

**Ministry of The Holy Spirit**  
**The Law Governing the Race to the Finish Line**  
**1 Cor 10:14-33**

Last time...after the exhortation to run to win and to finish well our race (Ch 9:24-27), we were given an example of not running to win, not finishing well – Israel (Ch 10:1-13)

This time...the Law governing the race to the Finish Line  
We are in 1 Cor 10

v14    dearly beloved, flee from idolatry:

This is a letter of correction and instruction in righteousness

The motive and tone of the letter is love, the love a father has for his children

Ch 4:15

Eph 6:4        ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord

Col 3:21      Fathers, provoke not your children *to anger*, lest they be discouraged

Encouraged to run to win the race and to finish well,  
Exhorted to not fall short of the Finish Line as Israel did,  
the Church at Corinth is now told point blank to flee from idolatry

Idolatry – the inspiration of Satan in his spiritual war with God for the hearts, minds, and souls of men, male and female created in the image of God

Anything or anyone “shiny and glittery” that

- appeals to the lust of the flesh
- replaces the Lord Jesus Christ as the object of devotion and worship
- causes a person to stop short of the Finish Line
- is harmful to one’s spiritual health i.e. right relationship with Jesus Christ

v15 wise men, judge:

Ps 111:10 and Prov 9:10 tell us

The Word of God is the beginning of wisdom  
the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding  
a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*

Regarding Israel's idolatry, the Word of God says

Hosea 13:2-3 And now they sin more and more, and have made them  
molten images of their silver, *and* idols according to their  
own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they  
say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.  
Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, and as the  
early dew that passeth away, as the chaff *that* is driven with  
the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the  
chimney.

Hosea 14:9 Who *is* wise, and he shall understand these *things*? prudent,  
and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD *are*  
right, and the just shall walk in them.

The Church at Corinth was superbly taught the Word of God by both Paul and  
Apollos

Therefore, they have wisdom, they are wise

Paul encourages them to search the Scriptures to discern if his words of correction  
and instruction are correct

Acts 17:11 to them too

And if they are correct, to understand them by doing/obeying  
Again, "Consider Israel"

v16-17 cup of blessing...bread...one:

Flee idolatry!

And keep your eyes on the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!

As you run to win the race and to finish well, stay focused on Jesus Christ

Jesus gave His followers something to help us do just that – Communion

Matt 26:26-28 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*,  
and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, **Take,**  
**eat; this is my body.** And he took the cup, and gave thanks,  
and gave *it* to them, saying, **Drink ye all of it; For this is**  
**my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for**  
**the remission of sins**

A corporate action and an individual time to

- remember
  - Who Jesus is
  - the sacrifice of Himself for us sinners
  - by grace thru faith in Him and His acceptable sacrifice, we are one with Him and with each other

John 3:16

Rom 5:8

1 John 4:9-10 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins

1 Cor 6:19-20

- reflect on our personal walk in the Spirit with Jesus
  - our weaknesses, His strength
  - His faithfulness to the Father and to us, our faithfulness to the Father and to Him

By the broken body and the shed blood of Jesus Christ, we are

- one loaf with the Bread of Life (John 6) and each other
- one Body, the Body of Christ

John 17:20-23 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Let us not lose sight of the one-ness we have with Jesus Christ.  
Let's keep our hearts and minds focused on Jesus Christ.

v18 eat partakers:

Again, "Consider Israel"

The not-born-again-of-the-Spirit-of-God-by-grace-thru-faith Jews,  
the center of whose worship is in the Temple in Jerusalem

Under the direction of a high priest, the priests minister at the altar and eat of the sacrifices; how God in His Law provides food for the servants of His house who do not have a land inheritance

