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A1231 – July 29, 2012 – 1 Corinthians 10:6-11
Take Heed, Lest You Fall

Today if you'll open your Bible to 1 Corinthians 10 we will pick back up with the example Paul brings to our attention of the Exodus generation. The things that happened to them happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they craved. Christians are generally familiar with this OT generation of Israel but they fail to see the significance of this generation. Paul says that happened to them as an example for us and they were written down as Scripture for our instruction.

The Greek word underneath the word **example** in 1 Cor 10:6 and 11 is *typos* from which we get the word "type". And I said last week I would give you a brief introduction to typology and the criteria for discerning a type over against an illustration. So let's do that now. The word "type" in the Greek text doesn't necessarily mean its referring to a formal type because the word can also mean an example, an illustration or a pattern. And there are many examples, illustrations and patterns in Scripture that are not formal types. For example, Joseph has many similarities with Christ, people have pointed out 100's of parallels between them, but there are also similarities between Isaac and Christ, Samuel and Christ, Elijah and Christ. So are we going to say all these men are types of Christ? What's the line here? The bottom line is that for something to be a type there are six criteria that must be met. First there has to be a natural correspondence, it can't be forced, and clearly in the case of the NT believer and that generation of OT Israel there is natural correspondence. Second, the type requires historicity, the OT type has to be historical if it's a real type and again, this is affirmed in the present case, that generation was historical. Third, the type must be there by divine design, it can't be something man sees that God did not intend to be seen, and in this case it appears this is conformed by the fact that Paul says these things happened as an example for us. Fourth, a type must be predictive, it

must be prophetic and that's one place where I think this example fails. It doesn't seem that the OT generation was prophesying our lives as NT believers. Fifth, a type must be heightened, have a heightened sense and that's probably true although it's questionable. And sixth, a type must be assigned a type by God and this is unclear, just because the word type is used, the word also means "a model" or "example," so it may not be assigned a type by God. And since it fails on one or two of the six criteria it's not a formal type but it is an illustration or example that is designed to teach us a lesson; namely, what not to do. They blew it and you can blow it too as a Christian. So we are looking for the correspondences.

In vv 1-5 we see five privileges that Exodus generation enjoyed and we have five corresponding privileges. First, in verse 1 they all had "the cloud" guiding them through the wilderness and protecting them from their enemies. We have access to the Holy Spirit who guides us if we will set our minds on the things of the Spirit and who protects our born again self from our enemies. Secondly, also in verse 1, they all "passed through the" Red Sea on dry land, a miraculous deliverance from their enemies. We all enjoyed a corresponding miraculous deliverance at the moment of faith in Christ when we were translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. Third, in verse 2 they were "all baptized into Moses" in the dry baptism as they passed through the Red Sea, thoroughly identified with Him by putting their trust in Him as God's chosen deliverer. By correspondence we are all "baptized into Christ" in the dry baptism of the Spirit when we put our trust in Him as God's chosen deliverer. Fourth, verse 4, they "all ate the same spiritual food," the supernatural manna that came down out of heaven to nourish them in the wilderness. And by correspondence we all receive the true bread that comes down out of heaven, Jesus Christ. Fifth, verse 4, they "all drank the same spiritual drink," the supernatural water that came forth from the rock at the beginning of their wilderness wanderings and at the end. And by correspondence, we have the true water that comes down out of heaven who is Jesus Christ; he is the water of life (cf John 4:7ff)

Now to amplify what we did last week, verse 4, we have identified for us the rock out of which they drank during their wilderness wanderings. "for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Messiah." So even the rock was a supernatural rock, it was going with them during their entire 40 years of wandering; "and the rock was Messiah." And

that sheds light on the fact that when Moses was told to speak to the rock and water would come forth, instead he struck the rock twice, that he was striking the Messiah and God didn't like that very much so Moses was disqualified from entering the land. By correspondence while the Messiah was traveling with them Jesus said in the Great Commission said, "and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." He is with you.

