

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 3RD, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

## A WAY OUT (1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-13)

### WELL KNOWN SAYING

Harvard Professor George Santayana wrote, "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

- Pioneering this thought, Paul will use Israel's history in attempts to keep the Corinthian Christians from falling into the same trap of disobedience and idolatry.

### "BAPTIZED INTO MOSES IN THE CLOUD AND IN THE SEA"

The Israelites, our ancestors, were delivered from oppression of slavery in Egypt through Moses by passing through the Red Sea and following God's presence in the cloud.

- We are delivered from the oppression of sin through Jesus. We pass through the baptismal waters to identify with Him, and we are covered by the presence of God.

### SPIRITUAL FOOD AND DRINK

Five times in four verses, Paul speaks to common experiences that the Corinthians shared with the Israelites.

- The Israelites had bread (manna) provided by God, and the Church was given Jesus, the bread of life. God gave them a rock that provided water and revealed to us that Jesus is that rock, and He gives living water.

### BREAK THE CYCLE

The common experience that Paul was hoping to sever was God's judgement because of His unhappiness with His people.

- The Israelites were struck down in the wilderness, and if the Corinthians continued to disobey God and continue to abuse one another, God might judge them in the same way He judged Israel.

### "DO NOT DESIRE EVIL THINGS OR BECOME IDOLATORS"

Using OT examples to break the cycle, Paul quotes Exodus 32:6, where Moses comes down from Mt. Sinai to find the Israelites participating in idol worship before a golden calf.

- Because of their idolatry, God nearly destroyed the entire nation, and nearly three thousand men were put to death.

### WARNING AGAINST SEXUAL IMMORALITY

To warn against sexual immorality, Paul refers to a time when twenty-three thousand people died because of their participation in pagan fertility rituals and the worship of Baal of Peor.

- The perverse ways that Israelites participated in these rituals showed a disregard for God's design as well as a desire to satisfy the flesh above satisfying God.

### WARNING AGAINST REJECTING GOD'S PROVISION

Paul warns not to test the Lord as some did and were destroyed by snakes. In Numbers 21:4-9, the Israelites rejected God's provisions (manna) by seeking something different than what God provided for them.

- Rejecting God's provision in the wilderness foreshadowed that His people would also reject God's provision in salvation.

### WARNING AGAINST COMPLAINING

Paul warns the Corinthians not to grumble or complain as some did in the OT, where "the destroyer" is mentioned as the agent of judgment against them (Exodus 12:23; 1 Chronicles 21:15).

- The complaining reveals a lack of contentment, which comes from a relationship with God.

### WARNING AND EXAMPLE FOR ALL

Paul points out that these things, the rebellion, and judgment, happened as a warning and an example.

- These things were recorded for the benefit of the OT covenant people of God, the NT church in Corinth, as well as for us, whom the ends of the ages have come (those after the earthly ministry of Christ).

### TOO PRIDEFUL TO HEED THE WARNING

Verse 12 tells those who are overconfident and think they are standing firm must be careful not to fall.

- The Israelites became prideful in being "God's chosen people" and fell because they were "standing firm" by their own power. We must war against our pride of "American Christianity" so as not to fall.

### A WAY OUT IS ALWAYS PROVIDED

This does not say, "God will never give you more than you can handle." If we are never in situations out of our control, then we will never rely on God.

- The idea that no temptation will come except what is common to humanity gives us hope that we, too can overcome. God has provided the way out, making victory possible, but we give in because we are not looking for the way out.

## WE MUST CHOOSE (1 CORINTHIANS 10:14-22)

### SPEAKING TO SENSIBLE PEOPLE

In Ch. 8, Paul pointed out that meat is just meat since there is only one true God, and the meat they are sacrificing is to their so-called non-existent gods.

- He will clarify that even though the idols are not true gods, the practices in the pagan temples are not as meaningless as they may seem.

### UNITY AND FELLOWSHIP

In the Christian practice of Communion, "the cup of blessing (blood of Christ) and the bread we break (body of Christ)" shows a unity and fellowship with Jesus.

- Likewise, the practices that take place in the pagan temples show a unity and fellowship between the ones participating and the pagan gods they worship.

Paul tells the Corinthians that though the pagans are mistaken about sacrifices made to their so-called gods, there is still a spiritual aspect that takes place.

- Since he acknowledged that "an idol is nothing in this world (1 Cor. 8:4)," he adds that the sacrifices made to false gods are being made to demons.

### WE CANNOT HAVE IT BOTH WAYS

Paul tells the Corinthians that they "cannot share in the Lord's table and the table of demons."

- We cannot have it both ways and straddle the fence between the things of the Lord and the things of this world. When we try to do both, we "provoke the Lord to jealousy."

## DO EVERYTHING FOR THE GLORY OF GOD (1 CORINTHIANS 10:23-33)

### PRACTICAL APPLICATION FOR LIFE IN CORINTH

Paul had offered principles about the freedoms we have in Christ. Though the idols are not of divine nature, they do involve demons, so the Christian should flee from idolatry. They should not assert their own rights over loving others.

- In this section, Paul will give practical guidelines based on these principles so that the Corinthians know how to apply them to their lives.

### IT'S ALL KOSHER

Paul teaches that the freedoms we have in Christ must be balanced by a desire to build up and benefit others. So, when it came to meat sold in the markets if the topic of sacrificing to idols did not come up, they were able to buy and eat it.

- Paul asserted this based on Psalm 24:1, that says, "the earth and all that is in it is the Lord's."

### NOT YOUR OWN CONSCIENCE, BUT THE OTHERS

After speaking about food bought in the marketplace, Paul then focused on food being offered while a guest in an unbeliever's home.

- In a similar fashion, Paul says not to raise the questions of the origin of the meat so that offense is not caused to the unbeliever. However, if the host mentions it was from an idol sacrifice, we are not to eat.

### LOVE GOD, LOVE OTHERS

To summarize these principles, Paul stated that whether a person eats or drinks, their decision should always be made for the glory of God.

- The glorification and honor of God should be chief concern for those who claim to love him (Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37). We should love and honor God with everything we have and are.

### SHOW CONCERN FOR YOUR NEIGHBOR

Furthermore, the decision on whether or not to eat and drink should not cause anyone to stumble. Nor should the decision cause anyone to sin or hinder the opportunity for someone to receive the gospel.

- Each group Paul mentioned required different considerations. Whether it was a Jew, Greek, or the Church, they were to show concern and love for their neighbor.

### HISTORY MAY REPEAT ITSELF

- What is our view of George Santayana's quote? Do we see that we are doomed to repeat history, or do we see the hope in changing it?
- Do we believe that the whole Bible is relevant and applicable today?
- Are we heeding the warnings and applying the principles that are taught in the Word?

### A HEART ISSUE

- It does not seem that the Corinthians questions came from a place of wanting to go as far as possible with Jesus. Instead, it seems as though they wanted to know how much they could get away with and still be considered a Christ-follower.
- Is this how we approach the one who gave it all? Are we asking how little we must do?

### THERE IS FREEDOM IN CHRIST

- Paul spoke about the freedoms we have with food and drink. He spoke about the freedom we have from the law.
- Do we grasp that Jesus offers freedom from our past? We are not bound to recreate the sins of our past!
- We have freedom to change the course of our future despite our past!