

Discussion Leader Guide: All to the Glory of God

Purpose:

- ? Guide conversation
- ? Encourage discovery
- ? Keep focus on Christ
- ? Help participants speak more than the leader

Day 1 Afternoon

Day Theme: The Filter for Our Freedom

One memorable sentence: What if your "rights" are destroying someone else's faith?

Poll: When faced with a decision about a personal freedom, what is your first thought? A. Do I have the right to do this? B. Is this technically a sin? C. How will this affect those watching me? D. What does the culture say is acceptable? E. Does this bring honor to God?

Opening Engagement: Imagine a group of hikers walking along a mountain trail. A sign reads, "Caution: Dangerous Cliffs. Stay on the Marked Path." Some ignore the sign because they want a thrilling selfie at the edge, insisting, "It's my hike, I have the right to go where I want!" But their choice doesn't just affect them - if they slip, they lead those following them right into danger.

Read the Text: (Ask someone to read 1 Corinthians 10:31-33, NKJV) "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 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."

What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

- ? The scope of the command: "eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do."
- ? The ultimate goal: "do all to the glory of God."
- ? The instruction regarding others: "Give none offence."
- ? Paul's personal method: "not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many."
- ? The desired outcome for others: "that they may be saved."

Guided Discussion:

- ? Why do you think Paul links everyday, ordinary activities like eating and drinking to the grand concept of "the glory of God"? (Allow discussion)
- ? What is the difference between "giving no offense" and simply being a people-pleaser who caves to peer pressure? (Invite multiple responses)
- ? How do our personal choices regarding our freedoms impact the wider church community?
- ? How does asking "Will this help save someone?" completely change the way we view our personal rights? (Ask follow-up: Have you ever given up a freedom for the sake of someone else's faith?)

Discovery Insight: Our freedom in Christ is not a license to please ourselves or live recklessly. Instead, it is an opportunity to serve others and glorify God, prioritizing the salvation of our community over our own personal rights.

Christ Connection: Jesus had every divine right and freedom, yet He laid them all aside to become a servant, ensuring that His life was a stepping stone for our salvation rather than a stumbling block.

Life Response: Evaluate one "freedom" or habit you enjoy this week through this specific filter: "Does this bring glory to God and build up the people around me?"

Encouragement Bridge: Having perfect theology means absolutely nothing without perfect love. Let's see how Paul applies this to the church in Corinth.

Day 2

Day Theme: The Danger of Being Right Without Love

One memorable sentence: Having all the right answers means absolutely nothing if you don't have love.

Poll: What is the biggest danger of acquiring deep biblical knowledge? A. Becoming arrogant and judgmental. B. Forgetting how to relate to new believers. C. Arguing over minor details and missing the big picture. D. Assuming knowledge equals spiritual maturity.

Opening Engagement: We probably all know someone who loves to win arguments. They are technically "right," but their attitude makes them terrible to be around. In Corinth, some believers had the "right" theology, but their arrogance was destroying the church.

Read the Text: (Ask someone to read 1 Corinthians 8:1-3, 9, 13, NKJV) "Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him... But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak... Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

? A direct contrast: "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity [love] edifieth."

? A warning about self-deception: "he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

? A caution regarding freedom: "lest... this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock."

? A radical conclusion: "I will eat no flesh while the world standeth."

Guided Discussion:

? Why does theological knowledge have such a natural tendency to "puff up" or inflate our egos? (Allow discussion)

? How does love operate differently than knowledge when dealing with someone who has a weaker understanding? (Invite multiple responses)

? Why was Paul willing to give up his personal liberty (eating meat) permanently just to protect someone else's conscience?

? How can we tell if our biblical knowledge is making us more loving, or just making us more proud? (Ask follow-up: When was the last time you prioritized a relationship over proving you were right?)

Discovery Insight: Theological knowledge without love inflates the ego and damages the vulnerable. True Christianity requires us to use what we know to serve, protect, and build up the faith of others, even if it costs us our own liberties.

Christ Connection: Jesus possesses infinite, perfect knowledge of the universe, yet He always uses His truth to heal, comfort, and edify the broken rather than to shame or confuse them.

Life Response: Pause before correcting someone this week and silently ask yourself: "Am I doing this to be right, or to build them up?"

Encouragement Bridge: Would you give up your rights to save a friend? Let's see how Paul modeled this kind of radical sacrifice.

Day 3

Day Theme: Surrendering Your Rights

One memorable sentence: What is your personal freedom actually costing the people around you?

