

Summit Woods Baptist Church
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1 Corinthians 10:14-22

Remember to begin your study early in the week so that you have time to really think (and keep thinking) about the passage without being rushed.

❖ Day 1

Read 1 Corinthians 10:14-22.

For these lessons, the sermon text is provided in a format that visually helps display the structure of the paragraph or section of text. The main verbs are underlined. Generally, the main indicative clauses remain to the left, and the supporting clauses are either directly underneath when they have equal priority to what comes before, or are tabbed to the right when the clause supports, develops, or draws a conclusion from a neighboring clause.

¹⁴**Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.**

¹⁵I speak as to sensible people;

judge for yourselves what I say.

¹⁶The cup of blessing that we bless,

is it not a participation in the blood of Christ?

The bread that we break,

is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

¹⁷Because there is one bread,

we who are many are one body,

for we all partake of the one bread.

¹⁸Consider the people of Israel:

are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar?

¹⁹What do I imply then?

That food offered to idols is anything,

or that an idol is anything?

²⁰No, I imply that

what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God.

I do not want you to be participants with demons.

²¹You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons.

You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

²²Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy?

Are we stronger than he?

1. What does “therefore” refer to at the beginning of this paragraph?

2. Summarize Paul’s point from 10:1-13 in one sentence.

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3. What is the command in this week's paragraph?

4. Why is Paul confident that they will be able to flee from idolatry? (Draw from both last week's and this week's passages.)

5. What four "participations" does Paul mention, and what three groups of worshippers do they represent?

6. According to verses 16-17, what happens when believers take the cup and bread of the Lord's Supper?

7. In verse 18, Paul makes an Old Testament reference to the fact that in many of the Israelites' sacrifices and offerings, a portion of the offering was eaten for the express purpose of demonstrating the connection between the offeror and the offering (Leviticus 6:26, 7:15, etc.). How do these unions, symbolized through eating, illuminate Paul's objection to their eating the meals in the idol temples?

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8. Do you think it was the intent of the Corinthian believers who ate at and participated in the festivities at the pagan temples to be worshipping pagan gods and demons?
9. But according to verse 20, what does Paul say they are doing when they eat the temple meals, and why is it reasonable for him to make this connection – that eating in the pagan temples is tantamount to idolatry?

❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 10:14-22 again.

10. State Paul's point in verse 21 in your own words.
11. What other Bible verses can you think of that make a similar point?
12. In verse 22a, what is the Lord's response to His people "participa[ting] with demons"?
13. We have already noted that Paul's command in this paragraph is "flee from idolatry." Earlier in this letter, what else did Paul command the Corinthians to flee from? (see 6:18)
14. What did Paul link idolatry to in 10:7-8?

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15. Look again at 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. Compare the union that occurs through sexual immorality in chapter 6 to the union that comes from the participations described here in chapter 10.

Note: People often use the words 'jealousy' and 'envy' interchangeably, but there is a distinction between them when defined precisely. Envy relates to wanting to have what belongs to someone else. Jealousy relates to the threat of what belongs to you being taken away by someone else.

16. Throughout both the Old and New Testaments, God consistently uses marriage language to speak about His relationship with His people (Jeremiah 31:31-32, Ephesians 5:31-32, etc.). Read Judges 2:16-17 and Hosea 1:1-3. How does this help to explain the Lord's jealousy in verse 22?

17. Read Exodus 20:1-7 & 34:11-16, Deuteronomy 4:23-24 & 29:16-20, Isaiah 42:8 & 48:11, and James 4:4-8. (Also remember some of the Old Testament passages we read in the previous two lessons, such as Numbers 16 & 25:1-9.)

- a. How do these passages in questions 16 and 17 help you understand God's jealousy (what He is jealous for and why it is right for Him to be jealous)?

- b. How should all of these examples encourage fleeing from idolatry rather than provoking the Lord to jealousy? (List several reasons.)

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❖ Day 3

Read 1 Corinthians 10:14-22 again.

18. Why do you think some of the Corinthians wanted to keep going to the temples, and what kind of justifications so you think they would try to make?

19. Based on Paul's arguments in this passage, are the meals that take place in places of worship, whether Christian or Israelite or pagan, merely meals? Why or why not?

20. Imagine those in the Corinthian church who would continue to insist on eating in the pagan temples even after Paul has explained why it is foolish and dangerous to do so. What could their insistence reveal about their hearts, priorities, and identity?

21. Back in chapter 6, Paul addressed the notion of some of the Corinthians that they could separate their "spiritual" lives from their "physical" lives. How do you see a similar notion at work in those who want to eat at the pagan temples?

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22. What modern day examples can you think of where believers might try to justify their participation in certain activities, similar to the attitudes of the Corinthians?

23. Are there any areas in your life where the Lord has revealed that you are flirting with idolatry?

In preparation for Sunday, pray that we will be fully devoted to Christ, that we will recognize the danger of things that would lead us toward idolatry, and that we would promptly flee from those things.