

Living Humbly Before God
1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Intro: In chapter nine, Paul's concern is that he and his readers will live the Christian life without disqualification.

9:27 – I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

Talking about reaching the finish line is one way to help us finish well.

The Promised Land was the finish line for Israel in the wilderness, so Paul draws on that part of Israel's history to challenge the Corinthians.

Even though Israel had been miraculously delivered from Egypt in the Passover night, and again at the Red Sea, and then given every divine advantage in the wilderness – a cloud to cool their days and a fire to warm their nights (which also led the way), miraculous provision in their clothing, water, and food – most Israelites still did not make it to the Promised Land.

It's a powerful, cautionary tale for anyone who follows Jesus. Apart from grace in the cross, perseverance provides the greatest assurance.

Assurance cannot be based solely on the memory of a one-time experience.

We know that we are Christians because we are Christians today.

To put it in biblical terms,

Hebrews 11:13 – “All these died in faith...”

And that brings us to Paul's challenge to the Corinthians.

First: Think about God's Blessings. 1-4

Paul uses the word 'all' five times:

- v1a – Our fathers were all under the cloud
- v1b – All passed through the sea
- v2 – All were baptized into Moses in the cloud in the sea
- v3 – All ate the same spiritual food
- v4 – All drank the same spiritual drink

They had the same experiences, the same leadership, and the same blessings.

III – Of course, each of these speak to Christ.

V 4b - *For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.* When did this happen? Twice.

- Exodus 17:1-7 – the wilderness of Sin in the Sinai Peninsula

One year passes, and then – (Ex 12:2 & Ex 40:17) – Exodus records the first year, Numbers, the wandering years and Deuteronomy the last year.

- Numbers 20:2-12 – the wilderness of Zin near the Dead Sea.

(See map at the end of the CG notes)

What disqualified Moses?

1 - Numbers 20:12 - *And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them."*

Note: Contrast that with Galatians 2:20 – *"...I live by faith in the Son of God..."*

2 - Deuteronomy 32:51 - *because you broke faith with me in the midst of the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, and because you did not treat me as holy in the midst of the people of Israel.*

Why was it important?

- 1 – Moses would die anyway, and the people needed to see God as their God, not Moses as their idol.
- 2 – Striking the rock = the crucifixion of Christ. Speaking to rock = fellowship with Christ. Moses re-crucified Christ which is wholly anathema (Hb 10:12).

The Bible has one story, redemption and one Hero, Jesus. How else do the things Paul mentioned point to Jesus?

- a) Cloud - Ps 91:1 – *He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.*
- b) Sea - Jn 8:36 - *...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed*
- c) Baptized in Moses - Ro 6:3 – *We "have been baptized into Christ Jesus..."*
- d) Ate spiritual food - Jn 6:35 – *"I am the bread of life"*
- e) Drank the spiritual drink - Jn 7:37 – *"I am the living water"*

No wonder Moses exclaimed, "*Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD...*" (Deut 33:29)

v 5 – *"Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness."*

God requires more than the right spiritual experiences or the right associations. He demands our hearts.

Second: Look at Paul's Warnings. 6-12

- a) Don't be idolaters. v 7 – Personalities & food offered to idols
- b) Don't be sexually immoral. v 8 – man with step-wife & single/marriages
- c) Don't test Christ. v 9 -
- d) Don't be a complainer. v 10

Key verse to section: 12 – *"Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall."*

Third: This Is How We Apply It. 6 & 11

V 6 - *Now these things took place as examples for us, **that we might not desire evil** as they did.*

The root is desiring evil. Each of the Israelite's sins were caused by desiring the wrong thing. Instead of being satisfied with God, they thought something else could satisfy their heart's desire.

v 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.*

We are closer to the coming of Christ than Israel in the wilderness and this should motivate us to godliness.

Fourth: Paul's Final Word of Encouragement. 13

- a) No temptation is unique – *"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man"*
- b) God is faithful – *"God is faithful"*

Perseverance is our responsibility, but God's faithfulness enables us to persevere.

- c) Temptation is never irresistible – *"he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability"*

- d) We can never say we are helpless – *“but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape”*
- e) But we also cannot escape the world (and God does not promise that) – *“that you may be able to endure it”*. – (the way of escape is “to endure it.”)

God took Israel *through* the wilderness, not *out* of it. In other words, their way *out* of the wilderness was *through* the wilderness.

Conclusion: Remember how Paul started the letter –

1:2 –

- *“To the church of God that is in Corinth,*
- *to those sanctified in Christ Jesus,*
- *called to be saints...”*

He wants them to know that he believes they are Christians. Still, he’s concerned they might ‘disqualify’ [*adokimos*] themselves.

*Titus 1:16 – “They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit [*adokimos*] for any good work.”*

This does not mean they were Christians and lost their salvation. It means they were never Christians.

Exodus 12:38 – *“A mixed multitude also went up with them...”*

Romans 9:6b – *“For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel...”*

The best evidence that we are Christians
is that we are Christians today.

Community Groups:

- 1 – Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-13
- 2 – What is this section about?
- 3 – Read vs 1-4 and recount all of God’s blessings to Israel.
- 4 – How do all of these blessings point to Jesus/
- 5 – How would you say that God has blessed you?
- 6 – Read Num 20:2-12 7 Deut 35:51 and discuss why God ‘disqualified’ Moses from entering the Promised Land.
- 7 – Why was important that Moses not re-strike the rock?
- 8 – Against what particular sins does Paul warn the Corinthians?
- 9 – How did they commit these sins?

- 10 – Vs 6 & 11. Why did Paul mention Israel?
- 11 – Read 1 Cor 10:13.
- 12 – What does God promise in these verses?
- 13 – What does God not promise in these verses?
- 14 – What do you consider important evidence that you are a Christian.

