

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 2ND - 3RD, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

FAMILIAR MISTAKES (1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-5)

TOUGH LOVE

Paul taught the Corinthians harshly at times because he loved and wanted what was best for them. He also feared that their ignorance of the Old Testament would cause them to repeat the same mistakes.

- Paul saw some dangerous similarities between the arrogant Christians and the wandering Israelites in the desert.

TWO IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES

Receiving tough love without getting offended and knowing history within context are both valuable pursuits if we're to grow.

- **When we are overly sensitive and neglect the past because we think we have somehow evolved beyond our predecessors, we grow arrogant, dangerous, and self-destructive.**

"THAT ROCK WAS CHRIST"

Paul was telling the Corinthians to not be arrogant because the Jews "ate" the same spiritual food from the same source as they did. The manna from heaven and the water from the rock in the desert foreshadowed Jesus.

- **We must be humbled by our relationship with Jesus because we understand it is by Him we are saved and changed.**

"NEVERTHELESS..."

Just because the Israelites started the spiritual journey with evidence of God all around them, most of them died in the desert because they lacked **obedience** and **relationship** with God.

- We often say we're Christians, but **without a relationship with Jesus and the byproduct of obedience and trust that comes from that, we will also "die in the desert."**

IDOLATRY (1 CORINTHIANS 10:6-13)

THERE IS NOTHING NEW... (ECCLESIASTES 1:9)

5 times Paul shows examples of how the people of God fell because they "desire[d] evil things" instead of the things of God.

- This all relates back to the topic of meat sacrificed to idols. The question wasn't the meat, but that we **often make ourselves idols by valuing our rights and wants above God and others.**

"EAT AND DRINK, AND GOT UP TO PARTY"

Paul is referring to Exodus 32 and the golden calf. This example shows us that **humans are not only prone to worshiping material possessions but that we forget that the eyes of God see us even when other accountability is absent.**

- Is this not our culture? **Is it not us if not connected to Christ and community?**

AND SIN CAUSES DEATH

In Numbers 21 and 25, a plague was put upon the Israelites because they were engaging in pagan fertility rituals by sacrificing animals to other gods and having open sexual encounters.

- Many of the mistakes of the OT show us a greater truth. In these cases, it is that **sin has consequences now and leads to eternal death if we don't turn from it.**

WE ARE NOT TO "TEST" OR COMPLAIN

When we are taking the freedom, gifts, and salvation of God through Christ for granted, we are testing God's patience. We are to also keep our complaining to a minimum because we are not owed anything by Him.

- Compare this to our entitled culture. **As Christians, we must remain grateful and appreciative of God's provision.**

THE ROOT WAS THE PURSUIT OF SELF

V12 says, "whoever thinks he stands must be careful not to fall." This goes for overconfident Christians and non-Christians who don't think they need God or His teachings.

- **The path to destruction always begins with the pursuit of self! When we put our desires over God's desire for us, we fail and do tremendous damage.**

JESUS IS OUR HOPE OF ESCAPING THE FALL

V13 is a popular verse about temptation and our means to escape it. First, no temptation is new or exclusive to us. Second, **God is faithful to help us not fall into temptation if we will trust and rely on Him.**

- **We must be wise and avoid tempting situations, pray when we are tempted, and trust God's plan for our lives.**

DISTANCE (1 CORINTHIANS 10:14-22)

SO, RUN...

Just like Paul told them as "sensible people" to run from sexual sin (6:18), he tells them to run from idolatry as well. This simply means **we must intentionally distance ourselves from things we are tempted by.**

- This ties back into **occasionally forfeiting freedoms and wanting to grow closer to Jesus through discipline.**

A UNIFIED BODY

V16-17 talks about the unity we should have as believers. We are to not only be united in our belief in God but we should be united in our love for each other.

- **So, we should be avoiding any actions contrary to the teachings of the Bible, and we should be sacrificing for the sake of others.**

"I DO NOT WANT YOU TO PARTICIPATE WITH DEMONS"

This requires wisdom. Though we may be free to eat what we want, we are to not partake in anything that is evil.

- It is one thing to have coffee with someone of a different belief in the hopes of building a relationship. **It is going too far to partake in pagan actions or compromise biblical integrity.**

COMMUNION AND HOW WE LIVE EVERY DAY

When we partake in the Lord's supper or live in divided allegiance every day, we "share in the Lord's table and the table of demons" and provoke God to jealousy.

- **If we expect to receive the benefits of the cross while consciously doing things that put Jesus on it, we're living in dangerous rebellion to Him.**

EVERYTHING (1 CORINTHIANS 10:23-33)

BALANCE AND WISDOM...AGAIN

Paul repeats his profound phrase, "everything is permissible, but not everything is beneficial," but he adds in "not everything builds up," and we're to seek "the good of the other person."

- **We're to put God first, enjoy our freedoms if it doesn't cause others to stumble, and be seeking the greater good of the people around us.**

"THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, AND ALL THAT IS IN IT"

We're told to enjoy the things of this life (within the teachings of the Bible) "without raising questions for the sake of conscience."

- This simply means we **live in wisdom and above reproach while also making sure we don't tempt others** with our freedom because others may not be as mature in the faith as we are.

THIS CAN BE DIFFICULT (V27-29)

If we're invited into someone's life, and we're offered something we don't believe in or if it may confuse them if we accept it, we should decline. This is referring to meat sacrificed to idols, but the principle applies to us.

- **Not compromising our integrity for the sake of others may cost us relationships, but we honor God and them in our integrity.**

"EVERYTHING FOR THE GLORY OF GOD"

Whether we're exercising freedoms or choosing to abstain for the sake of others, we are to do all things for God's glory.

- This means **how we work, do sports, lead our families, handle our marriage, when we're students, or how we treat others matters. We should do our best to honor God with every aspect of our lives.**

TOUGH LOVE AND HISTORY

- If we are to mature as Christians, we must be willing to receive tough love without getting offended. **It is through the tough conversations we grow the most.**
- We must also learn our history to honor godly people who came before us and to also learn from other people's mistakes (Winston Churchill).

CAREFULLY ENJOYING OUR FREEDOM

- We are free to enjoy this life, but we must "flee" from sin in order to **live holy.**
- When we claim to know Christ but willingly participate in sin or compromise our biblical integrity, we're flirting with demonic forces.
- We're also called to love and protect those around us. This means we must occasionally forfeit freedoms for the sake of others.

DO WE WORSHIP ANY IDOLS?

- If we are honest, is there anything we put above God in our lives? Do we trust Him with **every** part of our lives? If not, what are we trusting more?
- **Whose desires are we pursuing, ours or His?**
- Are we striving to distance ourselves from temptation? Are we striving to keep non-sinful distractions at bay?

EVERYTHING FOR HIS GLORY

- If we acknowledge Jesus is our only hope and reason for anything good, we should want to do everything in a way that honors Him.
- **Can we honestly say our relationships, interactions with others, work, school, leisure, thoughts, and every aspect of our lives are done with excellence in order to honor God?**