

**May 24, 2020. Come Together,
Part 6: Disputable Matters**

What do you remember from the message?

What were some things that resonated with you?

Was there anything you wrestled with?

READ: 1 Corinthians 13

“If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails”

Which sentence or phrase in that passage is the most difficult for you?

In what ways does the modern concept of love differ from the concept of love Paul describes in this passage?

READ Romans 14:1 “Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.

What are some disputable matters that divide Christians today? Can Paul's etching in Romans 14 apply to today's disputable matters? Why or why not?

READ 1Corinthians 8:1-13

“Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. But whoever loves God is known by God. So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that “An idol is nothing at all in the world” and that “There is no God but one.” For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. Be careful, however, that

the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol's temple, won't that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall."

What is Paul's priority in this passage?

How do you reconcile Paul's teaching here with his continual struggle with the Christian Jews who insisted that circumcision should be a requirement for every Gentile believer?

Both Paul and Jesus seemed to sometimes cause some people to stumble by not following certain Jewish traditions and rules. When is it OK and when is it not OK to cause someone to stumble?

READ: Matthew 21:42–44 (NIV)

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: " "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes"? "Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed."

What does the last sentence mean? Would you rather be broken to pieces or crushed?

Does God ever allow you to be in a situation that seems to be like "being between a rock and a hard place?" Why can those experiences be good for us?

[Close with the three questions at the end of Jims message:]

In what ways might you still be like the the apostle Paul before he was transformed by the love, grace, compassion, and forgiveness of Jesus?

Are you ever guilty of hypocrisy?

What would the world look like if everyone followed Pauls instructions to the Romans.