

Introduction

I am blessed to have been raised by a father who invested in me. He took me to the golf course and taught me to play. He played and practiced with me. He took me on helicopter rides out to the rigs. When I played professional golf, he invested in my professional career, and he went out to watch me on the PGA Tour whenever his schedule permitted. After I had retired from golf, he asked me to come manage his company, and he invested in me again, teaching me about drilling operations and well control. I learned a lot from my father.

One of the things that I learned from my father was hard work. He worked hard at everything that he did. He did not take things for granted; but practiced and worked hard. He worked hard at work, at gardening, at fishing, at everything he did. There was no quitting in him. My father had a slang saying, “Git er done.” Whenever something needed to be done, whether he liked it or not, he would get the job done. He worked hard and did whatever needed to be done. Many small business owners have that same mindset.

Another thing that I learned from him and that has greatly benefitted me in ministry was his teaching. He was a great teacher in the oil and gas industry. He had the ability to analyze difficult concepts, and break it down where the field personnel could understand and apply them. In my ministry, I try to take Biblical principles and make them easily understood. One of the things that my father did to help people understand what he was teaching was to use case histories of things that had happened in his career, or that he was very knowledgeable about. While some people thought that he told too many stories, most people greatly benefitted from the practical application and relevance of the case histories. My father included numerous little details when he told stories, helping people enter into the stories themselves. In my ministry, I have tried to use lots of personal examples, and for the same reasons, I want people to understand the application and relevance of the principles.

When the Scriptures refer to fathers, it does not just mean your immediate father; it includes your grandfathers, great grandfathers, and the fathers before them. I did not know my grandfathers very well. When I hear stories of the things that they knew and did, I wish that I could have learned from them. My grandfather on my mother’s side was a great farmer. He was an expert at grafting fruit trees. I would have loved to pick his brain and learn more about growing and raising fruit trees. He was also a worship leader at his church, and there are many other things that he excelled at that I would have loved to learn from him. My grandfather on my father’s side was a great carpenter, and I would have loved to learn some carpentry skills from him.

What does all this have to do with our passage this morning? Paul tells us that he does not want us to be unaware or ignorant of the things that our fathers did. He encourages us to learn from their examples. He wrote, “Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction...” We are blessed to have the Old Testament and all the examples of our spiritual forefathers. God wants us to learn from their examples, and in particular, the struggles that they had. God does not want us to repeat the same sins, but to learn from their mistakes. Third, Paul admonishes them to take heed that they do not fall and he gives some principles about dealing with temptations.

Learning from Past Examples

1. Don’t Be Unaware (1 Cor 10:1-5)
2. Learn from Their Examples (1 Cor 10:6-11)
3. Take Heed (1 Cor 10:12-13)

(1 Cor 10:1–13) “For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; {2} and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; {3} and all ate the same spiritual food; {4} and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. {5} Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. {6} Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. {7} Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, “THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY.” {8} Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. {9} Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. {10} Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. {11} Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. {12} Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. {13} No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”

1. **Don't Be Unaware** (1 Cor 10:1-5)

Paul told the Corinthians that he did not want them to be unaware. Paul uses a double negative, saying I do not want you to be “not-knowing.” The Greek word is *agnoeo* (Strong's G50), which has the negative prefix of a before *noieo*, which means to know, or understand. If we said that Paul wanted them to know the historical actions of the Jewish fathers, it could take a slightly different meaning that just not being unaware. If Paul were addressing a church in Judea, his audience would certainly be aware of the fathers that were under the cloud and passed through the sea. There were some Jewish believers in Corinth, but it was primarily Gentile believers, and they may not have been as aware of these accounts. So, Paul gives a brief overview of their favor with God, and then their struggles with sin.

(1 Cor 10:1–4) “For I do not want you to be **unaware**, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; {2} and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; {3} and all ate the same spiritual food; {4} and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.”

Paul said that their fathers were under the cloud and passed through the sea. The Jewish people were led out of Egypt and through the desert under a cloud. These were people that God supernaturally led around with His Shekinah glory. God was present with them and leading them. They were a blessed and favored people.

They also passed through the sea. God brought a wind and separated the waters so that they were able to cross the Red Sea, and then the Jordan on dry land. This was a supernatural and spectacular event. When they crossed the Red Sea, Pharaoh's army went after them, but God caused the waters to return to normal, and they all drowned. The exact spot of where they crossed is not known. The Red Sea has a maximum depth of 8,200 feet, and an average depth of 1,640 feet, so it is fairly deep. Passing through the parted sea was not just a leading of God, but a supernatural deliverance from Pharaoh and his army. The Jewish fathers were a special people that experienced God's leading and protection.

