



Sunday October 20, 2019
1 Corinthians chapter 10

In Chapter 8, the apostle Paul had addressed the issue of eating food offered to idols. He then took a slight detour to defend his apostleship, pointing primarily to his own life of service, stewardship, sacrifice and discipline. He now returns to sharing truth concerning idols and food offered to idols. The apostle Paul points to the Hebrews and their mistakes as lessons to learn from. He reveals the spiritual dimension of partaking in food offered to idols, and then brings the final conclusion to this matter, as well as focusing on the heart attitude with which we are to live this out.

A little background to the Early Church. In **about 49 A.D.**, in between Paul's first and second missionary journeys, there was what is commonly referred to as **the Jerusalem Council recorded in Acts 15**. The apostles, elders in Jerusalem along with Paul, Barnabas and others had discussed what should be done to guide the Gentiles who were coming to faith in Christ. They summed up their discussions as:

Acts 15:28-29

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:

29 that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.

Subsequent to the Jerusalem Council Paul went on his second missionary journey during which time he and his team established the church at Corinth. The apostle Paul would have informed them to "abstain from things offered to idols". However the believers at Corinth needed further understanding on this, and hence Paul's writing to them at length on this topic.

For our study we divide this chapter into the following sections:

Lessons From Israel's History (10:1-14)

The Cup And The Bread (10:15-18)

Idols And Sacrifices (10:19-24)

Food Offered To Idols (10:25-33)

Lessons From Israel's History (10:1-14)

1 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea,

2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

3 all ate the same spiritual food,



4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.

7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND ROSE UP TO PLAY."

8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell;

9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;

10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

Vs 1-6 :

The apostle Paul looks back into history and draws lessons from God's dealings with the Hebrews as He brought them out of Egypt and as they journeyed to the Promised Land.

As they journeyed, they all had wonderful experiences of the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, passing through the Red sea, water out of the rock, manna from heaven and so on.

4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

God was with them. In fact, Paul states that Christ was with them (vs 4). This points to the fact that Christ was/is eternally God, pre-existent even before His physical birth into this world. This also teaches us about Old Testament types, shadows or pre-figures. There are types in the Old Testament that point to Jesus Christ and what God was going to unveil in the New Testament.

From the time of their Exodus from Egypt, till the end of their time at Horeb (Mt. Sinai), was 1 year, 1 month and 5 days. From Horeb they had a 11-day journey to Kadesh, right on the East of the river Jordan. This is where they sent out 12 spies who came back with their report. The people of Israel chose to believe the report of the 10 spies, and eventually ended up wandering around Mt. Seir for 38 years. Mt. Seir was a mountain range 70 miles North-South, and 30 miles East-West. The people of Israel spent 38 years going around the mountain, until God said "You have gone around this mountain long enough; turn northward." (Deuteronomy 2:3).



vs 6-11 :

6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.

7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND ROSE UP TO PLAY."

8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell;

9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;

10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Looking back at their experience the apostle Paul points to specific sins that kept them out of the Promised Land. Paul tells us that these are examples for us to learn from, so that we can avoid the same sins and mistakes.

#1, Lust for evil things (vs 6)

(See Numbers 11:4,5,34; Psalm 106:14)

God had them enjoy meat in Egypt. But now, while in transition, their craving for meat was 'out of place'. What may have been acceptable in one season, may not be appropriate for another season.

#2, Idolatry (vs 7)

(See Exodus 32:1-8; Psalm 106:19-23)

Anything that replaces God in my life, is an idol.

Be careful in moments/seasons of "silence" or "inactivity" when God does not seem to be saying anything or doing anything - that's when we tend to make things up for ourselves. Stay with His last instruction.

#3, Sexual impurity (vs 8)

(See Numbers 25:1-9; Psalm 106:28-29)

Our sexual appetites must be consecrated to God.

Like Paul, I must "discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." (1 Corinthians 9:27)

#4, Tempting Christ (vs 9)

(See Exodus 17:1-7; Numbers 21:4-6)

"they tempted the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?" (Exodus 17:7)

"..the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses.." (Numbers 21:4-5)

The Amplified Bible renders tempting Christ as our attempt to "test His patience, question His purpose or exploit His goodness" (Amplified Bible).