Verse 5, "Nevertheless, with most of them," not all, "most of them God was not well-pleased" as evidenced by the fact that "they were laid low in the wilderness." That generation did not get the reward of the Promised Land, they wandered around and died, they were disqualified. However, they were not all disqualified. Who were the two men of that generation that did get the reward of the Promised Land? Joshua and Caleb, the two faithful spies. So they went into the land, with them God was well-pleased. The point being that just because you have privileges and you have many privileges, that does not mean you are going to win the prize. Some Christians think, well, we're Christians and we're all going to get rewards. Not so. I think a lot of Christians are going to be surprised at the judgment seat of Christ. That generation certainly was surprised when they didn't get to enter the land but had to wander around under divine discipline till every last one of them was dead. I did a calculation once and I believe they were having something like 89 funerals every day for 40 years. So they knew what it was for that generation to be laid-low.

Verse 6, **Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.** Now that's not just a general craving or desire for evil things, that's referring to a specific event in the Book of Numbers 11 and there are five things now we are supposed to avoid. Before we turn to Numbers 11 I want to re-introduce the situation of chapter 8, the eating of things sacrificed to idols, because Paul is bringing that situation back into focus. He dealt with it in chapter 8, then in chapter 9 he dealt with the principle of setting aside your freedoms as a Christian for the sake of the weaker brother, now he's coming back to the situation and applying the principle to the situation at Corinth. Remember, 1 Cor 8:1, the situation, "concerning things sacrificed to idols." Corinth was a cosmopolitan city, it's where East met West, so it was a melting pot of cultures. They had something for everyone, sports at the Isthmian Games, gambling, legalized prostitution, religious cults, a synagogue and now a Church. This eating of

meat sacrificed to idols had to do with these religious cults. Corinth was the home of the temple of Poseidon, god of the sea, the temple of Apollo, god of oracles and healing and the temple of Aphrodite, goddess of beauty, marriage and love. At these temples pagan worshippers would bring daily animal sacrifices in honor of the god or goddess. The priests would take these animals and offer only a token portion to the deity to burn on the altar. The rest was consumed by the temple priests, attendants and their families. But frequently they could not eat all that was brought so they would sell what remained to the butchers in the meat market. From there anyone could purchase the meat. This meat was very desirable because the animals offered in sacrifice were usually only the very best animals. However, the butcher did not usually identify meat as having been offered to an idol in the marketplace. So if you wanted to buy meat you wouldn't know where the meat came from unless you asked. At the Corinthian Church this created three questions. The first question they had was, since there is no such thing as an idol can't I as a Christian buy this meat and eat it? It's the best barbeque in town so can't I buy it, take it home and eat it? Second question, can I as a Christian go over to a pagan friend's house if I'm invited and eat meat sacrificed to an idol. I just go, I don't ask where the meat came from, I just go and politely eat the meat. And third, can I as a Christian eat this meat at the feast held in honor of the idol? Can I actually go to the temple itself and eat it. So the three problems have to do with the eating of meat in these various venues. Paul is majoring on that third question as you'll see in our text today.

There are dangers with going to these pagan temples and eating meat because that's not all that goes on at the temples. They also engage in illicit sex and if you think that you are impervious to that because you have all these privileges (you have the Holy Spirit indwelling you, you've been baptized into Christ, you've got Jesus Christ with you) take heed, verse 12, "let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall." Everybody goes to verse 13, verse 13 is a favorite verse of Christians, but verse 12 which nobody looks at is the main idea! "Let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall."

In other words, the Mr Tough Christian who thinks he is impervious to temptation and can go hang out with all the pagans at the dance clubs and bars and he'll never fall, he'll even evangelize them while they're drunk as a

skunk but he of course will never fall because he's so strong as a Christian. Baloney, he's arrogant and he's stupid. Arrogant people are stupid because they think they can never fall.

Now that was Israel. They thought they could be around pagan people and they'd be fine. We're going to find out today they were not fine at all. So the big lesson today is this, just because you have tremendous privileges as a Christian does not make you impervious to stumbling and falling. You may be a strong Christian, but you are not immune from temptation, you are not protected from falling and ruining your whole life. Israel did, ruined their whole life because of arrogance.

