

# Take Heed Lest You Fall

Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher 8/23/20 (c) 2020

*1 Corinthians 10:7-13*

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## INTRODUCTION

1. Please take your Bibles and turn with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 10
2. Last Lord's Day we looked at verses
3. Today we are considering verses 7-13
4. Today's message is "Take Heed Lest You Fall"
5. Read 1 Corinthians 10:7-13
6. History is important

7. It is through history that we learn from our victories as well as our mistakes
8. Recently there was an article that read "Democrat lawmaker calls for ban on history classes since they lead to 'racist society'"
9. Democratic Representative LaShawn Ford believes that teaching history "leads to white privilege and a racist society."
10. But what about black history month that's promoted every year?
11. The article states "Many argue that the real problem in U.S. public schools' history education is not that it forms a racist society, but that it encourages children to resent America for allegedly being one. For instance, Hillsdale College history professor Burt Folsom contends that The American Pageant, a prominent text used in Advanced Placement history courses across the country, is full of "flawed passages," "distortions," "contradictions," and "defective historical methods that "mislead students into thinking that the United States is fundamentally corrupt, and that the world is often worse off because America exists and has so much global influence."  
"How can current students become effective leaders in

America's future if they think their nation has been evil during so many eras of history?" Folsom asked." (1)

12. History can only lead to racism if it is withheld or altered from the people
13. And from this article they correctly point out that many are taught that America has a racist history
14. But from what I see is America has learned from its past and is better because of it today
15. But you wouldn't know that from today's democratic politicians or the news media
16. Israel had a hard time with their history
17. They didn't seem to learn much from it but kept repeating the same old vicious cycle
18. You see that clearly in the time period of the judges
19. Israel would sin
20. God would send an oppressor

21. Israel would repent
22. God would remove the oppressor
23. Then after a short period of time the whole process was repeated
24. Paul continues to mention Israel in 1 Corinthians 10
25. But this time he doesn't just talk about their liberation and their abuse of it
26. He talks about what they exactly did that God was not pleased with
27. So in verses 7-10 first Paul says...

(1) <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/democrat-lawmaker-calls-for-ban-on-history-classes-since-they-lead-to-racist-society>

**1**

## **Don't Act Like Israel (vv.7-10)**

## A. THEY COMMITTED IDOLATRY BY WORSHIPPING A GOLDEN CALF (V.7)

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.”

### 1. Corinth was built around idols

1. No religious, social, political, or business function was conducted without some involvement with idol worship or recognition.(1)

### 2. The Corinthians had become careless about idols

1. Their activities were in places where idols were worshiped, consulted, and appealed to
2. They believed they could be associated with such activities and not be spiritually harmed

3. Some had slipped back into idolatry

4. Others were in danger of slipping back

### 3. Paul warned them not to do what Israel did

1. Shortly after leaving Egypt, Israel fell into idolatry

## 2. Exodus 32 records their fall`

1. Verse 1 records while Moses was delayed on Mt. Sinai receiving the 10 Commandments, the people persuaded Aaron to make a golden calf
2. The golden calf was a representation of an Egyptian god named Apis
3. "In Egyptian mythology, Apis or Hapis (alternatively spelt Hapi-ankh), was a bull-deity worshipped in the Memphis region.0 0(2)
4. He was a living manifestation of the creator-god Ptah. (3)
5. In Egypt it was common to worship a calf idol known as Apis. In some cases a king was depicted seated upon the calf as a way of emphasizing his divinity. Perhaps Aaron's purpose in creating a golden calf was not to create an idol of God but a platform upon which the invisible God would sit. (4)
6. Verse 2 records Aaron telling the people to give him the gold rings that were in their possession
7. Verse 4 says he took the gold jewelry and "fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and

they said, 'This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.'"

8. Verse 5 says Aaron made a proclamation that "Tomorrow shall be a feast to the LORD."
9. "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" (v.6)
10. Quoting Exodus 32:6 Paul continues, The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play
  1. The eating and drinking refer to the excessive feasting that followed the sacrifices.  
Play is a euphemism for sexual relations. It means sexual play and is the same word translated "caressing" in Gen. 26:8.  
Some three thousand of the Israelites who had instigated that idolatrous and immoral orgy at Sinai were put to death (Ex. 32:28). (5)
  2. Some of the believers in Corinth had also reverted to their old ways of worship
  3. Idols represent false gods, gods who are really demons, and Paul warns later in chapter 10 that "You cannot

drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons” (1 Cor. 10:20–21)

4. The right God can only be worshiped in the right way. Those who try to honor God with immoral and pagan practices bring dishonor on Him and judgment on themselves. (6)

(1) MacArthur, John F., Jr. 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

(2) <https://www.bible-history.com/archaeology/egypt/apis-the-bull-god.html>

(3) <https://blog.israelbiblicalstudies.com/holy-1%60and-studies/the-real-meaning-of-the-golden-calf/>

(4) <https://blog.israelbiblicalstudies.com/holy-1%60and-studies/the-real-meaning-of-the-golden-calf/>

(5) MacArthur, John F., Jr. 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

(6) MacArthur, John F., Jr. 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.



