

Be Careful of Complacency (Part 2) – 1 Cor 10:1-13

Happy Mother's Day; 1 Cor 10:1-13; This is part 2 of a 3 part message, looking at the issue of complacency that Paul addressed then, in order to avoid it now
The bottom line being – be careful; Be careful of complacency; That's the issue

And Paul gives 3 reasons for it in this text – the 1st of which we covered last week; That . . .
Special privileges don't guarantee spiritual blessings (v1-5)

Be careful of complacency, b/c special privileges in *life*, don't guarantee spiritual blessings from *God*; Special privileges now, don't guarantee spiritual blessings later

Privileges like a free country, or a godly heritage, or a good family, or a great church
They don't guarantee spiritual blessings like grace, mercy, favor, and eternal life
That's the point of the first 5 verses, which we covered in Part 1 *last* week
And if you weren't here, I'd encourage you to watch or listen online, or pick up a copy at Books & Things . . .
B/c it's the foundation for what Paul goes on to say in v6-11

6 Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did [they, referring to the Israelites of old]. 7 Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." 8 We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. 9 We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, 10 nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. 11 Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. 12 Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

IOW be careful of complacency, take heed, b/c . . .

Sin won't be ignored (v6-11)

That's the second point Paul makes here – sin won't be ignored
And once again, he refers to the Israelites and the sin *they* committed, to make it
To *warn* us about desiring evil as they did, v6; And *instruct* us to live differently, v11
Two bookends that bracket his point

Look again at v6 – *Now these things took place as examples for us* [Paul says], *that we might not desire evil as they did.*
These things, referring to the consequences they received for their rebellion and disobedience and sin; They're examples or warnings for us

Just like they were examples and warnings for *them* – that's v11 after he lays it all out
Now these things happened to them as an example
An example, in real time, so that the people *then*, wouldn't do the same things and suffer the same consequences as their neighbors
They *are* examples for us, and they *were* examples for them – both

Not only that, *but they were written down for our instruction* (11b)

For those of us on this side of the cross, *on whom the end of the ages has come*
Which means, if you've ever thought the OT was passé or didn't apply to you, think again; B/c the events recorded there, were explicitly written down for *us*
That we might not desire *evil* as they did, and suffer the consequences they did

- That's how he frames his thought, that sin won't be ignored
It wasn't then, for them; And it won't be now, for us
Especially on this side of the cross where the affront, the offense – is even greater

I think that's why he adds the phrase – *on whom the end of the ages has come*
Referring to the time on this side of the cross, after Christ gave his life for it all
B/c having given his *life* to *forgive* our sin, and his *Spirit* to *keep* us from sin – the offense is even greater *now*, than it was then

Which means it won't be ignored; Even as a believer, your sin won't be ignored
That's who he's speaking to here – brothers and sisters in Christ as he says in v1
So just b/c you're saved, doesn't mean you can live and think however you want, and expect God to ignore it; He won't

So let me exhort you, just as Paul exhorted them . . .

• **Don't be idolaters (v7)**

Do not be idolaters as some of them were, v7 – pretty clear
And then he cites an example, saying – *As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play."*

Now, if Paul expected us to know our history in the first 5 verses, the history of our spiritual forefathers as recorded in the OT – he *really* expects us to know it here
B/c he refers to an incident at the base of Mt Sinai, where the Israelites were camped during their journey to the Promised Land
And on this particular occasion, they were waiting for Moses who was on the mountain getting instructions from God

The problem was, he was taking a long time – 40 days and 40 nights in fact
And the people got impatient; They got tired of waiting for Moses, and they got tired of following a god they couldn't see or touch
Even though the top of the mountain was engulfed in flames b/c of his presence – it didn't matter; So, they petitioned Aaron to *make* some gods for them . . .
That they *could* see and touch; gods made in *their* image, the way *they* wanted him to be

