

Daily Devotionals: Dear Church | October 30, 2022

For our devotional studies this week, we'll learn to God and the Scriptures with our head, our hearts, and our hands.

Each week, you'll have an opportunity to learn (head), to engage how the Scripture passage intersects with your life (heart), and be prompted to take action (hands).

Our hope is that this devotional will help you love God, love people, and make disciples.

HEAD

As you prepare to engage **1 Corinthians 8**, take some time to look through **1 Corinthians 1-7** and answer the following questions:

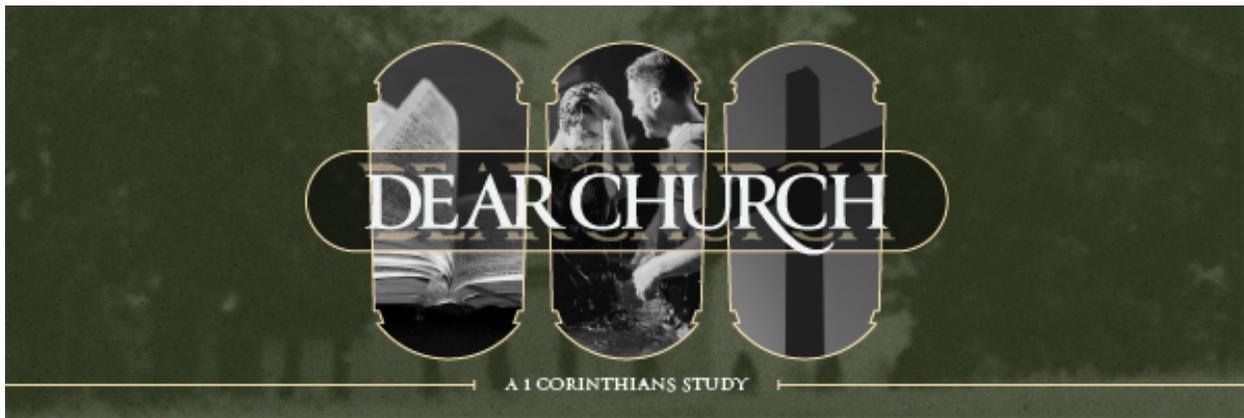
1. What different topics has Paul addressed in the church up to this point in the letter?
2. If you were to summarize Paul's response to each of those topics, how would you do so?
For example, in 1 Corinthians 5, Paul responds to a case of incest by challenging the Corinthians to enact church discipline.

Read 1 Corinthians 8:1-13.

In this portion of the letter, Paul is responding to questions the Corinthians had (1 Corinthians 7:1). One of the questions they had concerned food sacrificed to idols. Some Christians in Corinth thought it was fine to eat the meat that was sacrificed. Others begged to differ.

In fact, this issue was hugely controversial. The Corinthians that were okay with eating the meat held that view because of their belief in God as the one Creator, Ruler, and Redeemer. To them, the Greco-Roman idols were just that: idols. Carvings of simple wood and stone. No big deal.

Conversely, some of the other Corinthians differed because, to them, these weren't just idols. To them, there were real spiritual entities behind the carvings. And it went against their conscience



to partake of this food because doing so made them think they were participating in an act of worship to these gods.

How does Paul respond?

Well, he calls for the Christians who “know” to not allow their knowledge to “puff” them up, but instead he calls them to use their knowledge to “build up” the church. And he does this in two ways:

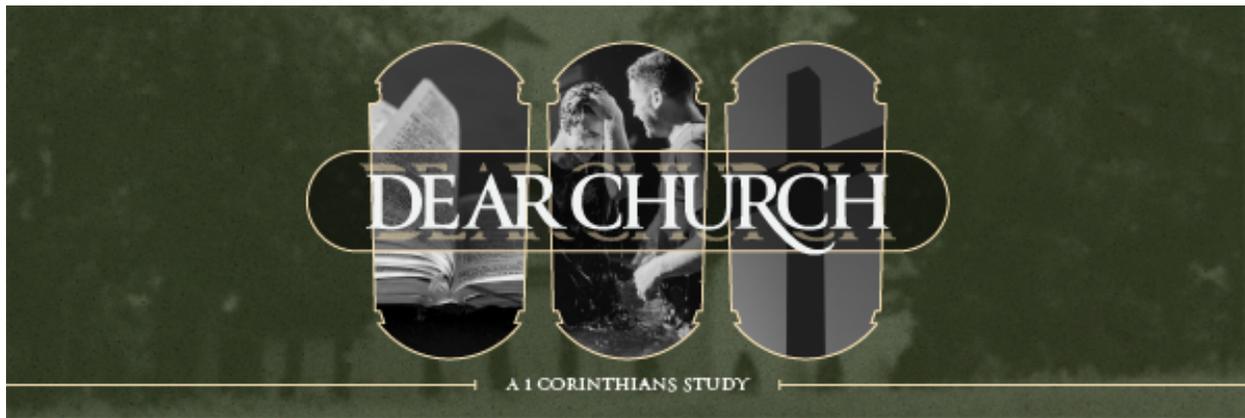
1. Specifically, Paul calls the Corinthians to “take care,” meaning to “look out” or “have eyes to see”, the people around them that might struggle with this issue (8:9).
2. And Paul calls the Corinthians to lay down their rights to the eating of the meat (8:9).

What are the reasons that Paul calls the more knowledgeable Christian in Corinth to these two action steps according to verses 10-12?

HEART

As you look to engage your heart with this passage, consider these three questions:

1. Was your family one that exemplified laying down rights for each other and for others? How might your family dynamic growing up shape how you feel about “rights” and seeking to put the struggles of others above yourself? Was your family one that exemplified laying down rights for each other and for others?
2. Is there any way in which you feel resistance to Paul’s words for us to “take care” and lay down our rights for others? If so, explain what that feels like and why you’re experiencing it. If not, try and imagine why people *might* have that resistance.



3. What is your “food sacrificed to idols”? What are those areas in your life in which you feel freedom, but that you might need to consider letting go of for the sake of loving others?

HANDS

The sermon this week introduced a series of prayers written by Nikos Kazantzakis. Take some time as you wrap up this week’s devotionals to consider which of these three prayers hits closest to home for you. After reflecting, spend some time praying and asking God to deepen your ability to surrender all to Him.

Then, reflect on the final question below.

Three Kinds of Souls, Three Prayers by Nikos Kazantzakis

- 1) *I am a bow in your hands, Lord, draw me, lest I rot.*
- 2) *Do not overdraw me, Lord, I shall break.*
- 3) *Overdraw me, Lord, and who cares if I break!*

What right(s) do you need to lay down as soon as possible for the sake of a brother and sister in Christ?