

Small Group Guide: *Loving the Weaker Believer* - 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
***The Gospel Centered Life* - Part 6, 07/19/26**

Icebreaker Question: What's one food rule or restriction you grew up with (religious, cultural, or family-based)? Looking back, do you still follow it? Why or why not?

Recap:

- Gospel Centered Lives are Free from Fear—Idols are powerless; we serve the one true God who is greater than any spiritual force.
- Gospel Centered Lives are Led by Love—Christian freedom must be governed by love for weaker believers.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 8:1,10. What was the specific issue the Corinthian church was dealing with regarding food sacrificed to idols? Why was this such a divisive topic for Jewish and Gentile believers?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 8:1-3 and Proverbs 3:5-7. Paul contrasts knowledge and love. What's the difference between knowledge that 'puffs up' and love that 'builds up'? Can you think of examples from your own life?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, 1 John 4:4, Psalm 23:4, and Isaiah 44:9-19. Paul says 'an idol is nothing at all.' What does he mean by this? a) How does this truth set believers free? b) What fears—religious, spiritual, or otherwise—might be holding you back from living freely in Christ? c) How does the truth that 'the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world' address those fears?
4. Read John 1:17, and Ephesians 4:15. John clearly contrasts how 'the law was given through Moses' and 'grace and truth came through Jesus'. What was his point? a) How have you experienced the tension between truth and grace? b) Where do you naturally fall on this spectrum—more toward 'truth-telling' or 'grace-giving'? c) How can you grow toward the middle?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 8:9, Romans 14:13-21 and Philippians 2:3-8. What are some modern examples where exercising our Christian freedom might cause a weaker believer to stumble? a) How do we distinguish between a weaker believer who genuinely might be led into sin by our example, versus a critical or controlling person who simply disagrees with our choices? And what should we do if the person is just being critical?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 8:13. What's something you might need to willingly give up for the spiritual good of someone else? How does that make you feel?
7. Read Romans 12:1-2; James 1:22-25; 2 Corinthians 5:17. Are you living a gospel-centered life? How has your life actually changed since becoming a follower of Jesus—beyond just attending church or reading your Bible?

Key Takeaways:

- Biblical literacy matters—We need to know what Scripture actually teaches, not just what sounds good or is popular on social media.
- Idols are powerless—There is only one God, and we don't need to fear false gods, spiritual forces, or demonic powers because God's Spirit in us is greater.
- Love limits liberty—Spiritual maturity isn't measured by how many freedoms we exercise, but by how willingly we surrender them for others.
- Truth must be handled with grace—Truth without grace is legalism; grace without truth is license. Neither is loving.
- Christian freedom isn't about self-expression but serving others—We've died to ourselves and our rights; now we live for Christ and others.

Prayer:

- Freedom from fear—That we would walk confidently in the truth that God in us is greater than any force against us
- Growth in love—That we would value others' spiritual wellbeing more than our personal rights and freedoms

- Wisdom and discernment—To know when to exercise freedom and when to limit it for love's sake
- Biblical understanding—That we would grow in knowledge of God's Word while remaining humble and grace-filled
- Transformation—That our lives would increasingly reflect Christ, not just in religious activities but in genuine heart change