

Intro:

1. Remember that in Chapter 9 Paul wrote that those that run and fight without being disqualified will earn imperishable crowns in Heaven.
 - a. Sowing and reaping. What we sow now, we'll reap in eternity.
 - b. Now in chap 10 Paul uses Israel as an example of what not to do.

Read 1 Cor 10:1-13 and Pray¹

1. Last week we looked at verses 1-5 in depth. If you weren't here last week and you have questions related to those verses, I encourage you to download that message from the church's website.
 - a. This week we are continuing in verses 5-13.
2. Like last week, there are a number of cross-references associated with what Paul is saying in our passage.
 - a. But for the sake of time, today I will give you the reference for your notes but we will not look-up each passage. Instead, I will paraphrase the account for you.

Let's pick back up in 1 Corinthians 10:5

1. Of this group of people who had received supernatural protection and provision, "**God was not well pleased**"
 - a. Paul says the reason for this is that "*their bodies were scattered in the wilderness*"
 - b. This goes back to Numbers 13-14.
2. The children of Israel were scattered in the wilderness because of a lack of faith in failing to enter the Promised Land immediately after coming out of Egypt.
 - a. As a consequence, everyone was sentenced to wander in the desert for 40 years.

¹ Unless otherwise marked, all scriptures taken from the New King James Version. © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

- b. What's more, everyone 20 and above was forbidden to enter the Promised Land and would as a result, die in the wilderness before the 40 years was over.
 - c. In this we also see God's heart and concern for the children: all those 19 years old and under were permitted to enter into the Promised Land.
 - d. One exception: Only two adult men were granted permission to enter the Promised Land
 - i. Caleb and Joshua, the faithful spies who trusted in God.
3. I think a good question to regularly ask yourself, "am I ***well pleasing*** to the Lord?"
- a. We know that Jesus was well pleasing to the Father. Matthew 3:17 *And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*
 - b. We should make it our aim to be well pleasing to the Lord as well.
 - i. Paul wrote, 2 Corinthians 5:9 (ESV) *So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.*
 - c. Are your actions pleasing to Him (God)? Take a personal inventory now.
 - i. Do your actions reflect the Son? Would others think of Christ when they see you?

In the following verses we are going to see what it was that made Israel fail.

- Note that there are 5 things that hindered and disqualified the Israelites; 5 things that can hinder and even disqualify us.

1 Corinthians 10:6 ⁶ **Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.**

1. The first thing that hindered and disqualified the Israelites, and can hinder and disqualify you and me: Lust
 - a. This is a ***desire or intense craving*** inclusive of, but not limited to sexual sin.
 - b. Lust desires what God has forbidden.

2. Understand: Sin is not bad because it's forbidden, Sin is forbidden because it's bad.
 - a. Lust wants something that's outside of God's provision for you. BTW, coveting is the twin sister of lust, both are sin.
3. When Paul speaks of Israel's lusting after evil things he's referring to their sin recorded in Numbers 11 where they lusted after the lifestyle found in Egypt.
 - a. Remember – Egypt in the bible is symbolic of sin or a sinful lifestyle.
4. What is it that you lust after?
 - a. Is there some element, even a little trace of lust that you've allowed to remain in your heart?
 - b. Is there something you desire even though you know it is wrong? You need to deal with it before you are overcome by it!
 - c. Those desires and cravings don't go away on their own, you need to put them to death. More on that at the end of the message.

1 Corinthians 10:7 ⁷ And do not become idolaters as *were* some of them. As it is written, "*The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*"

1. The second thing that hindered the Israelites, and can hinder you and me: Idolatry
 - a. Idolatry is worshipping or esteeming something, anything, higher than God or ahead of God.
2. Paul is referring to what is recorded in Exodus 32.
 - a. Moses was up on Mt. Sinai receiving the Law from the Yahweh (God).
 - b. Aaron and the people down below grew impatient waiting for Moses to come back down.
 - c. The people came to Aaron, Moses' brother, and they all got busy making and worshipping a golden calf.
 - d. The golden calf was the center piece and their reason for eating, drinking and playing.

- i. The word *play* in this verse is in context of an orgy; it speaks of sexual immorality²
 - e. Sadly, 3,000 people died in judgment on that day because of their great sin.
- 3. Has anything become your idol ahead of God?
 - a. What gets your highest degree of devotion?
 - b. Take a look at your calendar and your checkbook.
 - i. Where you spend a majority of your time and your money is often an indicator of what you worship.
 - ii. If you are giving your first and best to anything other than God Himself and serving Him, then you are also committing the sin of idolatry.
- 4. With idolatry it's important to consider Jesus' words...
 - a. Matthew 18:8 *"If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire.*
 - b. Jesus is not teaching us to maim ourselves, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit; we are to be **living** sacrifices that glorifies God (1 Cor 6:19, Rom 12:1).
 - c. What Jesus is saying is that sometimes is better to live without something than to have it in this temporary life but to lose your soul over it in eternity.

1 Corinthians 10:8 ⁸ **Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell;**

- 1. The 3rd thing that hindered and disqualified the Israelites, and can hinder and disqualify you and me: Sexual immorality
- 2. Paul's example comes from Numbers 25 where it says that the children of Israel began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab (sexual relations & pagan worship).

² *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)* (electronic ed.)

