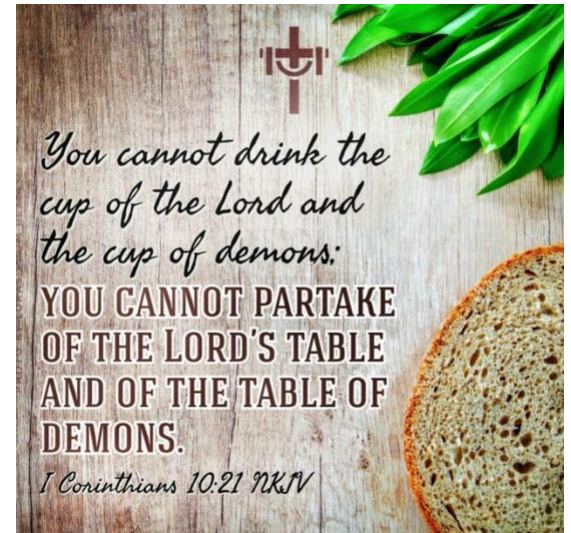


# 1 Corinthians, Chapter 10

In 1 Cor. 10, St. Paul warns against participation in idol worship. He previously allowed that discerning Christians have the freedom, barring the giving of offense to the weak in the faith, to eat food offered to idols. But it is one thing to eat such food in private homes and quite another thing to participate in idol worship. He adds the lesson that idolatry itself is a sin and must be shunned. It is wrong to argue that an idol is nothing. For in idolatry, the devil is worshiped.

**Read: 1 Corinthians 10:1-33.**



1. St. Paul devotes this section of his letter to warn about temptation. He uses examples from history, specifically the journey of Israel from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land.
  - a. "The cloud" (Exodus 13:20-22)
  - b. "Passed through the sea" (Exodus 14:21-22)
  - c. "Baptized into Moses" (Exodus 14:29-31)
  - d. "Spiritual food ... spiritual drink" (Exodus 16:13-16, 31; 17:1-2, 5-6)
  - e. "Overthrown in the wilderness" (Numbers 14:26-30)
  
2. Christ is called the "Spiritual Rock" from which the Israelites drank (1 Cor. 10:4). Jesus Himself spoke about this in **John 4:14** and **John 6:30-35**. In what way is Christ spiritual food and spiritual drink for you?
  
3. In 1 Cor. 10:6 and 11, and in Romans 15:4, St. Paul tells us why God preserved for us a record of things that happened long ago. How is this purpose of Scripture at work in your own life?
  
4. Israel's example stands as a warning for us. What four sins in particular drew down God's wrath on them?
  - a. 1 Cor. 10:7 (Exodus 32:1-6) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. 1 Cor. 10:8 (Numbers 25:1-3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. 1 Cor. 10:9 (Exodus 17:1-2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. 1 Cor. 10:10 (Numbers 16:1-3) \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. St. Paul warns us that we can be tempted to sin against God the same way the Israelites did. Even the strongest Christian can be overcome by temptation. But Paul also records a promise God makes to His own children when they are tempted. What is God saying to us in **1 Cor. 10:12-13**?
  
6. Of the four specific sins St. Paul notes in 1 Cor. 10:7-10, he emphasizes especially the sin of idolatry – a sin familiar to the Corinthian believers. They lived in a city full of pagan temples. Their friends and neighbors regularly worshiped false gods and goddesses. How are we tempted to commit the sin of idolatry?

**IDOLATRY:** the giving of anything or anyone the trust and allegiance that rightly belongs to God alone.

7. St. Paul refers to a participation in the cup and bread of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 10:16-17). The word for "participation" is the Greek word *koinonia*, which also may be translated "sharing" or "fellowship" or "communion."
  - a. Why do you think St. Paul brings up the topic of the Sacrament of the Altar in his discussion of idolatry?
  - b. How do the truths about Holy Communion back up his urgent command that God's people flee from idolatry?
8. When the Corinthians received the Lord's Supper, they received a piece of bread from one loaf. What implication is St. Paul drawing from the fact that the believers all shared one loaf?
9. Those who take part in pagan worship are "participating" or "communing" with demons (1 Cor. 10:20). What new implication does St. Paul make here?
10. How does 1 Cor. 10:16-21 apply to fellowship between Christian denominations and close or closed communion practice?
11. St. Paul tells of arousing the Lord to jealousy in 1 Cor. 10:22. The Lord is jealous in that He will not share us with any other gods. We belong to Him; we have been redeemed by the blood of His Son. Participating in the Lord's Supper while holding back a part of ourselves for other "gods" arouses His jealousy. How might we prepare ourselves to receive the Sacrament of the Altar with complete devotion?
12. St. Paul returns to the issue of eating meat offered to idols and repeats almost the same language as 1 Cor. 6:12. Everything is "lawful" – but not everything is beneficial or constructive. How are these criteria related to the principle of Christian love?
13. Why does St. Paul say it is right to eat meat purchased in the marketplace, even if it had been offered to idols (1 Cor. 10:25-30)?
14. Who, or what, is the focus of concern in this passage?
15. St. Paul commands that everything, even everyday actions like eating and drinking, be done to God's glory (1 Cor. 10:31)? How might God be glorified in our eating and drinking?

**Closing Prayer: (from LSB 534 – Lord, Enthroned in Heavenly Splendor, stanza 4)**

Life-imparting heav'nly manna, Stricken rock with streaming side, Heav'n and earth with loud hosanna  
 Worship You, the Lamb who died, Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Ris'n, ascended, glorified!  
 Ris'n, ascended, glorified! Amen.

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Sources: God's Word for Today: 1 Corinthians (CPH: 1997), LifeLight: 1 Corinthians (CPH: 2007), Luther's Works (CPH, Fortress), Concordia Commentary: 1 Corinthians (CPH: 2000)