

## 1 Corinthians 8 – 10 Small Group Discussion Questions

**Opening Question:** What is the most difficult decisions are you facing in your life today?

**Tell them:** This week Pastor Michael broke from our Genesis study to talk to us about decision making. This is a season of change, and with that change comes many difficult decisions which will affect our families, friends and community. That's why this flow chart of questions is so timely. So, let's look at the 5 things to ask yourself before you make a decision. These came from 1 Corinthians 8-10, and since we can't go over this entire passage, I suggest you download the Bible study and dive deeper in your quiet time this week, but to start, let's read 1 Corinthians 10:23–33.

*“All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. For “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.” If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— I do not mean your conscience, but his. For why should my liberty be determined by someone else’s conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks? So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, 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.” (1 Corinthians 10:23–33)*

**Ask them:** *If you had to summarize this passage in one sentence, what would you say?*

**Tell them:** Pastor Michael gave us 5 questions to ask ourselves before making important decisions. The first question is the foundation of them all. **Ask them:** *Does anyone remember what it is?*

1. **Does the Bible allow it?** **Tell them:** Pastor Michael said that this question encompasses both the commandments and our freedoms. The commandments are probably more obvious than our freedoms, but let's look at them both.

**Ask them:** *What are some commandments that are relevant during these trying times?*

Consider the following as they apply to your group: this list is not exhaustive, but a place to start.

- *“All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.” (1 Corinthians 10:23–24)*
- *“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.” (1 Corinthians 10:33)*

- *“Place yourselves under the authority of human governments to please the Lord. Obey the emperor. He holds the highest position of authority. <sup>14</sup> Also obey governors. They are people the emperor has sent to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. <sup>15</sup> God wants you to silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing what is right. <sup>16</sup> Live as free people, but don’t hide behind your freedom when you do evil. Instead, use your freedom to serve God. <sup>17</sup> Honor everyone. Love your brothers and sisters in the faith. Fear God. Honor the emperor.” (1 Peter 2:13-17)*

**Ask them:** *What freedoms do we have as Christians?*

**Consider the following for your group:** (Time won’t allow you to go through them all, but as topics come up this can be used as a reference.)

1. **Freedom from guilt.** *“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).*
2. **Freedom from shame.** *“Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame” (Rom. 10:11).*
3. **Freedom from God’s wrath.** *“For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5:9).*
4. **Freedom from fear of death.** *“But has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Tim. 1:10).*
5. **Freedom from bondage to sin.** *“For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace” (Rom. 6:14).*
6. **Freedom from the curse of the law.** *“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us” (Gal. 3:13).*
7. **Freedom from legalism.** *“Stand fast in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage” (Gal. 5:1).*
8. **Freedom from Satan’s dominion.** *“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love” (Col. 1:13).*
9. **Freedom to approach God.** *“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus” (Heb. 10:19).*
10. **Freedom to relate to God as His child and His heir.** *“you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (Gal. 4:7).*
11. **Freedom to partake and enjoy every spiritual blessing.** *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3).*
12. **Freedom to bring our concerns and requests to God.** *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” (Phil. 4:6).*

**Tell them:** Pastor Michael told us that if the answer to, *“Does the Bible allow it?”* is yes, then we go on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> question. **Ask them:** *Who remembers the 2<sup>nd</sup> question?*

1. **Does my conscience allow it?** **Tell them:** Pastor Michael said that we have a moral compass as a part of our image bearing; a conscience. When we disobey our conscience, we are sinning. (James 4:17 - *“So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for*

*him it is sin.”) He said that, the more we desensitize or numb ourselves to sin the more susceptible we are to other sins.*

**Ask them:** *How do you think that we can de-numb our conscience to make it more sensitive to sin?*

2. **Tell them:** The next question we ask ourselves is: **What is the effect on other Christians?** Pastor Michael said that love is more important than the freedom to do what you want. **Ask them:** *What did you think of that idea?* **Tell them:** Pastor Michael went on to say that, if I act on my freedom without any regard for other believers, it is unloving. If this idea interests you, the Bible study online goes into it more in-depth as it looks at 1 Corinthians 8:9-13. Pastor Michael said that we must ask, “What effect does this have on other Christians?” because brotherly love is more important than independence. (see Romans 12:10)
3. **Tell them:** Let’s have a look at the next question. **Ask them:** *Does anyone remember what it is?* **What is the effect on non-Christians?** **Pastor Michael said:** “The gospel is more important than your rights. If practicing your rights has a negative effect on non-Christians, then you are ignoring the gospel.” **Ask them:** *What do you think of the idea of the gospel taking precedent over our rights? Do you think we as a body have been living with the correct priorities?*
4. **Tell them:** The fifth and final question we ask ourselves is, “**What is the effect on my spiritual life?**” **Tell them:** Pastor Michael said that your spiritual health is more important than your personal freedom. And that Spiritual growth is more important than comfort. Most of us want our spiritual growth to be comfortable. We will pay more money to be more comfortable, but God continuously puts our lives in a state of flux, change, he upends our lives for our growth because comfort is the breeding ground for idols. **Ask them:** *What idols of comfort are you prone to serve?*

**Tell them:** We will all have difficult decisions to make as the days and years go on, but as believers we have a path that helps us to make decisions that glorify God and help us to love others. This week let’s all make it our prayer that we would be honest with ourselves as we navigate the difficult decisions, we will be making over the next few months.

**Shareable Quotes:** **Tell them:** Get the word out this week. Everyone around you is in the midst of making difficult decisions. Help them to navigate these tough times with some help from these 5 questions and some sharable quotes from Pastor Michael. Remember, we are to “*go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*” (Mathew 28:19-20) It’s time for us not to just feed ourselves, but to feed others.

1. Need to make a decision today? Ask yourself these questions before you make a choice:
  1. Does the Bible allow it?
  2. Does your conscience allow it?
  3. What is the effect on other Christians?
  4. What is the effect on other believers?
  5. What is the effect on my spiritual life?
2. The more we desensitize ourselves to sin the more susceptible we are to other sins.
3. Love is more important than the freedom to do what you want.
4. The gospel is more important than your rights. If practicing your rights has a negative effect on others, then you are ignoring the gospel.