

1Spending Time with Jesus in I Corinthians Chapter 10

Invite Jesus to speak to you as you read this week.

1st: read I or II Corinthians (read the one you didn't read last week) all the way through, the whole book, imagining you are Paul saying this to the church in Corinth. To help you remember and ENJOY what you are reading, read out loud for at least 15 minutes each time (longer would be even better.)

2nd: read chapter 10 by itself to remember what it is about.

3rd: read chapter 10 again and write down what stands out to you.

What do you notice?

1)

2)

3)

Third read through, answer questions as you go:

I Corinthians 10:1-4

Who are the ancestors Paul is talking about? The _____ (yep, think Exodus.) But the Corinthians are mostly Gentiles... How can Paul speak of Moses and the people God led out of slavery in Egypt as the ancestors of the Corinthians?

What happened to "ALL" of our ancestors?

they were all under the _____

they all passed through the _____

they were all _____ into Moses in the _____ and in the _____

they all _____ the _____ food and _____ the _____

_____ (10:1-4)

What a strange way for Paul to retell the Exodus story! But he wants the Corinthians to notice something they are blind to about themselves: they could end up like the Israelites!

What was the cloud in the Exodus story a symbol of?

How was crossing the Red Sea like a baptism? (Hint: we know that baptism is our way of tangibly showing that we have accepted the new life Jesus gives and that we have made Him our Lord...that we will follow Him and remain loyal to Him above all else. Did the Israelites enter into a new life by following Moses through the Red Sea?)

What spiritual food (in other words, food not from earth) did they eat in Exodus? _____

What was miraculous about how God gave them water when there was none? _____

If Paul wants the Corinthians to see that the Israelites crossing the Red Sea was like a Christian being baptized, what sacrament is he thinking of when he reminds them that the Israelites had food and drink from God in the wilderness? (Hint: think of the Lord's Supper.)

So their ancestors saw God at work in mighty ways, and they followed Him into freedom! But...

I Corinthians 10:5-11

Do you remember why - just a few weeks after the Red Sea and giving them manna and water from a rock - God was not pleased with most of those He set free? Here are two hints:

- 1) When God was giving Moses the law on Mt. Sinai, what did the people do? (By the way, this is what Paul is talking about in I Cor 10:7.)

- 2) The first time God told them to enter the land He promised them, what did they do? And where did the people tell Moses they wanted to go instead?

God wouldn't let His people return to Egypt, the land of slavery, but neither did He force them into the Promised Land. So he let that generation die in the wilderness.

After 40 years, God gets His people (the next generation) ready to enter the Promised Land. But when God takes them the long way, they got impatient. Read Numbers 21:4-9. Yikes! Now you know what Paul is talking about in I Cor. 10:9.

Later when they were just across the Jordan, so, so close to entering the Promised Land, the Israelite men started committing sexual immorality with the women of Moab who convinced them to worship their gods. (Sexual immorality and idolatry go together like 2 sides of a coin.) So a plague hit Israel that killed 23,000 people in one day. God said that the men who were worshiping the gods of Moab had to be killed. The people realized they had sinned and came to the Tabernacle to repent. As Moses and all of Israel wept over how awful their sin has become, - you won't believe this - a man walked right up to Moses with a Midianite woman (he wasn't married to), looks Moses straight in the eye and takes her into a tent where they start having sex. It's a challenge to Moses and God, like saying, "And what are you going to do about it?" A priest, who was with Moses, did one of the hardest things ever:

obeying God when it was so hard. He threw a spear into the tent, and it goes through the man and into the woman's stomach. God stopped the plague because of this priest's obedience (Numbers 25.) This is what Paul is talking about in I Cor. 10:8.

Paul tells us that the reason those things happened to the Israelites was that these stories are _____. (I Cor 10:11a) God wanted future generations to see the consequences of being disloyal to God their King.

These embarrassing stories had been passed down from one generation to another and later were translated into Greek so that even the Corinthians could read about them BECAUSE they are _____ (10:11b) for us (Christians) who know about Jesus' victory on the cross and who get to live with the Holy Spirit literally living in us as a church.

They are examples to keep us from _____ our _____ on _____ things as they did. (10:6)

Our Israelite ancestors experienced God rescuing them from Egypt (the Red Sea) and providing all they needed in the wilderness (spiritual food and drink and His presence in the cloud)...***but most of them rejected God. Not just once, but over and over.***

We experience Jesus' death and resurrection through baptism. We get to be united with Him through communion and having the Holy Spirit in our hearts. We are free from sin! Free to live for Him and build up His church... and free to reject Him as our God...

Just as they were.

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall.

I Cor 10:12-22

What does "standing firm" mean? What does "fall" mean? (Hint: think of how Israel fell away from God in those stories.)

Paul is getting ready to talk about idols again. Do you think the Corinthians believe they are "standing firm"? Is it possible that they could go back to worshiping false gods?

Write I Cor 10:13, one phrase at a time, in your own words. Think it through as you write.

Why does God allow us to be tempted? Look at the very end of 10:13. Does good come from it?

Why does Paul tell them (and us) to flee from idolatry?

Paul says to “flee” from idolatry in ch. 10 and from sexual immorality in ch. 6. Why didn’t he just say to “run” from them?

What are some idols we today are tempted to worship (give our time and money and loyalty to)?

When we participate in communion and take the bread and the cup, we are being united with Christ...especially in His complete obedience to the Father unto death on the cross. In communion, we are saying that we are “all in” with following God, trusting Him as the Holy Spirit enables us.

“OK, then,” Paul tells the Corinthians, “follow me here:” An idol is nothing. Food to an idol is nothing. BUT if a believer goes to an idol’s temple, who are they participating with? _____ Yikes!

Our loyalty is to Jesus. Can we participate with demons and still be completely loyal to only Jesus? _____. So **FLEE!!!!**

I Corinthians 10:23-11:1

Where have we heard this catchy saying before? Does Paul change his response any this time? If so, how? “Not everything is _____.” (10:23) What does that mean?

BIG TIME WISDOM is in this section. Ask the Holy Spirit which verses could you apply to every area of your life. I encourage you to write them out here word for word.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Think about the verses you wrote above. How did Christ set the example in those?