

FLAMMABLE

"CONSUMED BY GOD"

1 CORINTHIANS 10:23-11:1

This Week's Core Competency

Worship – I worship God for who he is and what he has done for me. Psalm 95:1-7

- 1 Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
- 2 Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.
- 3 For the LORD is the great God,
the great King above all gods.
- 4 In his hand are the depths of the earth,
and the mountain peaks belong to him.
- 5 The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.
- 6 Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;
- 7 for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.

Worship is our response to who God is and what he has done for us. It has a deliberate and a spontaneous side. On the one hand worship is a discipline; it's something we do deliberately; it's liturgical. When we praise God for his holiness and ascribe to the LORD the glory due him, we worship. When we declare his glory for all to hear and tell of his marvelous deeds far and wide, we worship. The Psalmist puts it this way,

3 Declare his glory among the nations,

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

– Apostle Paul

his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

*7 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of nations,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.*

*8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come into his courts.*

*9 Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth. (96:3, 7-9)*

In this regard worship is an end in itself because God is worthy of our worship.

On the other hand, worship is a response; it's something we do spontaneously; it's encounter. Richard J. Foster touches on this aspect of worship when he writes, "Forms and rituals do not produce worship, nor does the disuse of forms and rituals. We can use all the right techniques and methods, we can have the best possible liturgy, but we have not worshiped the Lord until Spirit touches spirit" (*Celebration of Discipline*, 158, 59).

I'm amazed that actors can cry on demand, so to speak. Maybe I'm missing something, but how do they do that? I certainly can't cry on cue. Nevertheless, I'm touched by situations and circumstances that easily move me to tears. It seems to me that worship is like that. While worship is a discipline that's deliberate, it's also a reaction that's spontaneous. It's unscripted and unpredictable. We can't control it. For example, from time to time my mind wonders upon thoughts of God's matchless love in Christ Jesus, and I'm touched by his grace and moved to worship by thoughts of his love.

Reading scripture can prompt the same spontaneous response. Try reading Romans 8:38, 39, *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor*

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anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. See what I mean. Worship happens—in Bible study, in contemplation, in solitude and silence, in life lived to the glory of God.

In Romans 12:1 Paul says: "Therefore, I urge you, brother, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship," and in 1 Corinthians 10:31, a complementary passage, he says: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1

23 "Everything is permissible"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible"—but not everything is constructive. 24 Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.

25 Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, 26 for, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it."

27 If some unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. 28 But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, both for the sake of the man who told you and for conscience sake—29 the other man's conscience, I mean, not yours. For why should my freedom be judged by another's conscience? 30 If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for?

31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—33 even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved. 11:1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

Cf., another translation

23 "Everything is lawful," but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is lawful," but not everything builds others up. 24 Do not seek your own good, but the good of the other person. 25 Eat anything that is sold in the marketplace without questions of conscience, 26 for the earth and its abundance are the Lord's. 27 If an unbeliever invites you to dinner and you want to go, eat whatever is served without asking questions of conscience. 28 But if someone says to you, "This is from a sacrifice," do not eat, because of the one who told you and because of conscience—29 I do not mean yours but the other person's. For why is my freedom being judged by another's conscience? 30 If I partake with thankfulness, why am I blamed for the food that I give thanks for? 31 So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. 32 Do not give offense to Jews or Greeks or to the church of God, 33 just as I also try to please everyone in all things. I do not seek my own benefit, but the benefit of many, so that they may be saved. 11:1 Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- * Circle the quotation marks in v. 23.
- * Box "but" indicating *contrast* in vv. 23, 24, 28, 31.
- * Highlight vv. 24, 33b.
- * Circle "beneficial" in v. 23.
- * Circle "constructive" in v. 23.
- * Underline "good of others" in v. 24.
- * Circle "conscience" in vv. 25, 27, 28, 29.

