**Gray Matters.***Scripture and Background Information for November 21-27*

To prepare for your group discussion each week**,** group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD’S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

God created the world with plurality and variety. No other human is identical to another. Even in gifting the church, God used different gifts to build one body (1Cor 12: 12-27). God celebrates unity through variety. Nevertheless, the created variety is diminished into two parties, **Us vs. Them**. Society, churches, relationships, and even families are divided by topics like politics, ethnicity, or religion drives through God’s designed unity. Today we want to see what God planned for His. We will look at 1Corinthians 10:23-33 and talk about **“Gray Matters.”**

**Background for 1Corinthians 10:23-33:**
Paul wrote the letter to the church of Corinth because the church was divided by a posture of **Us vs. Them**. The church was divided by divisions through different leaders, by immoral actions, understanding of eating food that was offered to idols, divisions in the gatherings of the church, and some doctrinal differences. Today, our text addresses the divisions that occurred in that church around the topic of food. While Jews had a problem eating food that was offered to idols, the Gentiles ate it. Paul shows that eating and drinking is in and of itself not a sin. Nevertheless, faith demands looking out for others. Paul uses the example of eating meat that was offered to idols, showing how gray areas should not bring condemnation for one whose conscience thinks a certain thing is a sin.

*Here are several insights and questions to engage with the text:*

1. Paul speaks to meat sacrificed to idols, but for us, what would be some similar examples of gray matters that the church struggles with today?
2. Paul gives the principle of freedom (23) but aids delimitations to that (23-24). What are the delimitations for the freedom principle?
3. It seems this text is full of restrictions so how does Paul speak of the freedom we have in Christ?
4. Gray Matters! Some people struggle with certain things, nevertheless, gray areas should never divide believers. What does Paul indicate to be the intention/final goal of putting others first? What does the text set as a motivator for putting others first?

*Note: The belief of freedom from slavery to sin should show itself in the freedom of serving God for His good. If believers use their freedom by carrying for themselves alone, they use freedom for sin, hindering others from growing in the knowledge of God. Thus, Paul calls them to set their interests aside and serve others in freedom.*

**Scriptures for upcoming weeks:**

 November 28-December 04 Mark 5:22-42