

**10:1-22:** warnings against idolatry with idolatry specifically mentioned in verse 7 and 14

**Verses 1-5** introduction of Jewish history. Paul shows that he is going to talk about history. He starts out making it clear that he is talking about the ancestors following God but then he transitions to say that the Lord was not happy with most of them.

**Verses: 6-13:** they were examples for us (verses 6 and 11 quote this)

**Verses: 14- 22:** food sacrificed to idols

**Verse 14:** flee idolatry: is Paul saying that food sacrificed to idols is synonymous with idolatry?

**Verses 15-18: may be a comparison with communion:** were they using idol food with communion? Also the metaphor that they are one body and the people who at the sacrifices participated in the altar.

**Verses: 19-22:** food sacrificed to idols is food sacrificed to demons

**Verses: 23-33:** do all to the glory of God

**Verses 23-24:** build each other up

**Verses 25-30:** don't ask questions of what you eat for the other person's conscience (repeated in verse 25 and 27)

**Verses 31-33:** seek the good of others and glorify God

Also 11:1

### Verse by verse

- From the beginning it seems as if Paul is slowly moving back to the idol food issue
- Some think that 1 Cor is a composite letter and chapter 10 was written at a different time than chapter 8

**10:1-22:** warnings against idolatry with idolatry specifically mentioned in verse 7 and 14

**Verses 1-5** introduction of Jewish history. Paul shows that he is going to talk about history. He starts out making it clear that he is talking about the ancestors following God but then he transitions to say that the Lord was not happy with most of them.

1 Corinthians 10:1–5 (ESV)

### Warning Against Idolatry

*10 For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup> and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup> and all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup> and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.*

Paul starts out: "I want you to know"

- The inference here is that Paul is about to state something that he wants to get their attention with
- Paul is kind of saying "attention!!!"
- Paul uses the familial term "brothers"

## 1Corinthians 10

- Paul continues by talking about Judaism history
- Might be interesting to re research about how much of the Corinthian church were Jewish
  - → even if only a small percentage of the Corinthian Church were Jewish they still are spiritual descendants of Abraham
- Paul is saying that their spiritual ancestors passed through the sea and under the cloud.
  - → Is Paul referring to how the Lord led them by fire at night and cloud by day?
- In verse 2 Paul gives the idea that during this time they were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.
  - These 2 verses are connected by a couple conjunctions
  - 3 times the conjunction translated “and”
- In verse 3 we once again have the conjunction translated “and” used so that Paul can say that they all ate the same spiritual food.
- Verse 4 is connected with the conjunction translated “and” in this case to say they all drank from “the Rock” which was Jesus Christ
  - 5 times the conjunction translated “and” is used
  - → the purpose is because Paul is stringing together a list of things that they have in common
    - This is an introduction because in verse 5 there is another conjunction which is translated “but” or “nevertheless” and in this case what Paul says is not good
- Ex 13:21: cloud by day and fire by night
- Ex 14:22: crossing the sea on dry ground
- Ex 16:15 and 35 about Manna
- Ex 17:6: water from the rock
- Num. 14:29, 37; 26:64, 65; Ps. 106:26; Heb. 3:17; Jude 5: about people dying in the wilderness<sup>1</sup>

**Verses: 6-13:** they were examples for us (verses 6 and 11 quote this)

### **1 Corinthians 10:6–13 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. <sup>7</sup> Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.” <sup>8</sup> We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. <sup>9</sup> We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, <sup>10</sup> nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. <sup>11</sup> Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. <sup>12</sup> Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. <sup>13</sup> No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

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<sup>1</sup>The Holy Bible : English standard version. 2001. Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

- In verse 6 Paul tells why he had listed those events and why they happened. They were examples. Just as Paul make himself an example in chapter 9.
  - → Paul seems to be moving back from the digression. Paul seems to be moving back into his argument
- Num. 11:4, 33, 34; Ps. 78:18; 106:14: all about the people rebelling against God
- Interesting that Paul uses a strong word: they desired “evil”
  - They had to have been tired of manna and quail. They may have just wanted something different. But was still against God’s plan and sin is evil.
- Verse 7 is a strong exhortation: “Don’t be idolaters!”
  - But Paul is fair. He says as some of them were
  - Ex 32:4 is about them making the golden calf. This is where Paul was quoting from
- Verse 8 is another strong exhortation using the Jewish people as an example: no sexual immorality as some of them did
  - Num 25:1 is about the Israelites involved with prostitutes
  - [Num. 25:9; Ps. 106:29] these verses talk about the people dying as a consequence of their sin