## QUOTE

When Christians worship anyone or anything besides God, that is idolatry. Worshiping the virgin Mary, saints, icons, or angels is idolatry. No matter how sincerely they are meant to honor to God, such practices are false worship and are strictly forbidden in Scripture. The first commandment God gave Moses was “You shall have no other gods before Me” (Ex. 20:3). There is only one God, and only God is to be worshiped. The injunction of Revelation 22:9, “worship God,” is still the exclusive command. And “My little children, guard yourselves from idols” (1 John 5:21) is still the comprehensive prohibition.

## **B. THEY COMMITTED IMMORALITY WITH THE DAUGHTERS OF MOAB (V.8)**

1. Sexual immorality is mentioned in verse 7 by the word "play" but it is treated in more detail in verse 8
2. Paul says, "Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day."
3. This incident is recorded in Numbers 25
  1. Numbers 25:1-9 (NASB) 1 While Israel remained at Shittim, the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab. 2 For they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. 3 So Israel joined themselves to Baal of Peor, and the Lord was angry against Israel. 4 The 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." 5 So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you slay his men who have joined themselves to Baal of Peor." 6 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. 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, 8 and he went after the man of Israel into the tent 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. 9 Those who died by the plague were 24,000.

2. Apparently 3,000 were killed by the Levites (Ex. 32:28) and 20,000 died in the plague (Ex. 32:35). (1)

4. The Corinthians had a temple to Aphrodite which had thousands of prostitutes

5. It's clear from Paul's warning that the Corinthians were no more immune to immorality than idolatry

6. Paul already told them in 6:18 to "flee immorality"

7. God's will is that believers "abstain from sexual immorality" (1 Thessalonians 4:3) and not let "immorality...even be named among you" (Ephesians 5:3)

(1) MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. The MacArthur Study Bible. electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.

### **C. THEY TRIED THE LORD WHEN THEY SPOKE AGAINST GOD AND MOSES (V.9)**

Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents.

1. This is recorded in Numbers 21
2. Verses 4-5 says, "Numbers 21:4-5 (NASB) 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. 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."
3. God had provided manna to eat and water to drink
4. The Israelites were not satisfied
5. They wanted variety like they had in Egypt
6. Psalms 78:18 (NASB) And in their heart they put God to the test by asking food according to their desire.

7. They constantly complained
8. They had no desire to please God
9. They were only interested in pleasing themselves
10. Paul told the Philippians in Philippians 2:14-16 (NASB) Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.
11. They did not use their new freedom to serve Him better but to demand that He serve them better. (1)
12. Numbers 21:6-9 (NASB) 6 The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. 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. 8 Then 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." 9 And 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.

13. Many of the Corinthians were pushing their liberty to the limits, to see how much of the flesh they could indulge and how much of the world they could enjoy
14. They were trying God and risking severe discipline
15. As some Christians today, they probably said, “This is the age of grace. We are free and God is forgiving. We can’t lose our salvation so why not get everything out of life that we can?”
16. The Israelites found the answer to that question. “And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died” (Num. 21:6)

(1) MacArthur, John F., Jr. 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary

#### **D. THEY COMPLAINED AGAINST MOSES AND AARON (V.10)**

Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

1. After Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and their fellow rebels were destroyed by the Lord (Num. 16:32–35), “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’ ” (v. 41)
2. God was so incensed at their complaints about divine justice that He immediately sent a plague that killed 14,700 people
3. The destroyer was the same angel who had slain the firstborn of the Egyptians before Israel left Egypt (Ex. 12:23), who would kill 70,000 men because of David’s census (2 Sam. 24:15–16), and who, in response to the prayer of Isaiah and Hezekiah, would destroy the entire Assyrian army that was besieging Jerusalem (2 Chron. 32:21). (1)
4. Murmuring is dissatisfaction with God's sovereign will
5. It is a sin God doesn't take lightly
6. When we complain, we are questioning God's wisdom, His grace, His goodness, His love, and His righteousness
7. We need to be content for God's glory
8. Complaining dishonors God

9. Contentment honors God
10. Paul had "learned to be content in whatever circumstances" he was in (Philippians 4:11)
11. He urged Christians to do the same lest they suffer God's discipline

(1) MacArthur, John F., Jr. 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

2

## Take Heed That You Do Not Fall (vv.11-12)

### A. THIS HAPPENED AS AN EXAMPLE (V.11A)

Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

1. This verse is a repetition of the admonition contained in that verse, in order to impress it more deeply on the memory. (1)
  1. The word "example" (Gr.tupos) originally meant, "the mark of a blow" and then "a stamp struck by a die" (PLGNT).