Now I'm going to take you through their five points of arrogance that led them to ruin their life and the five corresponding points of arrogance in the Corinthians that were leading them to ruin their life.

Verse 6 is the first one, we need to learn not to **crave evil things as they also craved**. And that's Numbers 11. We're going to be in Numbers a lot so hold your place here in 1 Cor 10, this is home base, and we'll be going to several places in Numbers. This is during the wilderness wanderings still. To give you some background of this generation, there's a cycle they go through over and over. God would lead them around and provide manna to eat and water to drink and then God would start to draw back some of the blessing and they'd start to whine and have a big pity party. When God pulled back He did it to test them, to see if they would trust Him. But they never did, the moment things weren't going their way they'd start whining. Like a lot of Christians, as long as everything is peachy they're on cloud nine, the moment something doesn't go their way they fall apart. It's a sign of immaturity. And it always reminds me of Job and his wife. When he was getting some pretty heavy artillery fired at him his wife said, why don't you curse God and die. And he said, You foolish woman, should we accept good from God and not adversity? Job was a mature believer. His wife was a lightweight, she couldn't handle adversity. And that's most Christians, can't handle one thing not going their way, they're weak, baby Christians and they go to pieces and fail to run the Christian race.

Now to see this cycle notice Numbers 11:1 and some of these baby believers. "Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing

of the LORD; and when the LORD heard *it*, His anger was kindled, and the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed *some* of the outskirts of the camp.” Oh, you don’t like adversity, I’ll make toast out of some of you. Verse 2, “The people therefore cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the LORD and the fire died out. ³So the name of that place was called Taberah, because the fire of the LORD burned among them.” Anytime they had a lesson taught to them they’d name the place after the lesson so they didn’t forget. So the place Taberah means stop whining. That’s just an example.

Let’s look at another example starting in verse 4, here’s the lesson Paul is referring to when he said they craved evil; the evil they craved was greed, a lot of them were greedy. “The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again” they’re throwing a fit, “and said, “Who will give us meat to eat? ⁵“We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, ⁶but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna.” They wanted a change of menu. They’ve had manna day after day after day; they boiled it, they baked it, they stewed it, you name it they tried it, and now they can’t stand to look at it anymore. We want a new menu. They’re greedy people, never satisfied with what they’ve got. Verse 10, “Now Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, each man at the doorway of his tent; and the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly, and Moses was displeased.” Nobody likes greedy people, they get on your nerves. ¹¹“So Moses said to the LORD, “Why have You been so hard on Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all this people on me? ¹²“Was it I who conceived all this people? Was it I who brought them forth, that You should say to me, ‘Carry them in your bosom as a nurse carries a nursing infant, to the land which You swore to their fathers?’” Basically he’s saying, why do I have to put up with these babies? I’m sick and tired of these cry babies. Verse 13, “Where am I to get meat to give to all this people” For they’re cry babies, saying, “give us meat that we may eat!” They’re sorry, ungrateful people. And finally in verse 15 Moses says, if this is the way it’s going to be, just kill me God; get me out of here; I’d rather die than put up with these whiny babies.

Now God’s going to get some help for Moses, He’s going to spread out the work load. And He’s also going to do something for the greedy people. For thirty days He’s going to give them a different menu, quail and lots of it. All

they've got to do is go out each day and gather some of it. Notice in verse 31, "Now there went forth a wind from the LORD and it brought quail from the sea, and let *them* fall beside the camp, about a day's journey on this side and a day's journey on the other side, all around the camp and about two cubits *deep* on the surface of the ground." That's three feet deep of quail, a lot of quail. Verse 32, "The people spent all day and all night and all the next day, and gathered the quail (he who gathered least gathered ten homers) and they spread *them* out for themselves all around the camp." They gathered way more than they could eat. Verse 33, "While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very severe plague." See how greedy they were, they gathered for 36 hours, piled it all up around themselves in the camp just in case there wasn't anymore there the next day, not going to trust the Lord to provide, going to get it all now just in case the Lord falls through. So the Lord said that's it and killed them. Then they named this place in verse 34, "Kibroth-hattaavah," which means graves of greed. And that's the lesson of Kibroth-hattaavah, don't be greedy or God will discipline you.

