

1 Corinthians 10.6-13

Introduction

- † Captain Mark Fiscus asked me to go over your memory verse again, to help you understand it better. This will help you to memorize it and help you to make use of it in life.

1 Corinthians 10.6 [ESV]: Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did.

- † What things are examples for us? Who desired evil? How do we figure this out? We look at the context.
 - The larger context of the whole book is that Paul is writing to a church that is filled with people young in their faith who are struggling with moral issues.
 - If we look at the first five verses of this chapter, we can see that Paul is talking about the Israelites who were rescued from Egypt and on their way to the promised land of Israel. They made several mistakes, which can serve as examples for us.
 - Now, in vv.7-10, Paul is going to give us some examples of these examples...

1 Corinthians 10.7: 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."

- † How do we know what this means? We have to find out where it is in the Old Testament and see what it means there. How do we do that?
 - Bible cross reference tool
 - <http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-corinthians/10.html>
 - <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/1corinthians.pdf> [p.109]
- † This is a quotation from Exodus 32.6, so we look at what happened in Exodus 32.1-6.
 - While Moses was up on the mountain communing with God, the Israelites made an idol and worshipped it. God was so angry, he was determined to destroy them.
 - We do not want to make the same mistake and anger God.

1 Corinthians 10.8: We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day.

- † What 23000? If we check our resources – the cross reference Bible, the online footnoted Bible, and the online commentary – we find that they all tell us this is a reference to Numbers 25.1-9.
 - Numbers 25 tells us that the Israelite men got seduced by pagan women, and engaged in both sexual immorality and the idolatry of giving honor to a false god. God was so angry, he demanded Moses have all the leaders of the people killed.
 - We do not want to be vulnerable in the same way and we do not want to anger God like this.

1 Corinthians 10.9: We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents,

- † What is this about? We check our resources, and we find this is a reference to Numbers 21.5-9.
 - Numbers 21 tells how the Israelites, on the way to the promised land, complained about God and his representative in Moses, and expressed doubt about God's deliverance. This angered God such that he sent poisonous snakes to kill them.
 - Paul says this was putting Christ to the test. Jesus is the Christ, which is the Greek term for the Jewish Messiah, the savior God promised would come in the Old Testament. Moses himself had given prophecy about this Messiah-savior, saying in Deuteronomy 18 that God would send a prophet even greater than Moses himself, who would speak God's words and represent God. This "Greater Moses Prophet" would be the Messiah, Christ, whom we know as Jesus. So when the people put Moses to the test – and challenged God himself – they were putting Christ to the test in a spiritual sense.
 - We should not doubt God's provision, nor complain when the going gets tough.

1 Corinthians 10.10: nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer.

- † There are lots of examples of the Israelites grumbling on their way to the promised land. Most commentators think this is a reference to Numbers 16.41-50, when God caused a plague to kill many people who were grumbling against the leadership of Moses.
 - We should be careful not to grumble against God or his ultimate representative in Christ. While there is nobody of the stature of Moses in these end times, except Christ himself, we should be careful about grumbling against God's anointed leaders who are serving us.

1 Corinthians 10.11: 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.

- † This verse repeats what we had at the beginning: God gave us these examples in scripture so that we could learn from them. We should avoid idolatry, sexual immorality, expressing doubt about God or Christ, and grumbling about God's provision.

1 Corinthians 10.12: Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

- † This is a challenging verse to translate because of how the Greek was written. The NLT says, "If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall."
 - As we were looking at the previous verses, we might think to ourselves, "How stupid those Israelites were! God had just delivered them out of slavery in Egypt, given them the Ten Commandments, provided them with food and protection, yet they kept slipping back into sin and doubt! What a bunch of fools!"
 - But Paul says, "The one who is thinking he will stand firm must beware not to fall!" We are all vulnerable to sin, and both the Bible and life make it clear that we often are most vulnerable when we feel confident that things are going ok, that we are fine. We must always be on guard against our own tendencies to sin!

- If you are out in the wilderness, you have to remain vigilant to step carefully so as not to fall and get hurt, to keep an eye out for dangerous animals or plants, to keep aware of sources for clean water and food, and so on. If, after a while, you let your success dictate that you no longer need to be vigilant, that is when you will be most vulnerable to danger.
- It is the same in life regarding the danger of sin. But there is good news in this message too...

1 Corinthians 10.13: 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.

- † When you are tempted to think of yourself instead of the needs of others, when you are tempted to fantasize about a girl, to look at her in lust, or to touch her inappropriately, when you are tempted to neglect daily worship of God, to doubt him, to believe in false teachings or to grumble against God, these are the same temptations people have always faced. That's why Paul gave us examples, so we would know these temptations are not new.
- † Now here is the promise: if you are a believer in Christ, then you will never experience a temptation beyond what you can escape or handle.
 - Even in Old Testament times, the Israelites should have done better: they had seen evidence that God was real and he was providing for them.
 - But we have even more advantages. We have the scriptures to teach us about God's will and character; we know that Christ has died for us, so that we can be assured of salvation; we have been spiritually regenerated to spiritual life and a connection with God; we have the Holy Spirit indwelling us and willing to empower and lead us to the right path; we experience "progressive sanctification" or "spiritual growth," which is the process the Holy Spirit is working in us to make us more like Christ in character and lifestyle; and we have each other to provide help, encouragement, and accountability.
- † We have no excuse for sin, gentlemen. But we also have victory over sin, for God himself will always provide us a way out. The Bible teaches how to avoid temptation. That is a talk for another day, but for now you should know that you can walk in victory, because Christ has set you free from the power of sin and the influence of evil, and the Holy Spirit is ready to back that up!