- a. Judgment upon their sin came in the form of some type of unidentified plague.
3. You see, that's what sexual immorality does, it causes sickness and a rotting away from the inside out.
- a. Sexual activity outside of marriage is a sin. Plain and simple.
 - b. Even sexual *thoughts* and *fantasies* of someone who is not your spouse is also sin. (Matt 5:28)
 - c. Allowing those thoughts and actions to remain in your life eats away at you like a plague; if you survive it, it leaves you with ugly scars that are hard to overcome.
4. If you are married and are entertaining **sexual immorality** in thought or deed, will you please listen to me, repent and run from it before it ruins your marriage and your life.
- a. If you are single and you are entertaining **sexual immorality** in thought or deed; repent and run from it before it ruins any hope you may have of having a God honoring marriage relationship with someone.

1 Corinthians 10:9 ⁹ nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;

1. The fourth thing that hindered the Israelites, and can hinder you and me: Tempt Christ
 - a. Perhaps you're thinking, "*What does that mean?*"
2. If you don't understand a passage, try reading it in another translation.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 10:9 (ESV) *We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents*
 - b. Testing or tempting Christ is to ask or accuse **without faith**, without believing.
3. In Numbers 21 the people spoke against God and against Moses essentially accusing them of leading the people into the wilderness to die.
 - a. They had no faith in God or in God's leader Moses.
 - b. Because of their sin, serpents came into the camp and bit the people and many of them died.

- c. After repenting of their sin, God instructed Moses to construct a special bronze serpent on a pole and to hold it up before the people.
 - d. If someone had been bitten and they looked up at the image on the pole they were healed.
4. In John 3 we learn that the bronze serpent on a pole represents Christ, who provides healing, spiritually, to those who would look up to Him trusting in the completed work of the cross.
5. Romans 1:17 tells us that the just shall live by faith.
- a. The only way to be right in the eyes of God is to live by faith.
 - b. We are only accepted by God if we are found to having saving faith in Christ.
 - c. Don't test Christ, trust Him.

1 Corinthians 10:10 ¹⁰ nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

1. The fifth thing that hindered and disqualified the Israelites, and can hinder and disqualify you and me: Complaining
 - a. Complaining is a destroyer – when you complain you are destroying and it destroys yourself.
2. Honestly, there are too many occasions of the people complaining to list them all, but Paul may have been referring to either Numbers 11 or 21 in this instance.
 - a. In those passages, the Israelites were sick of Manna and complained about what they called “worthless bread”.
 - b. Manna burgers, manna cakes, manna loaves, maybe even manna-coti?
3. What is it that you last complained about?
 - a. Was it really worth it? Spending your time and energy complaining about it?
 - b. I remember the last thing I complained about, the cat that keeps coming in our yard eating the leaves off our flowers and plants.

- c. I know it was a waste of my time. I'm sorry my family had to hear it.
 - d. What message are you sending to people by the things that you complain about?
4. Philippians 2:14–15 ¹⁴ *Do all things without complaining and disputing,* ¹⁵ *that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,*
- a. I've learned that you can't be a light for Jesus when you are complaining about the things of this world.
 - b. What's more important to you, getting your point across or helping others see Jesus through your actions.
5. I've heard it said that there are 5 Gospels; 4 written: Matthew, Mark, Luke & John, and 1 lived: your life.
- a. If the only gospel someone reads is your life, what impression will they get of your Lord and Savior?

1 Corinthians 10:11 ¹¹ **Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**

- 1. The bible contains a wonderful collection of examples of what to do and what not to do.
 - a. In this case, we see bad examples that are provided for our instruction; we are supposed to learn from them.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 ¹² **Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.** ¹³ **No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.**

- 1. If you are not taking heed, then you are likely to fall.
 - a. You and I are sinful. We were born in sin. We live in sin.

- b. We have a fleshly inclination toward sin, but we can be victorious over that sinful desire or tendency.
 - c. “but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able”
- 2. Do you feel overwhelmed by certain sinful desires and feel like you just simply can’t resist?
 - a. Maybe you can’t bear it because of the things you are choosing to do; the places you are choosing to go; the things you are choosing to look at.
- 3. So how do we overcome these sinful thoughts, desires and actions? The answer is found in Christ.
 - a. Romans 13:14 *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*
- 4. How do we put on Christ? Galatians 5:16–17 ¹⁶ *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.* ¹⁷ *For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*
 - a. Walk in the Spirit. Do those things that feed and nurture your spiritual relationship with God in Christ.
 - i. Getting in the word, daily devotional time, prayer, regular fellowship with other believers.

Conclusion

- 1. God is for you, not against you.
- 2. Have you sinned? Then you repent. That means you stop doing it.
 - a. Confess it to God asking for forgiveness and then continue on down the path of sanctification by spending time in God’s word and relying on His Holy Spirit for the strength to overcome that desire.
- 3. Practically speaking: if you are wrestling with issues in one of these areas, then you need to make a change while you still can before it’s too late.
 - a. If you have a problem with sexual lust, be careful of the movies and shows you watch and the places you go.

- i. Get an internet filter and accountability software.
 - ii. Don't spend your free time with the guys who you know frequent the strip joints.
 - b. Be someone who compliments and commends rather than complains.
 - c. Don't test Christ, trust Him!
 - d. And prayerfully look for our faithful Father's way of escape when we are tempted.
4. And to him who is faithful and is not disqualified goes the imperishable crowns and rewards and joy that will last throughout all eternity.