Now when you come back to 1 Cor 10 the Corinthian's were also greedy and that's the lesson Paul is trying to get through. How were they greedy? The stronger brethren didn't want to put aside their liberty to go to the pagan temples and eat the meat. They were so greedy they'd rather exercise their liberty and destroy their weaker brother's conscience. So the first lesson is the lesson of greed, don't be greedy, be willing to put aside your liberty for the sake of another's conscience.

Now verse 7 and we come to the second lesson. **Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY.**" Now if you look in your margin you see this looks back to Exod 32. So turn there. It's translated real nice, doesn't sound too bad, they ate and drank and they got up to play, except the play there is illicit sex. This is when Moses was on top of Mt Sinai getting the commandments of God and the people were at the base of the mount. But it took Moses a long time to come down and the people were impatient. So they said in verse 1, "Come make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." Come on Aaron, we need a new leader.

Now, the irony of the situation is they already knew in Exod 20 the Ten Commandments and the first commandment is “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” And what are they doing? Having Aaron make another god to represent YHWH. So Aaron does it, he follows the people rather than being a leader. “Aaron said to them, “Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me. They go through the whole thing, in verse 4 Aaron fashions it into a molten calf, this was the Apis bull calf which was an idol from Egypt. Then he pronounces of the calf, “This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.” So he identifies YHWH as the calf. That’s specifically what the first command is against, have no other god before Me, that is, don’t identify another god with Me. Clearly idolatry.

Verse 5, “Now when Aaron saw *this*, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, “Tomorrow *shall be* a feast to the LORD.” Two things, there’s an altar and there’s going to be a feast. This is exactly what they did in Egypt, they would set up an altar to a god, which is to sacrifice to the god and have a feast, which was a big party in honor of the new god. So they are officially rejecting YHWH as God and returning to the Egyptian god Apis, the bull calf. Verse 6, “So the next day they rose early and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.” They officially came into a covenant with the Apis bull calf, and the end of it there, rose up to play, after they were filled and drunk they started fornicating all over the place. It’s about that time Moses comes down and sees what’s going on and God threatens to destroy all of them and start over with Moses.

Now turn back to 1 Cor 10:7 and see the significance. **Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY.”** What were the Corinthians in danger of if they went up to the pagan temples in Corinth and ate the meat sacrificed to idols? First of all, clearly they were in danger of committing idolatry, worshipping the god or goddess. Secondly, they were in danger of fornication because they had sacred prostitution at the pagan temples. The Temple of Aphrodite was known for it’s 1000 prostitutes! So they were in great danger of idolatry and fornication but the emphasis in verse 7 is upon the idolatry.

1 Cor 10:8 emphasizes the fornication and this looks to another incident in the OT. **Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day.** This refers to an event in Numbers 25, the Baal-Peor incident. This is where Baal worship started in Israel and they could never get rid of it. Now “It was the assumption of the [Baal-Peor] cult that the fertility of people, cattle and crops depended on the sexual linkage of a god and goddess. By imitating this union of the gods, men and women would seek to induce the gods to grant a greater measure of fertility.”ⁱ In other words, in these fertility cults the temple would have sacred prostitution and it was an act of worship to have sex with one of these prostitutes. And by having sex with one this was to sexually excite the gods and goddesses, so they would have sex and the worshippers would get fertility; fertility in their families, fertility in their cattle, fertility in their crops, it was a sexual manipulation of the gods and goddesses. And in Num 25:1 we see this. “While Israel remained at Shittim, the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab.” They were going over into the Moabite camp and engaging in this. Verse 2, “For they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. ³So Israel joined themselves to Baal of Peor, and the LORD was angry against Israel. ⁴The LORD said to Moses, “Take all the leaders of the people and execute them in broad daylight before the LORD, so that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel.” ⁵So Moses said to the judges of Israel, “Each of you slay his men who have joined themselves to Baal of Peor.” Verse 6, and now they bring this into the Israelite camp. “Then behold, one of the sons of Israel came and brought to his relatives a Midianite woman, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the sons of Israel, while they were weeping at the doorway of the tent of meeting.” So here they’re bringing paganism right into the camp. Verse 7, “When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he arose from the midst of the congregation and took a spear in his hand, ⁸and he went after the man of Israel into the tent,” so they’re having sex and he goes right in “and pierced both of them through, the man of Israel and the woman, through the body. So the plague on the sons of Israel was checked. ⁹Those who died by the plague were 24,000.” God hates fornication and if you think you can flirt with pagans and not get caught up in fornication, you’re stupid really, it’s playing with fire and you’re going to get burned. God cut this off, the Hebrew text says God killed 24,000 by a plague. Paul says 23,000. There’s a textual discrepancy here. Four solutions have been offered. One is that Paul said

