

Faith Family Worship Guide – Week 32

MEMORIZE

1 Corinthians 9:16 – For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

1 Corinthians 9:19 – For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.

READ

Read 1 Corinthians 9:14-23.

In 1 Corinthians 8, Paul pointed to the example of Christ and laid down the principle that we should do nothing that would offend another Christian, especially weaker Christians. In this chapter, he points to himself as an example of one who had privileges, but, for the gospel's sake, did not use them. As an apostle, he has the right to be paid, to not have to support himself, and to bring a wife with him. He does not claim any of these rights, so that the gospel message can reach as many as possible. His priority is the spread of the gospel, not enjoying the rights and freedoms that are rightly his as a Christian and as an apostle. Therefore, the consideration for all of us is how can we prioritize the spread of the gospel in our own lives, even over our own freedoms and rights.

Questions:

What are some of the freedoms and rights we possess as Americans and Christians?

Why should sharing the gospel be our first priority?

What things in your life might you need to sacrifice in order to maximize your opportunities for sharing the gospel?

Bottom Line: Our priority should be the spread of the gospel.

SING

Let's continue in worship as we sing "Be Thou My Vision". Just as Paul laid aside his freedoms, even his very rights, let us offer our lives to God as living sacrifices, with the vision of the glory of Jesus reaching the ends of the earth. Let's sing praise to God for His gospel and spur one another on to spreading this good news to every nation!

Visit our website for a link to this song: www.brookhills.org/gathering/this_week.html.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God's word and worship him together.

Preschool

- Before you begin open your Bible to 1 Corinthians 9:16 and 19. Read the verses to your preschooler.
- Have you ever been really excited about something? Maybe you had really great news that you couldn't wait to share. Maybe you wanted to tell everyone you knew about something terrific that happened to you personally, or maybe it was something you heard. Talk about those as a family.
- Explain: Paul felt this way about the gospel of Jesus Christ, and he wanted everyone to know God's plan of salvation for them. We should be just as excited about sharing the gospel with others. It is the most exciting and wonderful news anyone can hear, and God wants everyone to know.
- Remember: God loved us so much that He sent His one and only Son to earth to die on a cross so that we could have eternal life. God wants us to choose to follow Him and to love Him more than anything. He wants us to turn away from our sin and to trust Him. God wants us to share the good news of what Jesus has done for us with others too.
- Pray together with your family. Ask God to help you make sharing the gospel with others your first priority.

Children

- Ask the children to brainstorm some of the rights and freedoms they experience as Americans. Here are a few potential examples to get you started:
 - Freedom of speech – we are able to speak our minds and share our opinions freely.
 - Freedom of religion – we are allowed to go to church and share the gospel without being punished.
 - Right to an education.
 - Right to protection – law enforcement and military protect us and keep us safe.
 - Right to vote for leaders.
- Help them think through how these rights and freedoms might be different if they lived in another country.
- In some countries people aren't allowed to eat certain foods or to wear certain clothes. In America, we have the freedom to make choices regarding what we eat and what wear.
- In some countries people do not have the chance to get an education.
- In some countries people are not allowed to be Christians—they can even be imprisoned or killed if they are.
- In some places people are not able to vote.
- However, with freedom and choices comes great responsibility. Even though we are allowed to do certain things, it doesn't always mean that it's God's best for us.
- For example, we have the right to say anything we want. But just because we *have* the right to do say whatever we want doesn't mean that we *should* say whatever we want. Ask your child to think of some examples that illustrate this point.
- Ask your children how we can use our words in a way that brings glory to God. (Share Jesus with our friends, encourage others, proclaim God's Word)
- Help your children think through creative ways they can use their freedom this week to glorify God and to proclaim Him to their friends. You can have them write out a list of two or three ideas they can work on this week and then hang it in a visible place. Talk with them about this throughout the week.

Students

- Before you begin your time as a family, have everyone go find something of theirs they do not use any longer. Items may vary from things that are obsolete (ex. an old cell phone or CD player) to items that no longer hold your attention because you have matured (like an old toy). Challenge everyone to find what they think is the most useless item, and offer a reward for the most ridiculous things that someone finds.
- As everyone grows up and as time passes the things we value change over time. Point out how excited your family members were to purchase or receive the items they brought when they first got them. Allow everyone to share how they initially valued their items and then what their feelings are now that the item's value is reduced. Ask them if they would change anything regarding their purchase or gift request if they had it to do over again.
- Now ask everyone to list the top five things they value right now (options: only list material things or let them include other items like hobbies or relationships).
- Read I Corinthians 9:14-23 together.
- Point out that in this passage that Paul is speaking about what he values. Ask your students to look through the passage and share what they believe Paul values most in his life. Ask them why they believe Paul is so wrapped up in this ("proclaiming the gospel").
- Now ask them what things Paul believed he had a right to do but chose not to do (e.g. collect a wage for preaching, disregard the Jewish laws, etc.) What was Paul's motivation for not exercising these freedoms? Paul valued sharing the gospel more than anything else, even more than his own personal freedoms.
- In every day life we see that when our priorities change and we mature, our values change as well. When this pertains to small things like what toys we used to enjoy, or a small electronic gadget that was once useful, it is not a big deal. However, there are times in our lives that we regret because we valued the wrong things when our priorities were skewed.
- To help everyone apply this principle, have them look at their list of the top five things they value. Ask them to put a checkmark next to those things they think they will still value in five or ten years. Challenge them to evaluate whether or not the things they value match up with the priority of sharing the gospel. Ask them if they think they will have any regrets if their list remains the same.
- This is not a lesson in saying that material things are in and of themselves bad. It is simply a chance to pause and evaluate whether or not the things we value match up with God's priorities for us as illustrated through Paul's life. If someone sees a priority that needs to change, challenge them to share it with so you can pray together and help hold them accountable.
- Spend time in prayer asking God to help shape your family's priorities and values to reflect the importance of the gospel in your lives.