- * Box "for" indicating *reason* in v. 26.
- * Underline "anyone" and "man who told you" in v. 28, and "other man's" in v. 29.
- * Circle "my" in v. 29, and "I" in v. 30.
- * Box "so" indicating *result* in v. 31.
- * Bracket "glory of God" in v. 31.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. "Everything is permissible" is in quotation marks (cf., 6:12). Why?
2. Explain the *contrast* between "permissible" and "beneficial."
3. Explain the *contrast* between "permissible" and "constructive."
4. Put what verse 25 means in your own words.
5. Explain what Paul means by "questions of conscience."
6. Is the informant at the table in vv. 28-29a a believer or unbeliever? What makes you think so?
7. Explain the relationship of verses 29b-30 (omitting the words "in the meal") to verses 25-26.
8. Put what "for the glory of God" means in everyday terms.
9. **Discussion:** People have religious convictions and some are legalistic. Talk about how "do not cause anyone to stumble" applies in regard to them.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

The biblical writers are more than stenographers; they're able authors, wordsmiths with a keen sense of literary design. Take the apostle Paul for example. He displays the skills of an author throughout his letter to the Corinthians. Consider the structure of 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1.

The Corinthians confused the true basis for Christian behavior. For them it was a question of knowledge and rights (*gnosis* and *exousia*). For Paul it was a question of love and freedom (*agape* and *eleutheria*). The apostle addresses these themes simultaneously as he comments back and forth regarding personal freedom and the benefit of others. He does this using *chiasmus*, a figure of speech using inverted parallelism. The structure of 10:23-11:1 looks like this:

A The criterion stated: the good of others (10:23-24)

B Personal freedom explained (10:25-27)

C The criterion illustrated: love governing liberty (10:28-29a)

B' Personal freedom defended (10:29b-30)

A' The criterion generalized: that all may be saved (10:31-11:1)

Such an artistic arrangement can hardly be accidental.

Paul states his thesis using contrast in verses 23-24. "Everything is permissible—but not everything is beneficial. 'Everything is permissible'—but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others." The quotation marks around the repeated saying indicate that Paul is likely quoting a Corinthian slogan, which the Corinthians deemed absolutely true, but he deems relatively true. His two qualifications make it clear that harmful things and destructive things are not permissible. Christians are not free to seek their own good at the expense of others.

In verses 25-27, he describes Christian freedom with respect to eating meat sold in the market. His rule for everyday life is a simple one. *Eat anything sold in the market—no questions asked*. Don't inquire as to its origin. In the words of one commentator: "Meat is meat; buy and eat" (Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT, 481). This was a very un-Jewish viewpoint coming from a Jew, seeing that Jews were expected to investigate carefully as to whether the meat in the *macellum* had

been previously sacrificed. So, as he did earlier in this epistle, and does elsewhere in his writings, Paul appeals to Scripture in support of his position (Ps. 24:1; 50:12), a position that he reiterates in 1 Timothy 4:4, "For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving."

In verses 28-29a, he illustrates the exercise of Christian freedom using a real life example. "If some unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience" (v. 28). In words similar to those in verse 25, Paul advises Christians in this situation to *eat anything served at the meal—no questions asked*. But if an unbeliever eating with you informs you that the meat is "sacrificial meat," then abstain for the sake of his conscience, that is, the informant's conscience. It's difficult to imagine exactly what Paul has in mind, as evidenced by the many different suggestions. One commentator offers this plausible interpretation: "The pagan's 'conscience' is not a reference to his convictions about what is right and wrong for himself, but his moral consciousness. He does not want his Christian guest to be unaware that he is being served food that the Christian might object to, and might choose to abstain from eating . . . If the Christian ate the meat, the pagan might conclude that his guest was doing something Christians should not do. He would be wrong, of course. Yet Paul advocated not violating the pagan's understanding of what Christians should or should not do, rather than have the Christian instruct the pagan about Christian freedom at the table" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 1 Corinthians," 2016 ed., 126, www.soniclight.com).