23,000 in “one day” which he may have known was the case, 23,000 in one day; 1,000 over the next day or days. Not a very good solution in my humble opinion but plausible. Two, the 24,000 may include the leaders where the 23,000 did not. Again, not too plausible. Third, the actual number was 23,500 and the author of Numbers rounded it up to 24,000, Paul rounded it down to 23,000. Again, that’s not too plausible. The last solution is that Paul picked up the number 23,000 from Num 26:62 which is an event in the next chapter. This seems the most likely solution to me but ultimately I don’t know. All I know is God was angry about the fornication. They were fraternizing with pagans, they got too close, they stumbled and fell.

Now go back to 1 Cor 10:8 and see how the Corinthians fell. First of all, did they fall? In 1 Cor 5:1 we have a man having sex with his mother in law. And the church wasn’t doing anything about it. In 1 Cor 6:9-10 Paul says some of them were “fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals,” so yeah, they had a problem in the sexual department. It was loose living at Corinth, as we’ve seen, it was the sex capital of the ancient world. In 1 Cor 6:15-20 we have specific mention of joining yourself with a prostitute. That occurred down at the temple. So if you are a believer at Corinth and you go eat the meat at the temple feast, where you worshipped the goddess Aphrodite, what do you think is going to happen next? You don’t just eat the meat; you have sex with the prostitute, that was part of the celebration, part of the worship. So now we have eating, drinking, sex and idolatry all going together at the same place. Do you really think you can go up there and just eat the meat and not be defiled? I highly doubt it.

1 Cor 10:9, Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Here we have the incident of putting the Lord to the test and that generation did that too. Let’s see this incident in Numbers 21. Verse 1, “When the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming by the way of Atharim,” that’s the route of the 12 spies, “then he fought against Israel and took some of them captive. ²So Israel made a vow to the LORD and said, “If You will indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities.” ³The LORD heard the voice of Israel and delivered up the Canaanites; then they utterly destroyed them and their cities. Thus the name of the place was called Hormah.” So they had victory, the Lord gave them victory. Verse 4, “Then they set out from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to go around

the land of Edom; and the people became impatient because of the journey.” Alright, they didn’t like the route they were taking. So verse 5, “The people spoke against God and Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food.” There’s nothing to eat out here, there’s nothing to drink and we don’t like this manna. So they cursed Moses and the Lord. So, verse 6, “The LORD sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.” Fiery serpents means the bites stung like fire. Verse 7, “So the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and you; intercede with the LORD, that He may remove the serpents from us.” And Moses interceded for the people. ⁸Then the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery *serpent*, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live.” ⁹And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived.”

So we have this incident where they tested the Lord. What does this correspond to at Corinth. Quite frankly I think it refers to the Lord’s Supper or the Lord’s Feast. We’re going to study this feast in detail in 1 Cor 11. But I think a lot of them were dissatisfied by it, they were accustomed to the drunken feasts up in the pagan temples, and so when they had the Lord’s feast that didn’t have enough spice to it, so they started trying to bring elements of the pagan feasts over into the Lord’s table and because of it God was striking some of them dead, we’ll see that in the next chapter. They were testing the Lord. And you should never test the Lord.

