



# SHARED HUMILITY

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## Read Together

1 Corinthians 8:1-13, 10:23-32 & Romans 14:1-23

“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.”

*(1 Corinthians 10:31)*

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## Learn Together (watch week 3 video lesson)

As Paul planted new churches and made new converts among the Gentiles, there were constant threats to the unity or togetherness of the church and to the effectiveness of its mission related to many issues. In Corinth the issue was the eating of meat after it had been offered to idols. Paul’s view was that idols are nothing and there is one God so everyone was free to eat meat that was offered to non-existent gods. He knew and others knew that to be true. But there were converts who formerly had participated in idol worship and maybe other related practices who might still have been bothered or even tempted to revert to eating meat connected with their former way of life. To the Corinthians, Paul offered a caring, pro-unity solution. Those who knew that idols were nothing and who felt free to eat could eat, unless the situation in which they did so would jeopardize their sisters and brothers who didn’t yet have that knowledge so firmly fixed that they felt free to eat the benign meat.

In Romans 14, the debated issues that threatened the unity and cooperation of the churches of Rome were eating meat or staying vegetarian, drinking or not drinking wine, keeping holy days or not keeping them. Many of the different communities viewed the answers to such questions as being among the defining characteristics of their group. Paul reminded them that God is glorified when the church is unified in love even while disputing to discern what is indisputable and what is disputable.

## Pray Together

Ever-open and ever-present God, you understand us in deep and complex ways. You know us as both who we are and who we could be, and who you created us to be. Help us to gain that same perspective with each other and with ourselves, so as we journey in community, we might have a deeper appreciation of your truth.

*Amen*

*Paul reminded them that God is glorified when the church is unified in love even while disputing to discern what is indisputable and what is disputable.*



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## Reflect Together

Do you remember the first time you felt judged for something you deeply cared about? Maybe it was during a sporting competition or in the merciless halls of junior high. What was that like for you? What were your emotions in response, and how has judgment — either in that moment or judgment in general — affected your identity today?

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Cultivating humility is a lifelong process. Name a time in your life when, you now realize, you didn't have all the answers. How has that realization shaped the way you live now, knowing that there's always more to learn and new ways to grow?

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A diverse community, no matter the size, brings together people with all sorts of perspectives. Paul very clearly believes in an earnest search for the truth, but also is extremely cautious about judgmental divisions. How might we balance this nuance, perhaps looking toward Romans 14:6-7 and 10, along with the often quoted, “In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, and in all things charity.” What is essential to your faith and church understanding, and what is non-essential?

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## Serve Together

Be attentive when encountering differing opinions, whether in conversation, when scrolling social media or when watching the news. Instead of demonizing others, try looking at the comment, post or issue from their perspective. Even if you come away still thinking you are right, try earnestly to see where the other person is coming from. What experiences or information might be shaping another’s viewpoint? Extend the most gracious perspective, if not for their sake, for your own!

**NEXT WEEK: SHARED TABLE**