Poll: When is it hardest for you to give up a personal right or privilege? A. When I have worked really hard to earn it. B. When someone else rudely demands that I give it up. C. When everyone else around me is enjoying it. D. When it costs me financially or physically.

Opening Engagement: We live in a culture obsessed with demanding, defending, and flaunting our personal rights. But what if the greatest demonstration of power isn't claiming a right, but voluntarily laying it down?

Read the Text: (Ask someone to read 1 Corinthians 9:1-4, 12, NKJV) "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? ... Have we not power to eat and to drink? ... If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ."

What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

? Paul asks rhetorical questions confirming his status: "Am I not an apostle? am I not free?"

? He claims a specific right: "power to eat and to drink" (financial support).

? He makes a deliberate choice: "we have not used this power."

? His motivation for the choice: "lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ."

Guided Discussion:

? Why does Paul spend so much time proving to the Corinthians that he has these rights, if he isn't even going to use them? (Allow discussion)

? What is the difference between having a right taken away from you, and choosing to lay it down voluntarily? (Invite multiple responses)

? What does it say about Paul's heart that he chose to do manual labor (tentmaking) rather than burden the church financially?

? What are some "rights" or preferences we might need to surrender today so we don't hinder the gospel in our community? (Ask follow-up: Is there a right you are stubbornly clinging to right now?)

Discovery Insight: Paul had every biblical right to demand financial support and certain comforts from the church, yet he deliberately surrendered those rights to remove any barrier to the gospel. Selfless love voluntarily sacrifices its own privileges for the good of others.

Christ Connection: Jesus surrendered the ultimate rights and glories of heaven, making Himself poor and taking the form of a servant, so that through His poverty we might become rich.

Life Response: Identify one personal preference you can lay down this week to bless someone else in your home or church.

Encouragement Bridge: We have immense freedom in Christ, but we must never become complacent. Let's look at a sobering warning from history.

Day 4

Day Theme: The Illusion of Immunity

One memorable sentence: Spiritual privilege doesn't make you immune to temptation.

Poll: Why do mature believers sometimes fall into serious sin? A. They stop relying on daily grace. B. They think they are strong enough to handle the temptation. C. They get careless about small compromises. D. They lose their first love for Jesus.

Opening Engagement: Have you ever looked at someone else's mistake and thought, "I would never do that," only to find yourself tempted by the very same thing later?

Paul gives a sobering history lesson to the over-confident Corinthians who thought their spiritual knowledge made them invincible.

Read the Text: (Ask someone to read 1 Corinthians 10:1-4, 11-12, NKJV) "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ... Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition... Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

- ? The Israelites shared massive spiritual privileges: "under the cloud," "passed through the sea," "spiritual meat," "spiritual drink."
- ? The source of their provision: "that Rock was Christ."
- ? The purpose of recounting this history: "written for our admonition."
- ? A direct warning: "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Guided Discussion:

- ? Why did experiencing incredible, undeniable miracles fail to keep the Israelites from falling into sin in the wilderness? (Allow discussion)
- ? What does the attitude of "thinking you stand" look like in a modern believer's life? (Invite multiple responses)
- ? Why is over-confidence actually one of the most dangerous spiritual states to be in?
- ? How can we learn from the Israelites' mistakes without living in constant fear of messing up? (Ask follow-up: Where does our true security come from?)

Discovery Insight: The ancient Israelites experienced incredible miracles and spiritual privileges, yet they still fell because they became complacent and idolaters. Having the "right" religious experiences or knowledge does not make us immune to falling.

Christ Connection: Jesus faced the most intense temptations in the wilderness, but He stood firm by relying entirely on the Word of God, providing the perfect victory that Israel failed to achieve.

Life Response: Pray a prayer of humble dependence today, acknowledging to God that without His daily strength and grace, you are vulnerable to falling.

Encouragement Bridge: Don't repeat the tragic mistakes of the past. We must fiercely guard our hearts against divided loyalties.

Day 5

Day Theme: Fleeing Divided Loyalties

One memorable sentence: You cannot sit at the Lord's table and the devil's table.

Poll: What is the most common form of modern idolatry? A. Obsession with money and material wealth. B. Addiction to entertainment and media. C. The pursuit of social status and reputation. D. The worship of personal comfort and convenience.

Opening Engagement: In ancient Corinth, social, civic, and business life revolved around pagan temple feasts. To refuse to attend these feasts was often considered social and professional suicide. But Paul drew a hard, non-negotiable line for the believers.

Read the Text: (Ask someone to read 1 Corinthians 10:14, 20-21, NKJV) "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry... But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."