Which Aaron did, much to his shame
Forming a golden calf out of their jewelry, building an altar for sacrifices, and then proclaiming a feast the next day to celebrate it all
And **Ex 32:6** says – *They rose up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.*
Play, being a euphemism here in Hebrew, for sexual relations
They ate, drank, and had an orgy in honor of their false god

And it wasn't ignored; God was furious
So much so, that 3000 were killed by the sword, and more due a plague that God sent
And if it weren't for the pleading and intercession of Moses, they *all* would've died****

- Now, I'm pretty sure your idolatry doesn't look anything like that
In fact, it may be very sincere and well-meaning
But you need to understand that it's no less *offensive* to God, and it won't be ignored

Whether it's *religious* idolatry – where saints, or icons, or angels receive a portion of your worship and prayer . . .

Or *philosophical* idolatry – where you supplant the truth with false beliefs about God or man or heaven or hell . . .

Or *secular* idolatry – where things like sports or leisure or money or fame are the primary focus of your life and energy

Whatever the case, it's sin, and God won't ignore it; Just like he didn't ignore it then

You shall have no other gods before me, still applies (Ex 20:3)

As does 1 John 5:21 which says – *keep yourselves from idols*

As in, don't let anyone or anything take first place in your life, other than God

In fact, don't let anyone or anything take *any* place of worship in your life

And if you're among people, or at a church, that does – that allows or propagates false beliefs or idolatrous practices, get out; Stop rationalizing it, and get out

B/c you can't stay long without condoning it by your presence, and being affected by its influence, and being endangered by its consequences

God won't ignore it; Sin won't be ignored; Second . . .

• **Don't indulge in sexual immorality (v8)**

That's the second sin he cites, found in v8

We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day.

Referring to an incident found in Nu 25:1-9, where it says that the ancient Israelites began to “*whore with the daughters of Moab*” (Nu 25:1)

IOW they indulged in sexual immorality – sex with people they had no business being with in the first place

Sex *outside* of marriage in some cases, and with unbelievers in all cases – people who didn't fear and worship God

People who bowed down to an idol, and influenced the Israelites who were with them, to do the same

And it led to a plague that killed 24k people – 23k in *one day* as Paul says

Which, by the way, has led some people to say that that it's an obvious error in the Bible

And while that *could* be true – it's *possible* that a copying error occurred sometime early on, that's not necessarily the case

It could simply be a clarification that Paul adds, to say that though 24k *total* were killed, 23k were killed in one day

Whatever the case, the point is – God didn't ignore their sin of sexual immorality, anymore than he ignored their sin of idolatry

• And he won't ignore yours; Nothing has changed

1 Thess 4:3 says that part of God's will is that you *abstain from sexual immorality*

And it wasn't that long ago we saw the same thing in 1 Cor 6:18 where Paul says – *Flee from sexual immorality.*

As in, don't indulge; Don't indulge in sex, or sexual acts, or sexual thoughts outside of marriage – i.e. with someone other than your spouse

And if you're not married, that means don't indulge with anybody

That includes, indulging in pornography, masturbation, eye candy, internet chat rooms . . .

And touching anything on your boyfriend or girlfriend that's normally underneath their clothes – I don't care if you're 14 or 44; It's all sexual immorality

And I include sexual thoughts, b/c Jesus said that *everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent*, that is, w/ thoughts of having sex w/ her, or a desire to do so (Mt 5:28) . .

Everyone who does that *has already committed adultery with her in his heart* he says

You've already indulged in sexual immorality

Which is a problem, b/c according to one survey – 59% of adults in this country, believe that it's morally acceptable to have sexual thoughts or fantasies . . .

About someone other than their spouse (Covenant Eyes, Pornography Statistics, Barna Research Group, 2003)

No wonder 68% of divorces these days, involve one party meeting a new partner over the Internet (American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers)

And no wonder pornography is such a problem

The worst part of which is – some of you have it; right here in our church

B/c according to one study, cited in a report called, “Pornography Statistics” by *Covenant Eyes* – which you can find on our website by the way, or online . . .

