

1 Corinthians 10



Personal Preparation Day 1 – 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Paul is concerned... and not without reason. The Christian life is a struggle, a race that we need to be prepared for (see the end of chapter 9), and the Corinthians just don't seem to be taking it seriously.

Let's take a look at Paul's warning from Israel's history.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

1. What point is Paul making about Israel's history in verses 1-5?
2. What is the first of Paul's reasons for using this example (verse 6)?
3. What are the four commands that follow on from this reason, in verses 7-10?
4. What is the second reason Paul gives in verses 11-12?
5. What encouragement does Paul have for those who are part of the 'fulfilment of the ages' in verse 13?

THINK: How do we reconcile that nothing "can separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8:38-39) with Paul's warning here that it's possible for them to fall? (verse 12)

Personal Preparation Day 2 – 1 Corinthians 10:14-22

"No one can serve two masters", says Jesus in Matthew 6:24. It was true of Israel and, as we read here, it's also true of the Corinthians.

Back in chapter 8, Paul wrote that there was no problem in eating meat sacrificed to idols - it's just meat, and it's just eating. And it's God who made and rules over all things anyhow.

But it seems the situation wasn't quite that simple. For while eating food that had been sacrificed to idols was okay, the preceding sacrifice of the food to idols stepped way over the mark. This wasn't just eating, it was worshipping.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:14-22

1. How would you describe the problem Paul raises in this passage?
2. Read Exodus 32:4-6. In what particular way are the Corinthians tempted to follow in the footsteps of Israel?

3. What is the parallel / comparison drawn between the Lord's Supper (verses 16-17) and idol sacrifices (verses 18-20)?

4. Verses 21 and 22 make it personal. What point is being made here?

THINK: In the groups and activities we're involved, are there things we cannot participate in for fear of serving more than one God?

Personal Preparation Day 3 – 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1

In this section of the letter, Paul provides a case study in which he applies what he has been talking about. He also concludes the position he has been encouraging the Corinthians towards making.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1

1. In verse 23, Paul identifies another of the Corinthian catchphrases – "Everything is permissible". What are the similarities and differences between his response this time, and that back in 6:12?

2. How does verse 24 reinforce his point?

3. How does Paul clarify what is and what isn't the issue with food sacrificed to idols, in verses 25-26?

4. Work through the case studies Paul gives in verses 27-30. How does he tie together what he's been speaking about in the previous few chapters?

5. Consider all that you've read from chapter 5 onwards (yes, I know that's a lot!). How does Paul's conclusion in 10:31-11:1 sum up how he wants the Corinthians to think and behave?

THINK: What things in your life reflect how you are not seeking your own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved?

Group Discussion Questions

We've heard the slogan, "Once saved, always saved." And yet Paul, notes the possibility that some in Corinth may fall away or, by their behaviour, cause others to fall away. It's seems like such a contradiction.

1. As Christians, how do we decide when to participate in what those around us are doing, and when not to?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-11:1

2. What questions, comments or observations did you have from reading the passage this week?

3. What are the two reasons that Paul uses the Israelites as an example in verses 6 and 11?

4. How does Paul warn against disobedience, and encourage the Corinthian christians to persevere, in the first 14 verses?

5. Read John 10:27-29. Do these words of Jesus contradict what Paul is saying in 1 Corinthians 10? How can these teachings be held together?

6. In verses 14-22, why does Paul suddenly object to their eating habits, when he's said previously that they don't matter (1 Cor 8)? And he seems to repeat that view in verses 25-26,,.

7. How then should the Corinthians exercise their God-given freedom, in terms of looking after their own salvation and the salvation of those around them? (verses 10:23-11:1)

8. Briefly flick over the issues Paul has looked at since the start of Chapter 5. How do verses 10:31-11:1 highlight the approach Paul has been encouraging the Corinthians to adopt?

THINK:

- a. How do you take your salvation for granted in the way you behave and live your life?
- b. How do you think your Christian life and your attitude towards God affects those around you? Does it have a positive or negative effect on their salvation?
- c. Do you think you could confidently repeat Paul's words in relation to yourself?
 "I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved." (10:31)
 "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." (11:1)

Coming Up...

- Food for Thought, 29 May
- Working Bee, 31 May
- Rush Games Night, 7 June

For Prayer...

- That we might live lives that reflect what we have been saved from and to.
- That our lives might be shaped by our desire to see those we know and those we come in contact with, understand the gospel.