Our High Priest

- is the Substance of the shadows of all those sacrifices (John 5:39)
- fulfilled the Law of Moses (Rom 10:4)
- changed the priesthood (Heb 7:12, from Levitical to the order of Mel)
- changed the Law (Heb 7:12, from the Law of Moses to the Law of Love)
- is the Mediator of a better testament (Heb 8:6, 1 Tim 2:5-6)
- offered one sacrifice for sins forever (Heb 9:28a, Heb 10:12)
- serves in the true sanctuary in heaven, not in the worldly sanctuary which is a mere pattern of the true sanctuary in heaven
- washed us from our sins in His own blood
- has made us kings and priests unto God the Father  
(1 Peter 2:5, 1 Peter 2:9, Rev 1:5-6)

Therefore, as Israel does in unbelief in the Temple in Jerusalem,  
so is the Church to do by faith in the Temple on earth (1 Cor 6:19) –  
partake of the altar of sacrifice...v16-17

And the Church at Corinth is to do that in a VERY idolatrous city filled with  
temples to false gods

v19 idol is anything...sacrifice to idols is anything:

Revisiting/repeating Ch 8:4-6

Because every person in the Church at Corinth has loved ones and friends and  
associates who worship in those idolatrous temples...are unbelievers...  
and Paul is instructing them on what to think and do about that

Starting with the knowledge and understanding that idols and things offered in  
sacrifice to idols are nothing...

- a false facade covering emptiness
- a vapor
- smoke out of a chimney

because there is only One True Living God

v20 Gentiles...devils:

The Gentiles do not know the OTL God...

because Israel stopped short of why God created them

Is 43:10 Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me

Is 43:12 I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when *there was* no strange *god* among you: therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I *am* God.

Is 43:15 I *am* the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King.

In uber superstitious Athens, Paul said in his witness of the OTL God

Acts 17:30-31 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: (of worshipping idols) Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead

Behind every idol is a demon drawing a person away from their Creator

Every offering to an idol is an offering to a demon

The Church at Corinth is a group of people that

has 1 Thes 1:9b turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God

are to be 1 Thes 1:10 wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

Therefore, Paul obviously desires that they do not fellowship/commune with demons in their race to the Finish Line

v21 cannot:

To finish well the race, the Church cannot...it is impossible for the Church to...

- commune with the Lord (Light, Life)

AND

with demons (darkness, death)...

- eat and drink at the Lord's Table (Communion)

AND

eat and drink at the devil's table

- Matt 6:24 behind the idol Mammon/money is a demon  
the two are diametrically opposed and utterly incompatible

v22 provoke...stronger:

After all, dare we provoke the Almighty Lord to jealousy (righteous indignation)  
with our disobedience and unfaithfulness by indulging our Self?!

Are we stronger than the Almighty, able to contend with Him and overcome His  
will with our will?

“Consider Israel”

v6 and v11

With the understanding that an idol is nothing and the sacrifice offered to a demon  
is nothing,

With the knowledge that behind every idol is a demon,

With the understanding that the followers of Jesus Christ eat and drink at His  
Table and not at the tables of demons,

what is the Church at Corinth to do in their idolatrous city (and we in ours)?

v23-24 All things are lawful...not expedient...edify not:

Fleeing idolatry,

Keeping our focus on Jesus Christ,

Washed clean of our sins by our High Priest's sacrifice of Himself once for all,

Knowing there is only OTL God,

Communing with the Lord and not with demons,

Diligent in following the Lord Jesus Christ in this race to the Finish Line,  
all things are lawful...since Rom 10:4

But...

- not all things are profitable or to our advantage as
  - God works in our lives to conform us into the image of His dear Son (Rom 8:29)
  - we run to win the race and run to finish well
- not all things build us up in
  - the faith of Christ
  - our relationships with
    - the Lord Jesus Christ
    - each other

This is lawful, this is the Law to govern the race to the Finish Line:

1. Do not selfishly seek one's own benefit/well-being
2. Selflessly and Self-lastly seek the benefit/well-being of others

The Law to govern the race to the Finish Line is...the Royal Law

James 2:8     If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture,  
Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.

