Why do you think some people have an over-sensitive conscience? Give examples on how to love people well, by not causing them to stumble.

5. Deciding in the 'gray'.

When it comes to making our own decisions, give specific examples of how you decide in the gray:

a. What does the Bible say about this activity?

b. What are my own vulnerabilities?

c. Could this potentially lead someone to stumble?

**Big Idea: Let love guide you in the 'gray'**

Spend some time praying for each other to be a loving community that fosters growth and mutual support.