Finally, 1 Cor 10:10, **Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.** And this has to do with Num 16:41-50 where the people got dissatisfied with their leadership, Moses and Aaron. They had a rebellious group of people following Korah who rose up against Moses and Aaron, challenging their leadership authority. In the course of the whole thing Korah was killed by the Lord for challenging Moses and Aaron, the rightful leadership. So in verse 41 the congregation didn’t like it very much, they start into their grumbling again. “But on the next day all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, “You are the ones who have caused the death of the LORD’S people.” They weren’t the LORD’S people, Moses and Aaron were the LORD’S people. Verse

42, “It came about, however, when the congregation had assembled against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tent of meeting, and behold, the cloud covered it and the glory of the LORD appeared. ⁴³Then Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting, ⁴⁴and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁴⁵“Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them instantly.” God is pretty ticked at the people. “Then they fell on their faces. ⁴⁶Moses said to Aaron, “Take your censer and put in it fire from the altar, and lay incense *on it*; then bring it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone forth from the LORD, the plague has begun!” ⁴⁷Then Aaron took *it* as Moses had spoken, and ran into the midst of the assembly, for behold, the plague had begun among the people. So he put *on* the incense and made atonement for the people. ⁴⁸He took his stand between the dead and the living, so that the plague was checked. ⁴⁹But those who died by the plague were 14,700, besides those who died on account of Korah. ⁵⁰Then Aaron returned to Moses at the doorway of the tent of meeting, for the plague had been checked.” So these are the grumblers, always grumbling about God’s leadership. We don’t like the leaders, we’re going to go around cursing the leaders. God says, that’s my leadership team, get out of the way.

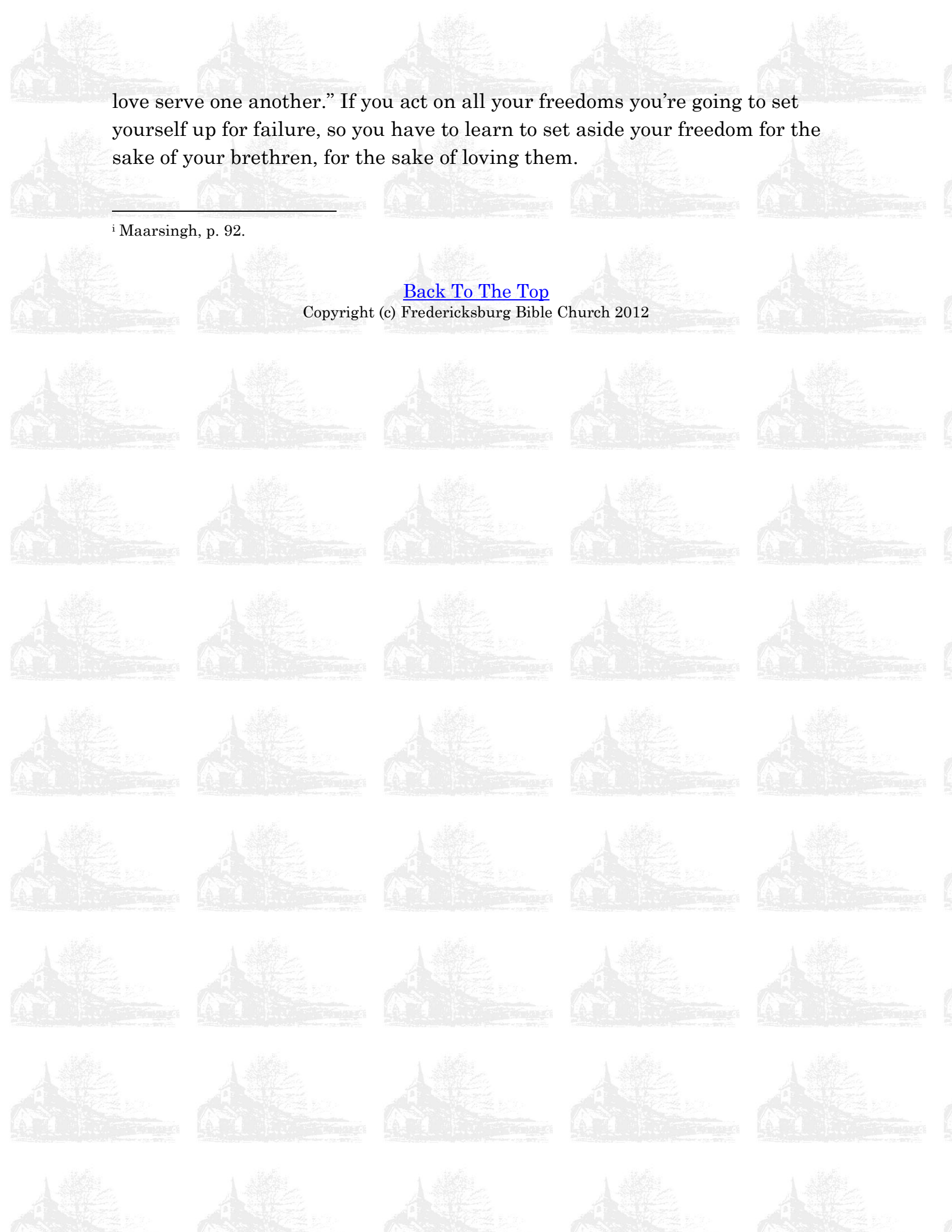
Now, back in Corinth who were they grumbling against? Did they grumble about their leaders? Yea they did, they did more than grumble. They divided into four factions. 1 Cor 1:10, ¹⁰Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. ¹¹For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe’s *people*, that there are quarrels among you. ¹²Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, “I am of Paul,” and “I of Apollos,” and “I of Cephas,” and “I of Christ.” So they grumbled against the leadership, some liked Paul and didn’t like Apollos, others like Apollos and not Paul, others like Cephas, that’s Peter, and others said, we’re so hyperspiritual, we just follow Christ. The whole point is they grumbled about the leadership.

