

1 Corinthians: The Body of Christ vs. A Body in Crisis
New Pilgrim Baptist Church Bible Study
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5/29/24

Unity Over Worship (1 Cor 8-11)

“Getting Worship Right Part 1: Learning from the Past” (1 Cor 10:1-14)

Contextualization

After Paul takes a moment to explore how he sacrifices for the salvation and blessing of others, he moves right back to his discussion of idolatry. Now, he appeals to the example of Israel to explain that idolatry ran amok among the people of God once. We need to do whatever possible not to let it happen again. Paul will explore this theme prior to more specifically addressing not only the issue of idolatry but also other aspects of worship and communion in the church.

- **Being saved is a journey and a destination (vv. 1-5)**

Paul uses Israel’s example, crossing into the promised land. The exodus is symbolic of salvation. It was God’s original way of describing God’s deliverance from enslavement as a precursor for what God would do for the whole world. Israel was baptized, ate spiritual food and drink, i.e. took communion, and met Christ as the rock who followed them. Yet, in all that they did, they were displeasing in the eyes of God. Paul wants certify that we as God’s people never forget that salvation is a process of maturation. We have to keep improving. We can never get lax. God destroyed most of them in the wilderness because they chose not to continue following God.

- **Israel is a cautionary tale for the church (vv. 6-11)**

Paul takes the history of Israel to explain how the church should not act. Israel is a type of the church. So, the church should learn from Israel’s example. The good things they did, we should repeat. The bad things they did, we should make sure we stay away from them. Paul warns against idolatry, fornication, tempting God, and complaining. Paul explains that the church of Corinth encountered the end of the old age and the beginning of a new age. Thus, they had the responsibility, as do we, to learn from the God’s faithfulness in the last age and walk in the new age.

- **Watch out for temptation and rely on God (vv. 12-14)**

Paul warns the church to be careful about how they anticipate standing in the world. Paul challenged the church of Corinth to no allow themselves to be caught off guard by various kinds of temptation. But when facing temptation, nothing the church ever faces can overcome us. God allows temptation and gives us the power to overcome. So, idolatry, though seemingly attractive cannot trap us if we rely on God’s power.