



small groups

Discussion Guide



Uncommon Liberty

1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1

Ice Breaker

(5 minutes)

Discuss

- How or how much have you been following the news from Charleston, McKinney and other situations where race is part of the story? Where do you get your news?
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Lesson Review

(35 minutes)

Corinthians were marked by their lack of moral restraint. To be "Corinthianized" meant to live in an immoral, hedonistic way.

Discuss

- Compare the meanings of "Corinthianized" and "Americanized."

Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1

Barry explained Paul's pattern in this passage: Principle - Practical - Principle. Paul explains the principle twice, bookending its application for a specific issue in ancient culture.

Principle: Liberty limited by love

We have freedom in Christ to do all kinds of things from a joyful, grateful heart. We shouldn't be constrained by religious rules designed to earn us the love of God or the approval of others. But we are constrained by the law of love that demands that we consider the consciences of others when we decide how to live.

"Love, and do what thou wilt."

– Augustine of Hippo

Practical: Food sacrificed to idols

This was a pressing and heated topic to the ancient Corinthian church. Believers on one side of the debate said that eating meat sacrificed to idols was, in fact, endorsing idolatry. Believers on the other side said that loving a pagan culture meant sharing meals with them and that Christ's sacrifice had set Christians free to do so. They appealed to Paul to settle the matter, but Paul refused to give them a rule. Instead, he told them to do what love would do. Practically, this meant that they should embrace their freedom to eat consecrated meat unless doing so would not be loving. If it confirmed idolatry in the mind of a pagan or confused faith in the mind of an immature believer, then it wasn't the loving thing to do.

Discuss

- Have you ever seen this in action? Do you know someone who limits their freedom out of respect for someone else?
- How does that affect the one receiving respect? How does it affect onlookers?

Barry called this "Uncommon Solidarity" meaning that unity in the church of God should be a higher value for Christians than cultural disputes. We must be more interested in laying down our rights than defending them.

Application

(20 minutes)

1. We must relearn to see ourselves as deeply interconnected.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:13-14, 26

Discuss

- How can you live more connected with other believers? (Hint: What you're doing now is a good start!)

2. We must relearn the importance of sharing tables with people who are different than us.

Jesus' ministry brought together disparate races and political parties. Are we doing the same?

Discuss

- Who do you know who is different than you, whom God may want you to pursue? How will you reach out to them this week?

3. We must relearn the fundamental posture of discipleship.

That posture is setting aside ourselves for the sake of others.

Discuss

- How can you set yourself aside for someone else's sake this week?