So then what are we supposed to learn from all this? 1 Cor 10:11 says **these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages have come.** Well the first thing we’re supposed to learn is this; just because you have tremendous blessings in Christ, that does not mean you are well on your way to rewards,

that whole generation had tremendous blessings and only two entered the Land. Not all believers receive rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. The second thing we are to learn is not to be greedy like they were, they were so greedy they weren't satisfied with the manna, they weren't satisfied by the quail, they were never satisfied, always whining about something. Shall we accept good from God and not adversity? Third thing we're to learn, don't think you can hang out with pagan people and not be sucked into their idolatry. They were and you will too. And I don't think you can stay long in the public school system and not be sucked into that idolatry, if you know what I mean. Fourth thing we're to learn, if you hang out with unbelievers, you're going to be sucked into their fornication. The world is a rampantly immoral place sexually and you will be destroyed. Fifth, are you somebody who tests the Lord all the time, speaking against Him when bad things happen in your life? Oh God, why did you let this happen to me. Why you're such a big meany? I can't believe you'd do that to me. Sixth, are you a grumbler, do you always moan about the leadership. And of course, I mean real leadership, I don't mean these false teachers that supposedly pastor most of the churches in this country, I mean real leaders who train their flocks, who love them with the word and love them in deed and in truth. Do you grumble against them? Hmm? Lastly, if you think you are too strong a believer to stumble into these things, you are naïve and you better take heed, lest you fall, that's verse 12 and that will serve as a lead in to verse 13, the means of escaping situations where you are prone to fall.

In vv 6-10 Paul lists five sins that got the Israelites in trouble with God. All of them were brought about by fraternizing with pagans, many by participating in their feasts. The Corinthians were in danger of falling prey if they participated in pagan feasts at the temple. And we are in danger too if we think we can fraternize with pagans and somehow escape scot free! Take heed lest you fall. We are to be in the world and to make disciples of all nations, but we are not to get so close to pagans that they convert us. There are some things Christians can do but should not do because of the danger of falling prey to greed, idolatry, fornication, testing the Lord and grumbling.

Let's conclude with Gal 5:13, this sums up the principle. "For you were called to freedom, brethren;" you have tremendous freedoms as a Christian friend, "only *do not turn* your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through



love serve one another.” If you act on all your freedoms you’re going to set yourself up for failure, so you have to learn to set aside your freedom for the sake of your brethren, for the sake of loving them.

ⁱ Maarsingh, p. 92.

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