

TENSIONS

WEEK 3

DAY 1: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-6

As we witness continued restoration and salvation in the resurrected Jesus, the fullness of His life contrasts so starkly with the absolute, vacuous deadness of the gods and idols we once writhed under. When you came to a saving relationship with Jesus, what things in your life did the Holy Spirit reveal to be empty and dead because they were not of Christ? Why did those things need to go away? On the other hand, what things did you begin to see that demonstrated that true life was only found in Christ? How?

DAY 2: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 8

Now, as we read the full passage, if those “gods” and idols are truly dead, why did Paul caution against the Corinthians’ belief that they now had a right to eat food offered to idols? Food is not the important aspect here. Who is Paul imploring the Corinthians to be mindful of so that they do not create spiritual stumbling blocks for these people? Why is this important? How does this relate to our behavior as Christians today? How are we to treat freedom in Christ while caring for other people?

DAY 3: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 9:1-18

What “right” is Paul putting aside in order that he might share the Gospel more freely? Just like we read in yesterday’s passage, verse 14 says that the Lord commanded for this right to be allowed. So, then, why would Paul give up that right? What is getting in the way of you freely being able to share the Gospel with others?

DAY 4: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-27

Why is self-control an important facet for reaching lost people and sharing the Gospel? Why is it important in discipling new or struggling Christians? Does Paul conform himself to live under the standards Christ already freed him from? What’s different? Practically speaking, how can we imitate Paul in this way?

**DAY 5: READ EXODUS 17:1-7,
1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-13**

We all absolutely depend on Christ for life. Just like God, through Moses, provided water for the wandering Israelites, whose begrudging, bitter hearts tested and mistrusted His faithfulness, Jesus is our life-giving water in our sinful desert. Let's not insult the great sacrificial love and righteousness of Jesus by desiring the dead, insufficient things from which He's delivered us. Just as Christ delivers us from sin, He is faithful to deliver us through our times of testing and temptation. Cling to Him and nothing else, church.

**DAY 6: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 10:12-22,
DEUTERONOMY 32:1-47**

As followers of the one true God, we must be aware of the very serious, real nature of spiritual warfare. Something seemingly as innocuous as eating foods offered to dead, lifeless idols is actually described here as being offered to demons. We serve the one true God, no one or thing else. We cannot serve two masters. Let's be aware of our God's righteous desire to protect and guide us and, through the Holy Spirit's discernment, test everything so that we do not fall into the devil's traps. Is there something in or around you that would make God jealous for your time, affection, attention, resources or life? Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you discernment to reveal anything incongruous with Him.

**DAY 7: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 5:8,
MARK 12:28-34, ROMANS 15**

Let's let glorifying God be the aim of our lives and Christ-like love for others be the means through which we seek His ceaseless, infinite, enduring praise. Today, let's consciously choose to love God with all our hearts, minds, souls and strength in everything we do (1 Cor. 31). Let's choose to serve everyone around us, Christian or not, and behave in a way that seeks their ultimate benefit - through a deeper, more intimate relationship with Jesus. How can you do this today? Let's dwell on this mission and intentionally try to seek His glory and love our neighbors.