



A Worship Discussion Guide for Individuals, Groups & Families for the week of December 3, 2023

Read the Bible passage aloud in your group meeting. This is a worship discussion guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for your meeting, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

Warm Up

- What do you need to know to love someone who is different than you?

I Corinthians 8:1-13

Do Not Become a Stumbling Block

¹Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." This "knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up. ²If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. ³But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

⁴Therefore, 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." ⁵For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"—⁶yet 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.

⁷However, 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. ⁸Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For 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? ¹¹And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. ¹²Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

- In Corinth, animals offered as sacrifices to pagan gods were often sold in the public market as food. The Corinthians Christians seemed to be asking a question of discipleship in light of this practice. How would you summarize their question?
- According to Paul, what do mature Christians know about food sacrificed to idols? (4-6, 8)
- Paul also notes that such knowledge can open us up to other temptation. What is at risk? (1-3)
- What does Paul say is more important than the knowledge that we are free in Christ? (9-13)
- Have you ever set aside your freedom in Christ for the sake of love? What was that like?
- Jesus used His freedom to love us—even to the point of dying for us when we had no love for Him. Reflect on this week's passage together, and use it as a guide for a time of prayer.

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www.wepc.org/resources/sermons-media-study-guide

Questions? Contact Pastor Kevin Greene,
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WEEK OF DECEMBER 3RD

O Emmanuel

SING



READ

Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Matthew 28:18b

And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

REFLECT

*O come, O Come, and be our
God-with-us
O long-sought With-ness for a
world without*
— Malcolm Guite

Think of a time when you felt completely alone. What emotions did you feel (angry, afraid, etc.)? What were you hoping for in that moment?

In this first antiphon we cry out to God to not leave us alone in our sin and suffering, and He answered us by giving us His Son, Immanuel which literally means "God with us." His very name is a promise! **What is it like to consider Jesus is with you in this moment?** Does it make a difference in your life?

During the season of Advent, **we celebrate the birth of Jesus our Savior and we wait expectantly for His second coming**, because we still endure suffering, loneliness, and sin in our hearts and in a broken world around us. Jesus has saved us, and yet there is still a war in our heart and in the world. As we wait for all things to be restored, He has promised to be with us by sending the Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts – to never leave you. **Why is it easy to forget God is with us?**

PRACTICE

This coming week:

Consider what distractions (busyness, pride in ourselves, present suffering) keep you from remembering that God is with you during the week. Ask Jesus for grace to see His love and power.

Think of a time in your life when you were comforted by God's presence. Share with a friend or family member about that experience this week.

PRAY

Merciful God, always with us, always coming; We confess that we do not know how to prepare for your Advent. We have forgotten how to hope in miracles; we have ignored the promise of your kingdom; we get distracted by all the busyness of this season. Forgive us, God. Grant us the wonder of the shepherds, the courage of the Magi, and the patient faith of Mary and Joseph, that we may find the good news of a child born for us. Now, in the quiet of our hearts, we ask you to make us ready for His coming. Amen.