Lesson 1: Behave Yourself!

**Lessons in this series:** **1**[2](http://www.teensundayschool.com/374/lesson/prayer-expecting-results.php) [3](http://www.teensundayschool.com/401/lesson/stand-firm-in-your-faith.php)

**Lesson Workbook (PDF)** **Am I Free? (Game)**

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To provide students with an understanding of what it means to live in freedom  
2. To help students recognize when using their freedom can actually harm others  
3. To motivate students to live lives that are others-focused

Topics

Behavior, Character, Christianity, Influence, Self-control

Scripture Memorization

1 Corinthians 10:31 

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (5 minutes)

**Am I Free (Game)**

GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

Just because we have permission to do certain things, doesn't mean we should do them. We're going to develop this idea fully today. Let's start by reading the complete Bible scripture covering today's subject, which is, "Behave Yourself!"    
 **Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-33**That's a lot of material to cover in one lesson. Maybe the best way to handle it is to point out three things:   
• The People  
• The Party  
• The Principle

DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

**THE PEOPLE:**The people that Paul addresses here are believers. However, the people we should be concerned with are not ourselves, but others; namely, people who do not follow Jesus.

**Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-26   
  
Discussion Questions:**1. There are three different groups or people listed here. Who are they?*(Others, the Lord, and me.)*  
2. What do people often say, according to verses 23-24? *("I can do anything.")*3. What do you think of this kind of attitude?  
4. What does Paul says about this kind of attitude? *(You may be able to do anything, but it's not always good to do so.)*5. According to verse 24, what should we seek? *(The good of others.)*6. What do you think it means to live for others?  
  
The particular scenario named here is the eating of meat sacrificed to idols. Paul says that it is edible because everything came from God. But in the next section of the Scripture, he explains how this plays out practically.

**THE PARTY:  
Read 1 Corinthians 10:27-30**

Okay, it might not be talking about a party in the sense that we know, but it is a feast, a party of sorts.

**Discussion Questions:**1. What does Paul say is okay to eat?*(Anything.)*2. When does Paul say they should not eat? *(When the meat has been offered in a sacrifice.)*3. Why not eat meat under this condition? *(Because of conscience.)*4. Whose conscience—the person eating or others'? *(The conscience of others.)*5. How can something you do be wrong because of someone's conscience? *(Allow for discussion.)*

If you are having a hard time with that last question, the rest of this passage spells it out for us.

**THE PRINCIPLE:**The principle that everyone should follow is found in the last three verses.  
  
**Read 1 Corinthians 10:31-33**

**Discussion Questions:**1. What should we do to the glory of God? *(Eat, drink, and "whatever we do.")*2. What are we attempting to avoid, according to verse 32? *(Causing others to stumble.)*3. Why should we be so concerned with pleasing other people? *(So that they may be saved.)*

So the principle at work here is that by living lives that glorify God, we will point others towards Jesus. We should be trying to glorify God in everything we do—not doing whatever we want—even if doing what we want is permissible.

MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)

I want you to think about a time when you were let down by someone's behavior, even though that person's behavior was not necessarily wrong. Do you remember how you felt in that moment? It is likely that the person you're thinking of was not trying to hurt your feelings, cause you to think poorly of him or her, or make you wonder if that person was who he or she claimed to be. The specific example you're thinking of was probably similar to what some were doing in Corinth—exercising their freedom without considering the impact on others.

**General Discussion:**1. Can you think of a time when you've done something that was not wrong, but it hurt someone else? What happened?  
2. How can freedom, when exercised without thinking of others, be a bad thing?

Remember earlier when we played, "Am I Free?" Let's reflect on that experience a little bit.   
  
Answer the following questions only by a show of hands:  
• Did anyone here abuse their freedom somehow?  
• Did anyone get frustrated at having to think about what you needed to ask next?  
• Did any of you get upset because someone else wasn't following the rules?  
• Did any of you get confused or frustrated for some other reason?   
  
For those who raised their hand on the last question, would anyone like to share what else was frustrating?

The truth is we don't live on an island. There are other people all around us. Our actions affect their lives. What they see us do, say, or value, impacts the way they perceive us and—as Christians—the way they view God.

**General Discussion (Continued):**3. What is one area of your life in which you do not feel you exercise freedom very well? In other words, what's one thing that could cause others to say, “Wow! I thought you were a Christian?”  
4. How can God redeem that area of your life to make it more others-centered?  
5. How can you eat, drink, and do "whatever you do" to the glory of God this week?

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Let's pair up and pray for each other. Pray that this week; we might glorify God by seeking to live "others-centered" lives, so that they can be saved.

Am I Free?

What if you had to ask permission to do whatever you wanted to do? An exercise in Christian freedom.

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| Topics:  Behavior, Self-control, Submission  Materials:  None  Duration:  Approximately 10 minutes | donuts and flag |

What you will do:

This game is very similar to the familiar one played by children called, "Mother May I?" From the moment you step into your group, begin by telling students that you're going to play a game like that, but called, "Am I Free?"   
  
The students are not allowed to do ANYTHING without asking permission first. They must ask permission by saying, "Am I free to (do whatever)." If they don't ask permission, they have to go stand at the entrance of your space and start over. To grant permission simply say, "You are free to (do whatever it is they are asking.)"

It will be chaotic at first, but that is good. Remember, for everything they have to ask, "Am I free...to come in, sit down, turn off my cell phone, have a donut, get out my Bible, etc." You will have to field multiple requests at a time so be prepared. Some will buck the system, but let it play out.

**Discussion Questions:**1. Do you like asking for permission to do things? Why or why not?  
2. How do you feel when you are not given permission to do what you want?  
3. How do you feel when you are given permission?  
4. How much freedom do we have as Christians?  
5. Is that always a good thing, or can too much freedom also be a burden? Explain.