**The Bible Knowledge Commentary:**

*A possible solution to the apparent discrepancy in the death count found in Numbers 25:9 (24,000) and Paul’s figure of 23,000 may reside in the phrase **one day**. Moses and most of Israel were mourning the death of those who had been executed by the judges (Num. 25:5) or killed by an ongoing plague. Meanwhile Phineas was dispatching an Israelite man and Moabite woman in their last act of immorality (Num. 25:6-8), which brought to completion God’s discipline of the immoral Israelites and ended the death toll by plague at 24,000, a number probably intended as a summary figure.*

*Another explanation of the 24,000 in Numbers (contra. Paul’s 23,000) is that the former included the leaders (cf. Num. 25:4), whereas the latter did not.<sup>2</sup>*

- Verse 9: don’t put the Lord to the test as some of them did and died
- Ex 17:2 and 7 and Psalm 78:18 deal with the people testing the Lord
- Numbers 21:6 deals with the serpents that the Lord sent amongst them
- Verses 9 and 10 are connected by the conjunction translated “nor”
- Numbers 14:2 has the Israelites grumbling against the Lord
  - → Verse 12 starts with an inferential coordinating conjunction. Paul is now moving to an application. If you think you are standing strong, beware!!!
  - 2Peter 3:17 is very good here
- I like verse 13. This is a very good memory verse for several reasons
  1. Our temptation is not unusual
    - a. We usually think our temptation is the worst.
    - b. I was speaking with a professional counselor and he said that studies have been done to show that most peoples temptations only last a couple seconds.
  2. God is faithful. We don’t live that way, do we?
    - a. Dan 3:17 is good about God’s

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<sup>2</sup>Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:526-527). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- b. 2Peter 2:9 about the Lord rescuing His people
- 3. The Lord will not allow you to be tempted beyond your ability
  - a. Are you praying for lighter temptations or a stronger back?
  - b. →God gives a stronger back—
- 4. The Lord will provide a way out of the temptation
  - a. 2 Samuel 11 when David sinned with Bathsheba his servant told David, “She is the wife of...” that should have sent red flags up to David
  - b. Heb 4:15: Jesus as our high priest has been tempted as us

**Verses: 14- 22:** food sacrificed to idols

**Verse 14:** flee idolatry: is Paul saying that food sacrificed to idols is synonymous with idolatry?

**Verses 15-18: may be a comparison with communion:** were they using idol food with communion? Also the metaphor that they are one body and the people who at the sacrifices participated in the altar.

**Verses: 19-22:** food sacrificed to idols is food sacrificed to demons

1 Corinthians 10:14–22 (ESV)

*<sup>14</sup> Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. <sup>15</sup> I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. <sup>16</sup> The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? <sup>17</sup> Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. <sup>18</sup> Consider the people of Israel: are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar? <sup>19</sup> What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? <sup>20</sup> No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. <sup>21</sup> You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. <sup>22</sup> Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?*

- Verse 14 is repeated from verse 7 but not exactly the same
  - The GK noun translated idolatry might also be translated “idol service”
    - →likely Paul is moving back into the idol of food sacrificed to idols
    - →If they are not only eating food sacrificed to idols but also at the temple where the sexual immorality and sacrificing is happening than I would say this is likely idolatry
    - Sexual immorality and idolatrous practices were both happening when food was sacrificed to idols
- In verse 15 Paul compliments his audience as being sensible
- In verse 16 there seems to be a contrast of the drink and food that they are taking part of and communion.
  - Paul uses a question
- Chapter 11:25 and Matt 26:27-28 deal with communion
- We are one body: Paul talks about this in 12:12, 13, and 20

## 1 Corinthians 10

- Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:4, 16; Col. 3:15
- Verse 18 goes back to Israel.
  - Paul weaves in and out of his illustrations to make his point
  - →this seems to be a strong condemnation of idol food
  - →Eating idol food is participating....
- In 8:4 it appears that the Corinthians were saying that an idol was not anything. Here in 10:19 Paul comes to that. Paul may be using a bit of sarcasm
  - Dt 32:17 talks about sacrifices to demons
- In verse 20 Paul makes it resoundingly clear that food sacrificed to idols is sacrificed to demons and he doesn't want them participants with demons!
- Then verse 21 relates communion with the sacrifices to idols. Paul says they cannot join the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. NOTICE THE CONTRAST
  - 2Cor 6:15-16 deals with this
- Verse 22 is a question with a negative answer. We shall not provoke the Lord to jealousy!!!
  - Ex 20:5: the Lord is a jealous God!

