

## **A Dangerous Game of Follow the Leader**

### **Why is this important?**

#### ***The theological reason they give, 8:1***

There is only one God...

#### ***The underlying reason***

If they were to be accepted by their peers and climb the social and financial ladders at Corinth, they would need to attend such feasts.

***They were viewed and a religious and social meal.***

***Idol gods were thought to be present at the meal***

***But they were intensely social occasions for the participant.***

***Most of the Gentiles who had become believers in Corinth had likely attended such meals all their lives. It was the basic “restaurant” in antiquity and every kind of occasion was celebrated in this fashion.***

### **Why is this matter of eating at idol temples so important 8:1-11:1?**

***It is a matter of love for Christ and the weaker brother, 8.***

***It is a matter of servicing and pleasing Christ, not insisting on one's rights and freedoms, 9.***

***It is a theological matter of great concern, 10.***

### **Understanding 1 Cor 10**

#### ***Begins with the word “for”***

Closely ties this with what Paul just said, being “disqualified for the prize,” 9:27.

***The commonalities of the Gentiles in Corinth and Jews in the wilderness, “our forefathers,” 10:1-5***

The OT Covenant people

*Under the cloud (symbol of God's direction and provision) and passed through the sea (symbol of protection) was a type (10:11) of "baptism into Moses," 10:3, a symbol of belonging.*

*Eating the "spiritual food" and drinking the "spiritual drink" was a type of communion, 10:16, another symbol of belonging.*

### **The NT Covenant people**

*They too were baptized, cf. Eph 4:5.*

*They too shared in communion, 10:16ff.*

Just as with the OT peoples, these things did not guarantee the genuineness of their salvation, 10:5, 12.

### **The contrasts**

*In the Greek text, five all's, 10:1-4*

*The "most of them" from verse 5.*

*See also Matthew 7:13-14; 21-23.*

### **The commonalities of their idolatry and yours, 10:6-10**

The real danger is that you, like them, might be guilty of setting your heart on evil desires, 10:6

Four OT idolatrous incidents discussed, 10:7-10

*The incident of the Golden Calf, Exodus 32 (punishment 32:10)*

**They worshipped a god that gave them a sense of security, and it too involved their desires, 10:7**

*The incident of Numbers 25 (punishment 25:3)*

**The men of Israel indulged themselves with foreign women and ate their food.**

**Idolatrous worship satisfies some sense of desire**

*The incident of Numbers 21:4-8 (punishment 21:6)*

**The people complained about the food they were eating and wanted to eat the food they enjoyed in Egypt in the land of idolatry.**

*The incident of Numbers 11:1-9 (punishment 11:1)*

**The children of Israel complained about their hardships and wanted to go back to the idolatrous ways of Egypt.**

In each above case, the desire for food is identified with a behavior that takes the OT saints back towards idol worship.

*We want the satisfaction, the security, the pleasures and the comforts of the “good old days.”*

They needed to see that this stuff is for their benefit and admonition, 10:6; 10:11.

***The commonalities of God’s wrath on the OT peoples and the possibility of that on the people of Corinth, 10:12, 14, 22.***

In each case, God severely punished his people for their sins (see above parenthetical references).

The bold Corinthians may not fear the power of idols, but they should fear the wrath of God.<sup>1</sup>

*He will do the same for them if they do not break off their relationships with “non existent” idols!*

*You may not worship idols, but you do worship your desires!*

Flee idolatry, 10:14!

***The encouragement of the Scriptures, 10:13***

Would these choices be difficult? Absolutely! It would be a difficult trial for them to endure.

*To choose to not attend idol feasts would mean a loss of status, not to mention wealth*

But God would be faithful, He’d not allow them to be tempted beyond what they could bear, and he would see them through it.

## So what

***A mark of genuine Christianity is to love your brother and make sacrifices for him, 8.***

***A mark of genuine Christianity is to surrender your rights and your freedoms for the sake of the advance of the gospel, 9.***

***If you don’t make these marks more important than your desires, you will face the wrath of God, 10.***

<sup>1</sup> Garland, *1 Corinthians*, p. 447.