

Summit Woods Baptist Church
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1 Corinthians 8:7-13

Remember to begin your study early in the week so that you have time to really think (and keep thinking) about the passage without being rushed.

❖ Day 1

Read 1 Corinthians 8:7-13 (both in your own Bible and in the paragraph flow below**).

For these lessons, the sermon text is provided in a format that visually helps display the structure of the paragraph or section of text. The main verbs are underlined. The main clauses remain to the left, and the supporting clauses are either directly underneath when they have equal priority to what comes before, or are tabbed to the right when the clause supports, develops, or draws a conclusion from a neighboring clause.

**When thinking through compound-complex sentences, sometimes it can be helpful to pull longer supporting phrases out of the middle so that the core of the sentence is more easily recognized. In the text below, this is accomplished through the use of ellipses (...) and brackets ([]). An ellipsis marks where the phrase was pulled from, and the phrase has been placed in brackets on the line below.

⁷However, not all possess this knowledge.
But some ... eat food as really offered to an idol,
[, through former association with idols,]
and their conscience ... is defiled.
[, being weak,]

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 ... to eat food offered to idols?
[, if his conscience is weak,]

¹¹And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed,
the brother for whom Christ died.

¹²Thus, ... you sin against Christ.
[sinning against your brothers
and wounding their conscience when it is weak,]

¹³Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble,
I will never eat meat,
lest I make my brother stumble.

1. Picking up from last week's passage, what topic is Paul discussing?

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2. What “knowledge” does not everyone possess?
3. What caused some to treat the food “as really offered to an idol”?
4. What does “association with idols” mean?
5. How does Paul describe these people’s conscience?
6. What does it mean for their conscience to be defiled?
7. What does Paul explain about food in verse 8?
8. What does “commend us to God”? (Note: This phrase could also be translated “bring us close to God”.)
9. Is it sin in and of itself for a believer to eat food that had been offered to an idol? From where in the text do you get your answer? (see verse 9)

❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 8:7-13 again.

10. According to the text, how do we know that the people Paul describes as having a “weaker conscience” are believers?

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11. In what ways could violating his conscience “destroy” the weaker brother? (Note: In the Greek, there is an interesting word play between “encouraged” (could also be translated “be built up”) in verse 10 and “destroyed” in verse 11 – so that he is emboldened to do something that he thinks will benefit him but in reality does him harm.)
12. Does Paul command the Corinthians not to eat food that was offered to idols?
13. What is the command in the passage?
14. What does Paul say the result is for one who eats without due regard for his weaker brother?
15. Read Romans 14. How do Paul’s instructions there relate to this week’s passage (both for those with weaker and stronger consciences)?

❖ Day 3

Read 1 Corinthians 8:7-13 again.

16. Is the food itself really the issue?

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17. In this week's passage, what is the heart issue for the person with the stronger conscience?

18. In this week's passage, what is the heart issue for the person with the weaker conscience?

19. According to this week's passage, who has the primary responsibility to adjust his behavior, the one with the stronger or weaker conscience?

20. What does Paul say that he is willing to do for the sake of his weaker brothers?

21. Here in the United States, we are not likely to encounter the issue of whether or not to eat food that has been offered to idols. What situations can you think of where Paul's principles apply in our modern lives?

22. How should this passage impact the way you handle areas where you feel more liberty than other believers?

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23. How should this passage impact the way you handle areas where you feel less liberty than other believers?

24. Reread 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, and summarize all of chapter 8 by restating Paul's argument in your own words.

In preparation for Sunday, pray that we would not sin by causing each other stumble but that we would love each other well as we seek to faithfully follow Christ.