

No Fear

Long Beach Alliance Church • August 16th, 2009 • Pastor Chris Lankford

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.

~1st Corinthians 10:13 (NASB)

1) Don't Get Caught "Playing Church..."

- A) The followers of Jesus Christ at Corinth did not fear false idols (1st Corinthians 8:4), and were participating in public meals given in honor of idols, but which also served important social and business purposes.

- B) Some Corinthians thought these public feasts were simply "part of the culture," and willingly participated, even to the expense of "weaker" Christians who were new to the faith. Paul condemns these practices (8:9-13).

- C) In calling the Corinthians to show "loving restraint" for one another, Paul reminds everyone that our purpose as followers of Christ is to communicate the gospel without being distracted OR becoming a distraction (9:1-27).

D) Paul then warns followers of Christ everywhere to be cautious about “playing church” with God (10:1-4), who is not “well-pleased” with pretending to follow Him (10:5).

2) The People Of God Who Have Gone Before...

A) Notice that the Israelites are pictured as those who experienced “baptism” (10:2) and “communion” (10:3-4) in their desert experience, although in very different manners than New Covenant (NT) followers of Christ.

B) Paul’s point is not a one-to-one correspondence (baptism & communion), but that there is a continuity between the Old & New Testament followers of God, and that continuity is the provision of Jesus Christ (10:4).

C) Despite the provision of Christ (which the Corinthians would have understood more clearly than OT Jews), the Israelites “craved evil” through idolatry (10:6-7).

D) Paul uses the rebellious Israelites in the desert to provide a negative example of how followers of God can get distracted from the centrality of Christ’s provision and wander away into temptation (10:8-10).

3) Fear Not! Be Faithful & Endure!

A) The example of the Israelites serves as an example of what NOT to do (10:11). Those who are strong should be careful! Pride comes before a fall (10:12; cf. Proverbs 16:18)!

B) As both warning and encouragement to keep the gospel of Jesus Christ central in our lives, we are implored to remain pure by enduring under the pressure of temptation. God has made a way of escape, are you utilizing it (10:13)?!