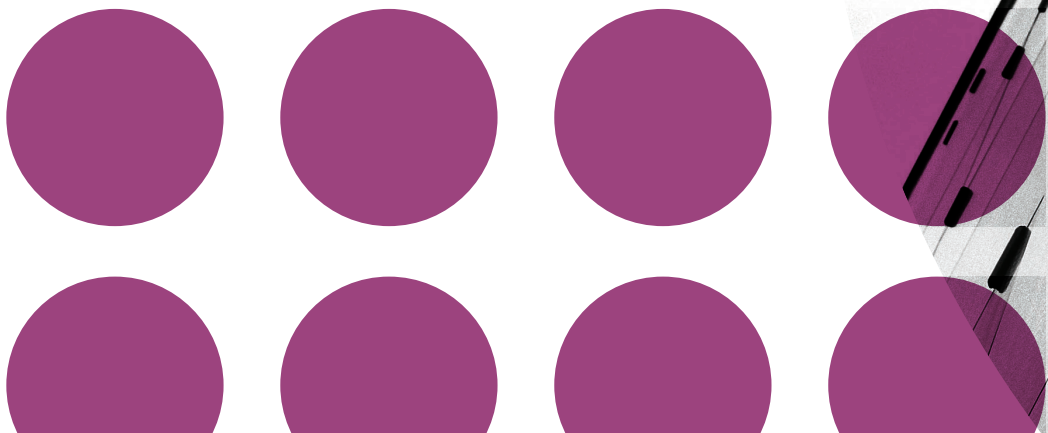


# HOLINESS IN FREEDOM: UNITY

1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1





03

## Daily Readings

- 01 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1
- 02 Psalm 24
- 03 Philippians 2:1-8
- 04 1 Timothy 4:1-8
- 05 Colossians 3:17
- 06 Romans 14:10-14
- 07 Romans 14:15-23



WEEK 03

## Holiness in Freedom: Unity

The long discussion of eating meat sacrificed to idols comes to a conclusion in this week's passage. While Paul defends the believer's freedom concerning matters of food, he also reminds the believer to be very concerned about the well-being of others. He presents hypothetical situations involving eating in the homes of non-believers—a practice Paul assumes believers *will* engage. A believer's pursuit of holiness should not involve distancing from non-believers. How could there be a witness to the gospel if that were the case? To eat in someone's home would show an intimate kind of friendship.

In Paul's hypothetical scenario, the non-believer serves the meal without any discussion about the food's origin. The question posed is whether the believer needs to investigate if the food was previously offered to a pagan god.

## THE BELIEVER'S FREEDOM

“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.

<sup>24</sup> No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.

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

<sup>27</sup> If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. <sup>28</sup> 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.

<sup>29</sup> I am referring to the other person’s conscience, not yours. For why is my freedom being judged by another’s conscience? <sup>30</sup> If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for?

<sup>31</sup> So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. <sup>32</sup> Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— <sup>33</sup> 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.

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



## WARM UP

Consider this saying: “It’s easier to ask for forgiveness than permission.”  
Has this mindset ever led you into trouble?

Have you ever stood firmly on your convictions, not being swayed by others?

## EXPLORING 1 CORINTHIANS 10:23-11:01

In verse 23, Paul calls out two phrases the Corinthians use to justify their freedom. How does he correct them? How does verse 24 instruct them on properly using and applying their freedom?

Paul makes the point that pagan worship did not contaminate meat that had been sacrificed to idols and mature believers were free to eat it. In verses 25-30, what is Paul saying about Christian liberty? Why does he encourage them not to eat the meat in the presence of unbelievers? Reading verses 32-33, how important is it to avoid becoming a stumbling block?

Many find it difficult to navigate “gray areas.” How do you manage these types of situations?

How does verse 31 relate to Colossians 3:17? What is the benefit (to you, to others, the church) of seeking to glorify God in everything we do?

In 11:1, Paul makes it clear that it is his ultimate goal to follow the example of Christ. What characteristics of Paul's life inspire you? What is the ultimate goal of *your* life?

### APPLICATION

Perhaps there are “gray areas” you have been careless with lately that may be stumbling blocks to others. List them. What are steps you can take to remove those barriers in your relationship with others?

### THINK

Compare your participation in the Christian life with a football game. Which phrase best describes you?

- In the bleachers (I'm just watching from a distance.)
- On the bench (I'm excited and ready to get in the game!)
- On the field (I'm in the game and loving every minute of it!)
- In the locker room (For some reason, I'm done. I need help.)

### PRAYER

List one or two prayer concerns you can share with your group. If you have one, share a praise with the group.

