

## Welcome to Grace Christian Fellowship

**Jesus is Lord!**  
(Romans 10:9)

Topic:

1 Corinthians Summary  
Chapters 9-10  
Handling conscience matters  
(advanced topics)

- All verses are from the *ESV* unless otherwise stated  
- [Brackets] are used to show other, alternative translations

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## Summary of 1 Corinthians

The Book of 1 Corinthians is loaded with refinements of ethical thinking

Much is still debated today

We are looking at chapters 8-10

Chapter 8 - 9:19 about interacting with *insiders* (in the New Covenant)

==>> Chapter 9:20- 10 about interacting with *outsiders*

Advanced and difficult matters

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## Today's text

Highlights from Chapters 9-10 and elsewhere

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 8-10)

Last time ...

In dealing with those *inside* of the New Covenant ...

Let's borrow the example of drinking wine from Romans 14:21.

Some think drinking wine is fine - claiming that drinking a little is good for the stomach (1 Timothy 5:23), while others totally avoid it, they are anti-wine because they feel there is a danger (1 Timothy 3:8).

How will they get along?

Suppose the wine-tasting group is very small and the anti-wine group is large?

Will they simply avoid talking about wine for fear of 'pushback'?

Will they **totally** avoid each other?

Will they each form a wine and ANTI-wine denomination?

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 8-10)

Suppose someone of the wine-tasting-group runs out of wine and learns that a friend, who is anti-wine, is going to the store. So he asks his friend to please pick up some Kosher wine when he goes to the store. [Deuteronomy 14:21]

Suppose the friend reasons  
“I believe drinking is a sin.

If I buy wine for my friend then I am promoting sin. So I cannot do this.”

The friend who wants the wine reasons:

“This friend does not show love. I know a church down the street that has a larger group of my kind of wine-tasters and even the anti-wine members there are willing to buy wine for their friends. I would have more friends if I go there.”

Can we support the wine tasting person without being ‘unwise’ ourselves?

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

In such situations could you be a friend and INSTEAD of pressing them to adopt your view, work within their beliefs?

Sympathize, suggesting actions that would be wise **in their own set of beliefs**.  
Can you discuss issues showing both sides so others wonder about WHICH view you hold?

Of course, if you *cannot* say something supportive, remain silent (**Romans 14:22**) but if at all possible, instead of always giving the silent treatment, TRY TO FIND SOME COMMON GROUND and make friends.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

<sup>19</sup> For though I am free from all, I have **made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them**. <sup>20</sup> To the Jews **I became as a Jew**, in order to win Jews. To those **under the law** I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. <sup>21</sup> To those outside the law **I became as one outside the law** (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. <sup>22</sup> To the weak **I became weak**, that I might win the weak. **I have become all things to all people**, that by all means I might **save some**. <sup>23</sup> I do it **all for the sake of the gospel**, that I may share with them in its blessings.

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

Romans 15:1-8

<sup>1</sup> We who are strong have an obligation to **bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves**. <sup>2</sup> Let each of us **please his neighbor for his good, to build him up**. <sup>3</sup> For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” <sup>4</sup> For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> Therefore **welcome** one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

Compare what Paul said:

Colossians 2:16

Therefore **let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath**.

If you hear counsel that is condemning speech, and it is not on serious matters (sin-list), we can overlook that condemning speech. Say “ Ok, something to think about”.

Some Christians struggle to put themselves in the place of others and truly understand their beliefs and feelings. These may judge or otherwise be unkind but it may not be out of a lack of love but because they lack the ability to understand and then empathized.

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

Compare ...

1 Corinthians 8

<sup>12</sup> Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup> Therefore, **if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat**, lest I make my brother stumble.

If someone judges you, that does NOT necessarily mean they are being stumbled. They may just be letting their 'inner-Pharisee out'. Discern carefully. If the other person appears to be confused about their conscience (it is 'weak') then this is an indication they are being 'stumbled'.

Your own words and actions should not appear as being condemning, critical or judgmental. When interacting with others be willing to give up your rights and restrain what you do and say.

Ask yourself: might the other person feel pressured as if you are judging them?

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

The issue is:

Do others feel compelled to ignore their own conscience because of your actions, and thus their conscience is damaged and confused about what is right and wrong?

If so, restrain your actions so that they can feel free to follow their own conscience.

OR

If someone's speech sounds condemning to you, ask: do they have a firm conscience on the matter without any confusion? Then they are **not** being **stumbled** but are letting their inner-Pharisee out and are judging you.

If so, kindly ignore their pressure.

In love show some restraint yet without doing what you believe is wrong.

Try to be friends without pushing-back your own views. (Romans 14)

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

In 1 Corinthians 10:25-33

There may be an activity that your conscience confidently says is OK to do.

Be kind around others, especially someone with a conscience that you think is not very discerning or a non-believer who would be confused to know that you do this activity.

Your conscience may not press you to refrain from the activity.

**But** still you **should refrain** because it appears you are contradicting your gospel message and it harms the conscience of **the one who is watching**.

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

... For why should my liberty be determined by someone else's conscience? ... <sup>31</sup> ... whatever you do, **do all to the glory of God**. <sup>32</sup> Give **no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God**, <sup>33</sup> just as **I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage**, but that of many, that they may be saved.