In verses 29b-30, he defends his own freedom from attack. The connection between these verses and the previous ones is debated (see note). Nevertheless, his use of the pronouns "my" and "I" together with the use of the indicative mood, i.e., "for why is my freedom judged by another's conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I slandered concerning that for which I give thanks?" (NASB), suggests he has in mind his own experience in Corinth. That being the case, verses 29b-30 relate to verses 25-26 rather than 28-29a. One commentator explains: "Since so much of the

language in the immediately following verses echoes 9:19-23, it seems probable that in dealing with the issue of Christian freedom in regard to *adiaphora* [nonessentials] like eating marketplace food, he has felt compelled to offer a final word of defense, precisely because this was the issue on which they were judging him" (Fee, 486).

In 10:30-11:1 he generalizes the thesis he stated in the opening verses. According to one commentator, these verses contain five ground-rules for life together in Christ. In his words, "They really need no more than stating, contemplating and obeying:

- i. 'Do all to the glory of God' (31)—not to establish my freedom.
- ii. 'Try to please all men in everything' (33)—not claiming my rights.
- iii. 'Seek the advantages of many' (33)—not my benefit or fulfillment.
- iv. 'Seek that many may be saved' (33)—not being

preoccupied with my personal salvation.

v. 'Be imitators of Christ' (11:1)—not boosting my reputation.

That is Christian freedom: being free from ourselves to glorify God by being like Christ" (David Prior, *The Message of 1 Corinthians*, TBST, 177).

The issue of personal freedom in regard to nonessentials in general, and more specifically, the limitation of that freedom for the sake of others continue to haunt the church. One commentator offers this assessment of the problem. "Conservatives on these issues simply fail to reckon with how 'liberal' Paul's own view really is . . . On the other hand, the assertion of freedom to the hurt of others is not the biblical view either. However, in most contemporary settings the 'offended' are not unbelievers or new Christians, but those who tend to confuse their own regulations with the eternal will of God" (Fee, 491).

The Message of the Passage

The exercise of Christian freedom must be tempered by what's good for others and what brings glory to God.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on the three "living questions" below to apply what you have learned this week.

• Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 23 **"Everything is . . ."** Cf., 6:12. Are these the words of Paul, the Corinthians, or both? According to one commentator, "'Everything is permissible for me' is almost certainly a Corinthian theological slogan. This is confirmed by the way Paul cites it again in 10:23; in both cases he qualified it so sharply as to negate it—at least as a theological absolute. The source of the slogan is debatable. Possibly the Corinthians had turned a Pauline position into a slogan for their own purposes. If so, their error would lie in making absolute what for Paul would always have been qualified by his 'in Christ' perspective. For him it is only as one is in Christ that 'everything is permitted me,' and in any case that would have to do with *adiaphora* (the nonessentials: food, drink, days, circumcision, etc.), not with Christian ethics" (Fee, 251-52).

v. 23 **beneficial** "There is no ambiguity as to what this means. It refers to what is beneficial for someone else. This is made clear by the second qualification, which does not make a new point but reinforces the first . . . together the two qualifications in effect bring *exousia* to its knees. For the Corinthians *exousia* meant the 'right' to act in freedom as they saw fit. For Paul, as with his own *exousia* in 9:12 and 18, it meant the 'right' to become slave of all; or as here, the 'right' to 'benefit' and 'build up' others in the body. For him nothing else is genuine *exousia*" (Fee, 479)

v. 23 **constructive** Cf., "builds others up" (NET); cf., v. 24. "It is not a Christian duty to seek out things that a man may be permitted to do; it is a Christian duty to build up the church. 'Freedom of the Christian is the freedom to play his part in the upbuilding of the community' (Barth, *C.D.* III. ii. 305f.). This he will do not by thinking of his own rights and privileges, but rather by considering others" (C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, HNTC, 239).

v. 25 **of conscience** "Without raising questions of conscience," suggests either don't ask questions because the answers might trouble one's conscience (see Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, ICC, 220) or don't raise questions because "this matter lies outside the concerns of conscience altogether" (Fee, 482). Perhaps the latter is better. In other words, don't bother inquiring into the matter like Jews would. "You do not need to find out which food has been offered and which has not, for you may freely eat food that has been offered . . . where conscience demanded of the devout Jew the most searching inquiry before he might eat" (Barrett, 240).