**Verses: 23-33:** do all to the glory of God

**Verses 23-24:** build each other up

**Verses 25-30:** don't ask questions of what you eat for the other person's conscience (repeated in verse 25 and 27)

**Verses 31-33:** seek the good of others and glorify God

Also 11:1

### 1 Corinthians 10:23–33 (ESV)

#### **Do All to the Glory of God**

<sup>23</sup> "All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up. <sup>24</sup> Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. <sup>25</sup> Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. <sup>26</sup> For "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." <sup>27</sup> If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. <sup>28</sup> But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— <sup>29</sup> I do not mean your conscience, but his. For why should my liberty be determined by someone else's conscience? <sup>30</sup> If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks?

<sup>31</sup> So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. <sup>32</sup> Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, <sup>33</sup> just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.

- Verse 23 is very similar to 6:12
- In 8:9 Paul said that all things are lawful but not all things build up
- All things may be lawful but that doesn't mean they are helpful in evangelism

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- Verse 24 is comparable to verse 33. This also comparable to 9: 23 where Paul says that he does all for the sake of the Gospel
  - Dt 6:5 and Matt 22:37: Shema and greatest commandment
- In verse 25 it appears that Paul is saying it is ok to eat what is sold in the market.
  - → this likely is a market. This is not the same as eating in a temple
- Verse 26 is cited from Psalm 24:1
- ; [Ex. 9:29; 19:5; Deut. 10:14; Job 41:11; Ps. 50:12]: all deal with the Lord owning everything<sup>3</sup>
  - → the application may have to do with eating things is ok because the Lord owns it all
  - Romans 14:20 says that everything is clean
  - Also Acts 10:15
- Verse 27 may also have to deal with not offending. But you don't ask questions for conscious sake
  - Luke 10:8 has Jesus sending the people out and saying to eat at what is set before you
- verses 28-29 add some more explanation. Be careful of other people's consciences
- 1 Timothy 4:3-4 also deal with the idea that all things God created as good
- Verse 31 is really good for memorization
  - Col. 3:17; 1 Pet. 4:11: also talk about giving glory to God in all things
- Verse 32 as well as ch. 8:13; Rom. 14:13; 2 Cor. 6:3 deal with stumbling blocks and the idea of not putting stumbling blocks in front of people
- Verse 33 and 9:22 are related: want to seek many to be saved. Also Gal 1:10 Paul serves God and not man
- Chapter 11:1 is a good rap up

### The IVP:

**10:24–25.** Whatever meat was left over from sacrifices was taken to the meat market in the large agora in Corinth (not far from where Paul had once worked—Acts 18:3). Not all meat in this market had been offered to idols, but some of it had. In comparatively large cities, Jewish people were often allowed to have their own markets so they could avoid such food. In other cities, they would ask about the source of the meat. But Jewish teachers considered inadvertent sins “light”; thus Paul can trust that the scrupulous will be satisfied with “What you don't know won't hurt you.” Because most people could not afford to buy meat, subsisting instead on fish and grain, Paul here addresses the well-to-do in the congregation.<sup>4</sup>

**10:27–29.** Most temples had their own dining halls, and people were invited to meals “at the table of Serapis” and other pagan gods. The meat at these meals would obviously have been offered to idols. But people were also invited to banquets in wealthy homes, where they could not be certain of the meat's source. Jewish people who avoided impure foods (like pork) were virtually excluded from such banquets, but they did not look down on Gentiles who ate pork as

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<sup>3</sup>*The Holy Bible : English standard version.* 2001. Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

<sup>4</sup>Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (1 Co 10:24). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

Gentiles \***Gentile**. Anyone who is not Jewish. In ancient Jewish parlance, this was often the equivalent of “pagan.”

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long as they abstained from idols. Jewish people had sometimes faced martyrdom to avoid eating impure foods, and they would expect Gentiles who claimed to believe in God at least to avoid food that had certainly been offered to idols.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (1 Co 10:27). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.