Does your exercising your 'rights' and 'freedoms' cause others to take **offense because you appear to contradict the gospel that you teach?**  
**- Restrain yourself**

Reflect on whether you exercising your 'rights' and 'freedoms' are for your own glory or for the sake of the gospel and for God's glory.

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

Example about something that is not on a sin-list, rather it is on a personal wise/unwise list: **vaccinations**

One person thinks vaccinations are risky and harmful, another believer believes that vaccinations are useful and wise to have.

Romans 14:5

One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. **Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.**

So if you **don't** want a vaccination that is your choice, but do **not** apply peer pressure on others.

Or if you are **first in line** to get a vaccination, do not press others to hold to your view.

Let the other person "**be fully convinced in his own mind**"

Can you do this?

**Comments ...??**

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

If we are interacting with others **inside the New Covenant** then ...

1. We show them love (Matthew 22:36-40)
2. We make them **feel welcome** and do not 'look down' on them for doing things that are on our personal 'not-wise' list (Romans 14)
3. Be humble. Suppress your 'inner Pharisee' that desires to push your own conscience.
4. Consider that the other person's conscience may not be as confident as yours.
5. Can you present the various views so well that others wonder about WHICH view you hold? (1 Corinthians 9:20-21)
6. Can you support them without doing the unwise act yourself? (Can you offer the meat without eating it yourself? (Dt 14:21) Can your conscience have more precise discernment?)
7. We do not condemn or judge them. (1 Corinthians 4:5; Matthew 7:1-2)
8. If others try to judge us, we overlook their condemnation, thank them for the warning and let him know you will ponder this but **you do not need to conform to their conscience nor press them to agree.** (Colossians 2:16)
9. We are careful not to injure the other person's conscience by being known to do something that can easily be interpreted as something on a 'sin-list' (**1 Corinthians 8:7-13**).
10. If they have embraced something on the 'sin' lists, there is a process to follow (1 Corinthians 5)

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

According to Romans 14 ...

It is not enough that a person finds in Christian fellowship that they are **not** judged - not enough

It is not enough that a person finds in Christian fellowship that they are accepted - not enough

Persons seeking Christian fellowship also hunger to be **welcomed**

Romans 14:1,3; 15:7

<sup>1</sup> As for the one who is weak in faith, **welcome** him, but **not to quarrel over opinions**. ... <sup>3</sup> Let the one who <eats> **not despise** the one who abstains, and let the one who abstains **not pass judgment** on the one who <eats>, for God has welcomed him. ... <sup>15:7</sup> Therefore **welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you**, for the glory of God.

Unfortunately that is not always the case here in GCF.

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

How is GCF doing on these?

GCF has **not** yet mastered these qualities.

Romans 14:22 recommends that we keep our controversial comments to ourselves.

But staying quiet is not the full, loving solution.

It will appear that we are avoiding others **BECAUSE** they do not agree with us.

Others will feel unwelcome and have a fear to talk to us.

Some will start to avoid the 'circumcision party'.

Which happens in churches today, even here in GCF.

This issue is probably not addressed in some churches.

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

What if this biblical counsel is not followed?  
If there are hurt feelings then the Bible says ...

Matthew 5:23-24

<sup>23</sup> So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Matthew 18:15

<sup>15</sup> "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church.

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

Here is the process.

- 1) Whether someone has something **against you** (Matthew 5:23)  
OR **you have something against** someone else (Matthew 18:15)

Assuming the problem cannot be ignored (Colossians 2:16)

- 2) If you are not the head of house then recruit a representative (either your head of house OR someone in leadership).
- 3) Either you or your representative should go to that person and seek reconciliation
- 4) If this fails to reconcile and there has been judging (assigning a moral status to others) and it is causing divisions (Romans 16:17), then pursue "church discipline".

Some in our body have done this.

Just as Paul said ... 'some have reported to me ...' (1 Corinthians 1:11)

There was a case or two that resulted in pursuing church discipline  
Others chose to ignore the conflict  
Others asked for coaching on what they personally could do

Questions? Comments?

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## 1 Corinthians and conscience (chapters 9-10)

If we are interacting with others **outside the New Covenant** then ...

1. We show them love (Matthew 22:36-40)
2. We can fellowship with them (1 Corinthians 5:9-10; **10:27,32**)
3. We find common ground (**1 Corinthians 9:19-23**)
4. We do not condemn or judge them. We will not be appointed as judges until Jesus does so in the Kingdom. (1 Corinthians 4:5; Matthew 7:1-2)
5. We realize they have possibly embraced sins that are on the 'sin-lists' (1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 1 John 3:9; 5:19).
6. Can you support them without doing the sinful act? (Can you offer the meat without eating it yourself? (Deuteronomy 14:21)
7. We should not do anything that would imply **we practice sin** (**1 Corinthians 10:20-33**)

We sometimes have opportunities to show these qualities when we have visitors.

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## Closing comments

Did you see anything you need to work on?

Can you identify the passage in the book of 1 Corinthians that speaks to **you** about the changes **you** need to make?

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Next time ...

Summary of 1 Corinthians chapters 8-