

Flee Idolatry (1 Cor. 9:24-10:22)

- I. **Introduction**
 - A. Illustration: “The Life of Pi” – just add Jesus
 - B. Review of context – the matter of idol food in chapters 8-10
 - C. Outline of the sermon / Prayer

- II. **Idolaters disqualified – An athlete’s example (1 Cor 9:24-27)**
 - A. New Christians and the idolatrous practices of Corinth
 - B. The freedoms Paul surrendered for the sake of the Gospel (9:19-23)
 - 1. This is not a justification for bringing idols into the church
 - C. An analogy from sports from the Isthmian games
 - 1. The temporary perishable honor of earthly prizes
 - 2. The requirement of self-discipline for athletes not to be disqualified
 - a. Paul follows Christ in a self-sacrificing, status-rejecting model of cross-bearing discipleship
 - b. Entry into the contest does not guarantee the prize (Mt 7:21,
 - 3. A transition into the severity of dabbling with idolatry

- III. **Idolaters displease God – Israel’s example (1 Cor 10:1-13)**
 - A. Observations from the text
 - 1. “*For*” = *gar* ... Israel’s disobedience is the historical grounds for the professing Christian’s disqualification
 - 2. “*our fathers*” – Israel’s history is our history – learn from it!
 - 3. “*all*” – a guard against foolish presumption in the church
 - B. The sin of the children of Israel in the wilderness
 - 1. *they desired evil* – idolatry (golden calf)
 - 2. they committed spiritual adultery (Num 25:1-9)
 - 3. they tested God (Psalm 78:18)
 - 4. they grumbled (Exodus 17:7)
 - C. Identify your idols by discontentment and complaining
 - D. verse 12 is a warning against presumption leaving us hopeless
 - E. verse 13 carries us from despair into hope – God is faithful to save us!
 - 1. Let the failure of Israel and your own failure, lead you to Christ

- IV. **The severity of the sin of adding Jesus to our idols (1 Cor 10:14-22)**
 - A. The command: *My beloved, flee idolatry* (vs. 14)
 - 1. This is consistent with God’s hatred for idolatry and Paul’s argument against eating idol-food in chapter 8
 - 2. Yet Paul loved the church at Corinth
 - B. To eat idol-food is to fellowship with demons (vss. 15-22)
 - 1. Comparing it to the Lord’s Supper (vss 15-18)
 - a. there is a fellowship with Christ at His table
 - b. there was a fellowship with the idols at the idol’s table
 - 2. It’s not that the idol has power in itself (v. 19)
 - 3. The focus of Paul’s argument is against syncretism (vss. 20-21)
 - the idea of adding Jesus to the mix of other gods
 - C. What idols do we need to repent of, that we have just added Jesus to?