

LIVE 2017: 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-27

August 13, 2017

To better understand this passage, start back in 1 Corinthians 8. There, Paul starts addressing a question the Corinthian church sent him about whether or not they could eat food that had been offered to idols (in that time, people brought food offerings to pagan temples, so those temples doubled as butcher shops and restaurants). Initially Paul says yes, technically you can eat meat that has been offered to idols, but he includes an important caveat: so long as you do not cause your brother to stumble. “Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat.” (1 Cor. 8:13) Throughout chapters 9 and 10, Paul gets at the heart of the matter: just because you can do something, doesn’t mean you should.

Paul addresses this not only as it affects your fellow believer, but also for the sake of spiritually edifying yourself. In our passage for the week, he likens it to being an athlete. If you want to be an athlete, you have to train. Just because you have the ability to sit on the couch all day in your pajamas watching Netflix doesn’t mean you should, especially if you want to be ready for race day. Again, this metaphor gets at the idea of spiritual edification. Just like a runner exercises discipline as they train, similarly we should give up anything that hinders us in our spiritual growth and worship of Jesus. And as hard as that might be, we have to believe to our very core that Jesus is worth our entire lives.

Discussion

Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

- What stood out to you from this passage?
- What do you think Paul’s overall point is here?
- How do you typically feel about exercising discipline in your spiritual growth?
- How does God’s grace affect the way you think about spiritual discipline?
- How does the gospel give you hope as you try to grow in spiritual discipline and obedience?



VINTAGECHURCH