Therefore, applying the Royal Law to the issue of idols and things sacrificed to idols, because every person in the Church at Corinth has loved ones and friends and associates who do not believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and worship in those idolatrous temples, Paul offers simple instruction on what to think and do about that

v25-26 sold in the shambles:

Situation #1

Whatever meat is sold in the butcher's shops and in the meat markets:

- eat
- do not investigate where the meat came from so that you have a clear and clean conscience (moral guidance)

Because everything comes from the Lord

Ps 24:1

v27 believe not bid you:

Situation #2

An unbeliever...loved one, family member, friend, associate... invites you over for dinner and you desire to go:

- eat whatever is set before you  
(graciously accept the hospitality extended to you)
- don't ask questions about where it came from so you have a clear and clean conscience

Remember Ch 5:9-13

v28 But if any man say...eat not:

Situation #3

A person invites you to dinner and tells you the meat was offered to a demon, thanks for this meal is to be given to an idol:

- eat not
- for his sake...for his benefit i.e. a witness of Truth
- for the sake of your clear and clean conscience...v20-21
- because Ps 24:1
  - you know it but your host denies it
  - don't participate in giving thanks to a demon when thanks belongs exclusively to the Lord Jesus Christ

Modern day example: invitation to a homosexual wedding  
Do not go!

v29-30 why is my liberty...why am I evil spoken of:

Anticipating an objection to how to handle Situation #3

“Why is my freedom impinged by the conscience of another person?”

“If I eat, giving grace to the host and giving thanks to the Lord to Whom that meat belongs, why am I evil spoken of?”

Answer: Conscience (moral guidance in the situation, what is the right thing to do) is dictated by the other person, not by you

Appropriate action by a believer is determined by...the other person

In this situation, and in every situation, our race to the Finish Line is governed by the Royal Law, the Law of Love

Matt 22:36-40

James 2:8

Ch 8:7-13

v23-24

v31-33 do all...give none offense...they may be saved:

The Law that governs the race to the Finish Line is the Royal Law

Love of God and Love of others is the motive for every decision/action/word

Because “it” is not about me, it is about Jesus Christ and all others

Therefore

1. All that you do, do to the glory of God (be Christ-like always)
2. Do not cause anyone to stumble, do not be a bad witness of Jesus to
  - unbelieving Jews
  - unbelieving Gentiles
  - believing Jews and Gentiles in the Church
3. Serve others, not selfishly seeking one’s own benefit but the benefit of others...so they may be
  - saved from eternal death and darkness
  - 2 Peter 3:18

Ch 9:19-23a

My temporary “pain” (the surrender of my Christian liberty) is absolutely worth the “gain” (the salvation or sanctification of another person)

In every situation in the race to the Finish Line: What am I to do?

Choose the option that loves the most

- Pursue righteousness...Love Jesus Christ
- The Royal Law...Love your neighbor as yourself



## Application

The Royal Rule applies to people, not things

Things loved pre-eminently are idols, behind which is a demon

A life governed by the Royal Law is about relationships,

2 willing volunteers engaged in each other's lives

A broken or estranged relationship brings sorrow and pain

A healthy relationship brings happiness and meaning

A right relationship, founded on Jesus Christ the 3<sup>rd</sup> person in the relationship, brings joy

Relationships flourish when the time and effort they need are governed by the Royal Law

Grace blossoms and grows

Relationships wither when the time and effort they need are governed by the Love of Self

Bitterness blossoms and grows

All we have in this world are relationships

Real treasure on earth

We came into the world naked, we will leave the world naked

All worldly treasure will be left behind and burned by the Almighty and relational God  
who John 3:16 and Rom 5:8

Therefore, invest in relationships

Don't live to enrich your life, live to enrich the lives of others with Jesus Christ

- love
- encouragement
- comfort
- faith
- hope
- time

Live your part of those relationships according to the Royal Law, v23-24

Matt 16:24-25

And...Church, a group of people following Jesus, is all about relationships

Invest in the relationships in the Church...time and effort

That is the "fellowship" part of Acts 2:42

That is why Heb 10:24-25

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.