v. 28 **anyone** I.e., the informant (v. 28); the other man (v. 29). What kind of person does Paul have in mind: 1) the unbelieving host, 2) a pagan fellow guest, or 3) a fellow believer? Each view has its merits and its defenders. However, the second seems more likely given the terminology used. "Paul's hypothetical interlocutor speaks from a pagan point of view by referring to 'sacrificial meat' (*hierothyton*) rather than the standard Jewish-Christian designation 'idol meat' (*eidolothyton*), which Paul had used in earlier chapters . . . Since Paul himself composed it so that the person speaking uses pagan terminology, it seems unlikely that he would thereby have understood the interlocutor to be a believer" (Fee, 484). In answer to the observation that "it's not easy to see how a non-Christian's conscience could enter into the matter" (Barrett, 242), one might answer: "The one who has pointed out the sacrificial origins of this meat to a Christian has done so out of a sense of moral obligation to the Christian, believing that Christians, like Jews, would not eat such food. So as not to offend that person, nor his/her moral expectations of Christians, and precisely because it is not a matter of Christian moral consciousness, one should forbear under these circumstances" (Fee, 485). "Only in verse 32 does the broader principle of not giving offense to fellow believers arise" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 1 Corinthians," 2016 ed., 126, www.soniclight.com).

v. 29 **why should** Or indicative rather than subjunctive; cf., "For *why* is my freedom judged by another person's conscience? If I partake with thanks, *why am* I slandered because of something I give thanks for?" (HCSB; cf., NKJV, NET).

v. 29 **my** In the words of one commentator, "It is not easy to see how this question [v. 29b] is to be connected with the flow of thought in the paragraph" (Barrett, 242). Does it continue the thought of vv. 28-29a or is it linked to vv. 25-26. If the former, then, speaking hypothetically, the believer should abstain to prevent the exercise of his freedom from being viewed critically by or becoming a stumbling block to an unbelieving guest whom he would like to see saved. (See note on v. 28.) If the latter, (since Paul's pronouns suggest that he has in mind his own experience in Corinth [see 9:19-23; cf., 10:29b]) then, "how can the Corinthians, or some of them, be judging him on this matter" (Fee, 487).

v. 30 **in the meal** Lit., "if I partake" (ESV, NKJV, NET). The translators of the NIV link vv. 29b-30 to vv. 28-29a and so add these words.

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

This is the last week in our worship series, *Flammable*. We have been reviewing insights from Kathleen Chapman's *Teaching Kids Authentic Worship*. We've learned we must help our kids know God before they can worship Him. Next, we learned that we must teach our kids to intentionally focus on God. Last week, we explored the idea of making God so familiar that they can't help but think of Him. This week, Mrs. Chapman gives us the overall reason it is so important to teach kids to worship. "Presenting children the opportunity to know God is the highest calling a parent, grandparent or teacher can have. Children who consistently come to the throne of God in worship are changed. Their world takes on new dimensions as their focus is redirected to God. Worshiping helps them clothe themselves in the armor of God and protects them from the 'roaring lion'. We want our kids to be so close to God that nothing will be able to separate them from Him. 'Neither death, nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God, that is in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 8:38-39)". Authentic worship is the glue that will stick our kids to God! Let's be diligent to teach them how!

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read 1Co 10:23-11:1

1. Whose good did Paul say we are to seek in verse 24?
2. What particular situation is Paul addressing with the Christians in verses 25-30?
3. According to verse 31, how should we do all things?

What Do You Think

Paul instructed the believers to be careful in the things they did because unbelievers were watching and might misunderstand. What does this teach you about the decisions you make everyday? How can you bring God glory in all things?

What R U Going To Do

Next Sunday is the last opportunity to donate your gently used athletic shoes to the Shoe Bank, who delivers them to homeless people. Have a shoe drive in your neighborhood this week and see how many you can bring to the KidPix store!

Core Comp

Worship - I celebrate God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Memory Verse

Heb 12:28-29 - *Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire."*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse _____, completed Scrolls _____, brought Bible _____, brought a friend _____.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.