

DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

A Study of 1 Corinthians

4. Dealing with Temptation



Introduction

The Church in the time of Paul was probably no different to the church today! Just as the Christians in Corinth lived in a permissive society, so do we. The Apostle Paul uses the example of the Children of Israel in the wilderness, to teach the importance of overcoming the temptations they were facing. One of those temptations was idolatry. At times though, the believers faced difficult situations regarding the food that had been offered to idols, and so Paul gives principles to help them know what to do.

Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-33

1. Perils to be avoided 1 Corinthians 10:1-11

- ✘ What were the blessings the Children of Israel received in the wilderness? V1-4 What is the spiritual significance of these in the life of the believer? Discuss.
- ✘ Despite the blessings the Israelites had received, God was not pleased with them. What temptations did they fall into that Paul warns us about? V6-11
- ✘ What is the connection between eating, drinking and dancing, in verse 7, with idolatry? Compare with Exodus 32:4-6.
- ✘ The Apostle Paul quotes from Numbers 21:4-7. From these verses what do you think it means when Paul says in verse 9 in 1 Corinthians 10 that we should not test the Lord?
- ✘ The Lord's dealing with the Children of Israel was severe, but we are told that this was recorded as an example to us. What can we learn from these things?

2. Victory over temptation 1 Corinthians 7:10-14

- ✘ Why do you think Paul gives the warning in verse 12?
- ✘ What does it mean when it says, 'provide a way out'? Discuss.
- ✘ Sin stems from wrong thoughts and desires, and so this is an important area to learn victory. Share your own experience and what has helped you overcome temptation.

3. Not causing others to be tempted 1 Corinthians 8:7-13, 10:31-33

- ✘ How were the Corinthian Christians causing others to fall into sin? 1 Corinthians 8:7-9

- ✘ In what ways do you think we can cause others to sin? Discuss.
- ✘ What reasons are given to show that if we cause others to fall, it is sin on our part?
1 Corinthians 8:11-13
- ✘ What should motivate us in all we do as Christians? 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

Conclusion

We are living in a time of God's grace! So were the believers in Corinth! We have all experienced God's mercy and grace through the sacrifice of his own dear Son. However this does not mean we should take this lightly, rather it should spur us on to live holy lives. The Apostle Paul draws from the example of the Children of Israel in the wilderness, and although these events took place thousands of years ago, we are told that these were recorded so we could learn from them. Let's take these words seriously! The good news is that God will provide a way for us to 'stand up under' temptation through the power of his indwelling Spirit.