

Text: 1 Cor 10.1-22

As we move through Corinthians, we will keep our place by developing the broad outline we started with.

I. Introduction (1.1-9)**II. Conditions reported to Paul (1.10-6.20)**

- A. Divisions in the church (1.10-4.21)
- B. Lack of discipline in the church (5.1-6.20)

III. Questions asked of Paul (7.1-16.4)

¹ Cor 7.1 ¶ Now concerning the things about which you wrote...

“The remainder of the body of this epistle deals with questions that the Corinthians had asked Paul in a letter. Paul introduced each of these with the phrase *peri de* (‘now concerning,’ 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1, 12).”¹

- A. Questions about marriage (7.1-40)
- B. Questions about things sacrificed to idols (8.1-11.1)

Key to understanding: What is the issue?

“things sacrificed to idols” = εἰδωλόθυτος, “idol sacrifices”

¹ Cor 8.10 For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, **dining in an idol's temple**, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols?

“an animal sacrificed in the presence of an idol and eaten in the temple precincts.”²

My outline for the passage:

1. Weakness of the brother (8)
2. Worth of the gospel (9)
3. Wickedness of the heart (10)

¹ Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), 1 Co 7.1.

² Ben Witherington III, “Not So Idle Thoughts About Eidolothuton,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 44, no. 2 (1993): 240.

Review Questions:

1. What is the conclusion of the “weakness of the brother” teaching with respect to the question about consuming “things sacrificed to idols”?
don't do it.
2. What is the application of the “worth of the gospel” teaching with respect to the question about consuming “things sacrificed to idols”?
don't do it.
3. Why do I say “application” instead of “conclusion” when we are talking about the “worth of the gospel”?
no direct teaching in 1 Cor 9

“This whole chapter [chapter 9] is an explanation of the last verse of the preceding chapter. More generally it clarifies the importance of limiting our legitimate liberty as Christians for higher goals, namely, the glory of God and the welfare of other people.”³

1 Corinthians 10

Paul makes a point about the spiritual experience of the “Exodus generation” of Israel as they escaped Egypt and went to Mt. Sinai. What is he saying about Israel’s spiritual experience? (1-4)

They all were in a spiritual relationship with God through their deliverance under Moses.

Nevertheless, what happened to God’s chosen people? (5) **they died in the wilderness**

Verse 6 and verse 11 mention “these things” are “examples” — what does this tell us about the whole section, vv. 6-13? **It is an inclusion, tightly connected together**

What are the examples listed in this section?

- (6) **craving evil things**
- (7) **participating in idolatry [specifically the Golden Calf incident]**
- (8) **committing immorality when participating in in Moab’s religious feasts, Num 25.1-9**

³ Constable, *Expository Notes*, 1 Co 9.27.

(9) trying the Lord – grumbling about the manna, plagued by serpents, Num 21.4-9

(10) frequent grumbling but specifically the instance in Num 11.1-3

What is the purpose of these examples? (11) a lesson for us

Who is targeted by the warning of v. 12? Those who think they are strong

What assurance is given in v. 13? God made a way for us to overcome temptation

“One of the reasons we yield to temptation is that we are like the little boy in the pantry. His mother heard a noise because he had taken down the cookie jar. She said, ‘Willie, where are you?’ He answered that he was in the pantry. ‘What are you doing there?’ He said, ‘I’m fighting temptation.’ My friend, that is not the place to fight temptation! That is the place to start running.’⁴

What is Paul’s flat conclusion in v. 14? Flee from idolatry

Paul uses two illustrations in vv. 15-18, the Christian communion service and the OT sacrificial meals. What does he mean by using these illustrations?

Partakers in sacred meals enter a spiritual union with the God they worship

What is the point of these illustrations? Are idols anything? Are the things offered to idols of any spiritual significance? What is the issue, then? (19-20) the idols are nothing, but there are demons behind the idols, Christians should not share with demons

Paul marks down a clear line between the Lord’s supper and feasting with demons. He gives an absolute prohibition of sharing the table of demons. (21)

What does Paul mean by the question of v. 22? There is a danger of judgement if we provoke the Lord

This concludes the argument of “things offered to idols.” The rest of the chapter deals with applications and possible objections. We will study that next week along with making some contemporary applications.

⁴ J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, v. 5, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 46.