In times of discouragement, we must be careful that we do not question God in a manner that challenges Him to prove Himself. God is very secure in Himself and does not need to prove Himself to anyone.

We must believe His promise, not question His promise.

#5, Complaining and murmuring (vs 10)

(See Exodus 16:2; Numbers 14:2,37)

Don't permit temporary difficulties cause you murmur and complain and lose out on God's purposes.

Things will be unsettling when you are in transition. Turning back to known comforts of the past is not an option. **There is only one way, move ahead into your land of promise.** Be careful what you speak about your leaders.

These five sins kept the people in the wilderness and kept them out of the Promised Land:

#1, Lust for evil things

#2, Idolatry

#3, Sexual impurity

#4, Tempting Christ

#5, Complaining and murmuring

vs 12-14 :

12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

We should always be on guard, watchful, humble. Don't let pride come in, where we think we won't fall. We always remain dependent on God.

13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

The word 'temptation' in Greek '*peirasmos*' could refer to any trial, testing, experiment or proving as in (A)adversity, affliction, trouble or (B)an enticement or inducement to sin either from inner desires or external sources. In the context of what the apostle Paul is writing, we understand that he is referring specifically to enticement or inducements to sin.

The 'way of escape' in Greek is '*ekbasis*' which can mean both EXIT referring to a way out of something, or END referring to the termination of something.

For every temptation that is presented to us, God has an EXIT, a way of escape or a way to get out of it. We must choose to RUN through the EXIT, if we want to overcome



temptation. Alternatively, God will bring the temptation to an END. We have to RESIST the temptation till the END and not yield to it.

WHEN FACED WITH TEMPTATION RUN THROUGH THE EXIT OR RESIST TILL THE END. DON'T GIVE IN.

14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

In view of all that was said, we need to RUN from idolatry.

Remember in Chapter 6, Paul instructed us to "run from sexual immorality" (6:18). He uses the same injunction and instructs us to run from idolatry. He explains why as we progress in this chapter.

The Cup And The Bread (10:15-18)

15 I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say.

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

18 Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

Paul recognizes that he is speaking to wise (intelligent, thoughtful, sensible, sagacious) people and invites them to think this matter through with him.

Paul reveals to us the spiritual significance of the Lord's Table, which we partake of together as believers:

The word communion in Greek is '*koinōnia*' which refers to fellowship, sharing, participation in, partnership, communion, partaking of.

The cup of blessing - this cup that we drink is intended to administer blessing into our lives.

which we bless - we speak and pronounce blessing over it before we drink it.

it is the communion of the blood of Christ - we share (we receive in response to faith) the benefits of the blood of Jesus Christ.

the communion of the body of Christ - we share (we receive in response to faith) all that Christ did for us on the Cross. We also share by being part of His spiritual body, the Church.



In all of us partaking of the that one bread, we are attesting that we are "one body" spiritually.

In verse 18, Paul points to the fact that in the Old Testament, the people of Israel, their worship of God (i.e. partakers of the altar) was expressed through their eating of the sacrifices made at the altar. Their eating of the sacrifices of the altar meant that they became one (partakers Greek '*koinōnos*' sharer, brought into fellowship with) with all that happened at the altar - the worship of God, what God released to the people, etc.

The important truth here is that there are spiritual dimensions of blessing, sharing in the benefits, many becoming one, etc., when we eat or drink something that is used as an expression of worship toward God.

Idols And Sacrifices (10:19-24)

19 What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything?

20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.

21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.

22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?

23 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify.

24 Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being.

Having spoken of partaking of the Lord's table, Paul now begins to address idols and sacrifices made to idols.

Paul recognizes as he has mentioned earlier in chapter 8, that the idol itself is nothing and what is offered as a sacrifice to an idol is nothing. The sacrifices offered are actually made to the spirits behind the idols, demonic spirits. Hence when something offered to an idol is eaten, we are fellowshiping (sharing, coming into association with) with the spirits behind that idol. So a believer partaking of the Lord's Table is fellowshiping with the Lord, and if this believer partakes of sacrifices made to idols, they are fellowshiping with demon spirits. **We cannot mix true worship with idol worship.** This is unacceptable and must not happen. This provokes the Lord's jealous love and care for His people and we are not more powerful than Him.