They said in 2006, 50% of all Christian men and 20% of all Christian women are addicted to pornography – addicted

As in, obsessed with, in bondage to, and spending as much time as possible indulging in

Now, I don't know how they defined Christian, but even if those percentages are only half true around here, we still have a problem

B/c that means that a whole bunch of you are indulging in sexual immorality, regularly

And you need to stop

Stop indulging; B/c God won't ignore your sexual immorality forever, even if he has up to now; You *will* reap what you sow, and it won't be good

Look at the Israelites; And look at the Corinthians – some of whom were weak, ill, and dying in the very next chapter . . .

B/c they were continuing in sin and acting like they weren't

• So don't be thinking that a “loving God,” who you've made in your own image in order to rationalize your own sin . . .

Don't be thinking that he wouldn't do things like he did to the Israelites, just b/c that's in the OT

He did it in the NT too, and there's no reason to think he won't do it now

Your sin won't be ignored

It's either going to be dealt with on the cross b/c you've repented of it – i.e. you've confessed it to God and turned from it in the strength he provides . . .

Or, it's going to be dealt with in your life, b/c you haven't

Don't indulge in sexual immorality; And third . . .

• **Don't try God's patience (v9)**

That's v9 where Paul says – *We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents*

Which comes from Nu 21 this time, where the Israelites became impatient with God (**Nu 21:5-6**), and spoke out against him and Moses saying . . .

“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 worthless food.” 6 Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.

I said this a few weeks ago at Easter, and I'm sure I'll say it again, b/c it's a biblical truth, and often ignored – God's patience has limits

You can't keep sinning, and expect him to keep looking the other way; He won't He can't; His *holiness* demands better, and his justice requires a payment *****

If that *weren't* true, he wouldn't be coming again to *judge* those who haven't *repented*, who *haven't* turned from their sin
But he will the Bible says, so his patience *does* have limits

- And if you think that just b/c you prayed a prayer once upon a time, you're just fine to pursue the things of this world, or try God's patience – think again
B/c at best, he's going to *discipline* you like Heb 12 says . . .
Or at worst, he's going to *punish* you b/c you're not really saved

1 Jn 3:6 says – *No one who abides in him [God] keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.*

And v9 (**1 Jn 3:9**) says – *No one born of God makes a practice of sinning*

If you continue in sin, if you make a practice of wrongdoing, if you go on sinning deliberately after receiving a knowledge of the truth the Bible says (Heb 10:26) . . .

You're not saved; The verses are crystal clear – *no one who keeps on sinning has either seen [God] or known him* *****

And don't ask me what it means to keep on sinning, or how long “continuing” is, or what it means to make a practice of it – just *stop*

Try God's patience no longer; B/c you're flirtin' with disaster if you do

Don't be idolaters; Don't indulge in SI; Don't try God's patience; And last . . .

- **Don't grumble and complain (v10)**

V10 says – [we must not] *grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer.*

Probably referring to Satan, or maybe an angel of the Lord, in carrying out some of God's punishments

Whatever the case, Paul is most likely thinking of the time when the Israelites grumbled and complained in Nu 16:41, leading to the death of 14,700 of them in one fell swoop
Destroyed by a plague – a tool of the Destroyer

- Which is no surprise, b/c when you get right down to it, grumbling and complaining is dissatisfaction with God's perfect sovereignty in your life
It's a passive-aggressive way to say – “I don't like what you've done or allowed God; I don't like it, and I want it changed”
That's essentially what you're saying when you grumble and complain

Whether it's about the weather, or the food, or your boss, or your pastor, or the songs, or your job, or your husband – it's sin; And God won't ignore it (**Summary**)

So if you're prone – don't; don't go there; And if you are – stop

B/c God punishes disobedience, and you're no exception