Figuratively it meant "a mark" (TDNTA), "an impression" (EDNT), "a model" (Louw-Nida) and "warning" (BGD)`

2. The same word was used earlier in verse 6
3. The example in verse 6 referred to the Israelites that were liberated from Egypt serving as a "model" of those whom "God was not well-pleased" and were destroyed in the wilderness (v.6)
4. The example in verse 11 refers again to the Israelites that were "idolaters...immoral...try[ied] the LORD...[and] grumble[d] and "were destroyed by the destroyer"

(1) Barnes, Albert. Notes on the New Testament: I Corinthians. Ed. Robert Frew. London: Blackie & Son, 1884–1885. Print.

## **B. THIS WAS WRITTEN FOR OUR INSTRUCTION (V.11B)**

Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

1. "Instruction" (Gr.nouthesia) is more than ordinary teaching
2. It carries the idea of warning
3. It is counsel given to persuade a person to change behavior in light of judgment. (1)
4. Romans 15:4 (NASB) For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.
5. The ends of the ages refers to the time of Messiah, the time of redemption, the last days of world history before the messianic kingdom comes. (2)

(1) MacArthur, John F., Jr. 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

(2) MacArthur, John F., Jr. 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

## **C. CONSIDER YOUR STANDING (V.12)**

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.

1. They imagined they were alright

1. "Thinks" (dokeo) (pres.act.part.) "to imagine" (WSNTDICT)

2. "Stands" (istemi) (perf.act.verb) "to hold one's ground"  
(Louw-Nida)

2. They needed to take heed so they not fall into the same sin

1. "Heed" (blepo) (pres.act.imp.) "to see"

2. Paul commands them to be careful, to consider what God did in them in the past at conversion freeing them from the bondage of sin lest they fall back into the same sin the Israelites committed

## QUOTE

The Israelites, as God's elect, equipped with sacraments, fancied themselves secure. They were not; they fell into sin, condemnation, and destruction.

3

## Remember Trials and Temptations Are Common for Everyone (v.13)

### BIBLE VERSE

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NASB) No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

### A. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS (V.13A)

1. Paul uses the common word for tests that's translated temptation
  1. It is the Greek word peirasmos
  2. It is translated "trials" in James 1:2
2. Trials are tests

3. Temptations are opportunities to do evil if yielded to
4. Whether it becomes a proof of righteousness or an inducement to evil depends on our response
5. If we resist it in God's power, it is a test that proves our faithfulness
6. If we do not resist, it becomes a solicitation to sin
7. The Bible uses the term in both ways, and I believe that Paul has both meanings in mind here. (1)
8. "Common to man" means "human"
  1. The trials or temptations we face and part of life
  2. James says they have their purpose for testing our faith
  3. One man's strength is another man's weakness

(1) MacArthur, John F., Jr. 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

## B. GOD IS FAITHFUL (V.13B)

God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted (peirazo) beyond what you are able, but with the temptation (peirasmos) will provide the way of escape, so that you will be able to endure it.

### 1. God is faithful

1. That universally taught in Scripture

2. Job 5:19 (NASB) From six troubles He will deliver you, even in seven evil will not touch you.

### 2. His faithfulness oversees our temptation

1. He doesn't allow us to be tempted "beyond what [we] are able"

2. He also uses the trial to provide a way of escape so you can bear it

3. James says the way to bear a trial is to first realize what it is, how it occurs, and our attitude during it

1. We are to "count it all joy" in trials (v.2)

2. We are to have this attitude when trials come because we cannot pinpoint their arrival
3. We are to understand that "faith produces endurance" (v.3)
4. We are to also "let endurance have its perfect result" (v.4)
5. God is using the trial and our endurance under it to make us spiritually mature (v.4)
6. But if we are struggling to understand or "if we...lack wisdom," we are to ask for it (v.5)
7. But we must "ask in faith without any doubting" (v.6)

## QUOTE

“God is faithful to all His promises, nor can He fail, or deceive; He is all wise and foreknowing of everything that comes to pass; He never changes His mind, nor forgets His word; and He is able to perform, and is the God of truth, and cannot lie; nor has He ever failed in any one of His

promises, nor will He suffer [allow] His faithfulness to fail; and this is a strong argument to hold fast a profession of faith.”

John Gill, <https://www.puritanboard.com/threads/god-is-faithful-gill.103397/>

## APPLICATION

1. We have freedom in Christ
2. But like Israel we can abuse that freedom by sinning against God
3. That's what they did and experienced each time God's discipline
4. We too are susceptible to temptation
5. We need to learn from Israel and take heed to ourselves lest we fall
6. This is the danger that is associated with liberty
7. We are free to serve Christ but not free to live in sin



8. All sin brings about God's discipline
9. Are you a follower of Jesus Christ this morning?
10. You can be if you will surrender your life to Him.
11. That means you forsake all, including your sin, to follow Jesus.
12. Pray with me as we close.