In vs 23, the apostle Paul repeats a statement he made earlier in chapter 6, where there may be things that are lawful (culturally acceptable), but we must evaluate things to see if they are spiritually helpful and edifying (building up as in building a house). So we do



not do things just because they may seem acceptable, or aligned to popular opinion or appear to be the norm.

Another important aspect to consider in this matter is the other person's well-being.

So the apostle Paul has addressed the issue of idols and eating things offered to idols:

1, The spiritual aspects involved (vs 19-21)

2, Cannot mix worship of God and worship of demons (vs 22)

3, It may be culturally acceptable, but it may not be helpful and edifying (vs 23)

4, I also need to consider the other person's well-being (vs 24)

He then sums things up:

Food Offered To Idols (10:25-33)

25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake;

26 for "THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, AND ALL ITS FULLNESS."

27 If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake.

28 But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, AND ALL ITS FULLNESS."

29 "Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another man's conscience?

30 But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for the food over which I give thanks?

31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

32 Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God,

33 just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

As we mentioned in chapter 8, there were two scenarios that the believer was faced with as far as eating things offered to idols: (A) Meat that was offered as sacrifice in the temple, was later sold in the market along with other portions of meat. When one went to the market it would not always be possible to identify what meat was sacrificed to idols and what was not. (B) A believer may be offered in a temple or elsewhere food offered to idols. Paul addresses these situations.

Vs 25-26 :

25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake;

26 for "THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, AND ALL ITS FULLNESS."

Whatever you buy in the market pray over it and eat it. Paul taught clearly that when we receiving food with thanksgiving, speak God's word and pray over it, it is sanctified (made holy, cleansed).



1 Timothy 4:3-5

3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;

5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

vs 27-30 :

27 If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake.

28 But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, AND ALL ITS FULLNESS."

29 "Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another man's conscience?

30 But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for the food over which I give thanks?

Similarly, when you are invited for a meal at the home of someone who is not a believer, eat whatever you are offered. When you pray, give thanks, speak the Word over the food it is cleansed. Your conscience is clear. Enjoy your meal!

In the other scenario, if you are informed explicitly that the food was offered to idols and it is therefore being presented to you as an item of worship, then do not eat it. Although we have the freedom and knowledge of the truth, that the food can (and will be) sanctified by the Word and prayer - we still do not eat it, for the sake of the person who gave it to us, for his conscience sake.

Our gentle, loving refusal to eat will awaken their conscience to the truth and point to the worship of God. That is the intent in not eating what was offered to the idol. To help point them to the living God in a loving and gentle way through our action.

vs 31-33 :

31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

32 Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God,

33 just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

Very importantly here are the underlying attitudes we must maintain in this matter:

1, We must do everything to honor and glorify God. This is our priority.

2, We do not wish to offend any person. We do everything with love, meekness and gentleness.

3, We walk in good terms (please = to be agreeable) with people, because our hearts desire is for them to be saved.

MINISTRY TIME | SALVATION CALL



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Sunday October 20, 2019
1 Corinthians chapter 10

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at apcwo.org/sermons. Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture passages: *1 Corinthians chapter 10*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

1, Review the five sins that Paul highlights from Israel's history and warns us about. How can you guard yourself from falling into similar sins?

#1, Lust for evil things

#2, Idolatry

#3, Sexual impurity

#4, Tempting Christ

#5, Complaining and murmuring

2, Discuss 1 Corinthians 10:13, on what this Scripture teaches us to do when we are faced with enticements or inducements to sin.

3, Discuss the significance of the Lord's table, as presented in 1 Corinthians 10:16-18



4, Summarize in your own words what the Scripture instructs on a believer's response to eating food offered to idols. Now think of scenarios in your everyday life that you might encounter and consider how you will have to respond to, based on what the Scripture teaches us.

If time permits, each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

1, families to be protected and strengthened

2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.

3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.

Close by thanking God together.