What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

- ? An urgent command: "flee from idolatry."
- ? The reality behind the idols: "they sacrifice to devils, and not to God."
- ? An impossibility: "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils."
- ? An exclusive claim: "ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."

Guided Discussion:

- ? Why does Paul specifically command the believers to "flee" idolatry rather than to fight it or try to reason with it? (Allow discussion)
- ? What does it practically look like when a Christian tries to drink from the Lord's cup and the devil's cup at the same time? (Invite multiple responses)
- ? Why is God so opposed to divided loyalty in the hearts of His people?
- ? In what subtle ways are we tempted to blend the toxic values of our culture with the holy worship of God today? (Ask follow-up: Is there a specific area where you are trying to sit at both tables?)

Discovery Insight: Idolatry isn't just bowing to wooden statues; it is anything that competes with our exclusive loyalty to Jesus. We cannot blend the dark, compromising values of the world with the pure worship of God.

Christ Connection: Christ demands our whole, undivided heart because He gave His whole self for us on the cross. He is jealous for us with a perfect, protective love.

Life Response: Identify one media habit or cultural practice that divides your loyalty to Jesus, and take a tangible step to flee from it this week.

Encouragement Bridge: What is the ultimate filter for every decision you make? Let's look at Paul's grand conclusion to this conflict.

Day 6

Day Theme: The Ultimate Filter

One memorable sentence: Let's make love and God's glory our highest goal today.

Poll: How do you usually make difficult everyday decisions? A. I go with my gut feeling. B. I ask my trusted friends for advice. C. I try to find a Bible verse that gives a direct rule. D. I ask, "What brings the most honor to God?"

Opening Engagement: Instead of giving the Corinthians a massive, exhaustive rulebook for every possible scenario regarding food, culture, and rights, Paul gives them one brilliant, overarching principle for all of life.

Read the Text: (Ask someone to read 1 Corinthians 10:31-33, NKJV) "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 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."

What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

- ? The scope of the rule: "whatsoever ye do."
- ? The main objective: "do all to the glory of God."
- ? The relational boundary: "Give none offence" to anyone.
- ? Paul's personal approach: "not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many."
- ? The ultimate reason for this lifestyle: "that they may be saved."

Guided Discussion:

- ? How does doing something "to the glory of God" change the way we approach mundane tasks like eating, drinking, or going to work? (Allow discussion)

? Why is "the profit of many" (their salvation) inextricably linked to bringing glory to God? (Invite multiple responses)

? How does this one principle actually free us from living by a rigid, legalistic checklist of rules?

? If we applied this filter to our church's fellowship and activities, what might need to change? (Ask follow-up: How does this verse challenge your own personal priorities?)

Discovery Insight: The Christian life is not about asking "What am I allowed to get away with?" but rather "What brings the most honor to God and helps save others?" This shifts our focus entirely from selfish rights to selfless love.

Christ Connection: Jesus lived His entire earthly life with one singular, unwavering focus: to glorify the Father and secure the salvation of humanity, regardless of the cost to Himself.

Life Response: Before making a choice about how to spend your free time or money this weekend, ask yourself: "Does this bring glory to God?"

Encouragement Bridge: True freedom is found when we use our liberties to serve others and honor our Creator.

Day 7 Summary

5 Weekly Takeaways:

? Knowledge vs. Love: Having perfect theology without love only inflates our pride; true Christianity uses knowledge to build others up.

? Surrendering Rights: Following Jesus often means voluntarily giving up our personal rights and freedoms so we do not hinder the gospel.

? The Danger of False Security: Spiritual privilege does not equal immunity from sin; we must humbly rely on God's grace every single day to keep from falling.

? Fleeing Idolatry: We cannot mix the toxic values of the world with our worship of God; Jesus demands our exclusive, undivided loyalty.

? The Glory of God: The ultimate filter for every decision we make - whether eating, drinking, or anything else - is whether it brings honor to God and helps save others.

Final Reflection Question: Looking back over this week's study on personal freedom and selfless love, what is one specific right, preference, or habit God is asking you to lay down so that you can better reflect His glory to someone else?(Pause for responses)

Closing Appeal: We've discovered this week that the Christian life is not a competition for who has the most knowledge or the most freedom. It is a call to follow the self-sacrificing path of Jesus. He laid down His ultimate rights to save us. As we go through our week, let's refuse to let our freedom become a stumbling block. Instead, whether we eat or drink, let us do absolutely everything to the glory of our wonderful God.