Paul said they were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. The word baptized means to be immersed. They did not go through a baptismal service in the name of Moses. They were immersed in the teaching and leadership that Moses gave them. They were immersed in the Law, which came through Moses.

Ralph Howe is one of my friends, and I knew him when he played professional golf. He now pastors a church in Central Florida. One year I heard him teach on the baptism of the cloud and sea at one of our Bible studies. He said it was a type or shadow of what was to happen in the New Testament. We are baptized in Spirit (cloud) and in water (sea). We are led by the Spirit, just as they were led by the cloud. There are great parallels and it could very well be a prophetic picture of what God would do for us in the New Testament.

Not only were the Jewish fathers led and protected by the cloud, they all ate spiritual food, and drank from a spiritual rock, the rock of Christ. God supernaturally fed two million Jews every day, and gave them water to drink from a rock. There has never been a people where God supernaturally provided like this for forty years. The Jewish fathers were a special and favored people.

Many people in the church are unaware of God's dealings with the Jewish people. They focus on the New Testament, and miss out on all the rich examples from the Old Testament. We need to encourage people to read and study the Old Testament. Pastors should not be afraid to teach from the Old Testament. We need the whole counsel of God. We will miss out on these examples if we are unaware of God's dealings with them.

In the natural, we need to learn from our fathers and forefathers. We need to learn from the positive things in their lives, and also the failures in their lives. The absence of fathers in our culture has become a big problem, and children are unaware of their fathers, and forefathers.

Unfortunately, even though the Jewish fathers were special, and had God's divine leading, protection, and provision, with most of them God was not well-pleased. They were laid low in the wilderness, and did not enter into the Promised Land. The Corinthian church was a gifted church. They had the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the leading of the Holy Spirit. They had God's protection and provision. The Corinthians needed to be aware of the fathers, and they needed to learn from their examples.

(1 Cor 10: 5) "Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness."

2. **Learn from Their Examples** (1 Cor 10:6-11)

Paul said that these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. The Greek word that is translated as examples is *tupos* (Strong's G5179), and it means a die (as struck), a stamp or scar, a statue or figure, or model, or pattern. It comes from the Greek word, *tuptos*, which means to strike. A die made an imprint, an exact representation of the die. In Acts 7:44, Moses was to build the tabernacle of testimony according to the pattern (*tupos*) that God had showed him. Again, Moses was to build an exact representation of what God showed him. Normally, examples are used in a positive way; we are to follow the examples of elders. Paul exhorted people to follow his example. Our lives are to be an exact representation of the lives of godly leaders.

(1 Cor 10:6) “Now these things happened as **examples** for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.”

(Acts 7:44) “Our fathers had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern (tupos) which he had seen.”

In the passage today, we are not being exhorted to be an exact representation of these past fathers. Quite the opposite, we are to see the mistakes that they made and not follow their example. In the Roman Empire, famous war generals were honored by making statues of them for people to see. They wanted the people to see these positive examples and emulate them. They also wanted people to see the lives of those that were not living honorably, and they put these lives on prominent public display, on crosses. The crucifixion of criminals was done publicly so people would see what happened to people that live lawless and evil lives. When Jesus was crucified, it was done publicly with two other men, both of whom were criminals. These were negative examples that they wanted people to learn from. Paul uses these fathers in the same way; these are negative examples that we should learn from. We should see what happens when we live our lives a certain way, and know that a similar fate awaits us if we do the things that they did. We are to learn from these “negative” examples. Paul gave five specific areas that the Corinthians needed to consider.

(Matt 27:38) “At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.”

a. Craving evil things

First, they were not to crave evil things as they had craved. We find the historical account in Numbers 11, where the people grumbled about the manna that they God had been supernaturally providing for them. They wanted the fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic that they had in Egypt. So, God brought forth a wind and blew in quail. The quail was two cubits deep. A cubit is eighteen inches, so two cubits is one yard. The quail was piled up three feet deep. The Israelites went and gathered up quail, and while it was still in their teeth, the anger of the Lord was kindled, and He struck them with a severe plague. Many people died because of their craving for evil things.

(1 Cor 10:6) “Now these things happened as **examples** for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.”

(Num 11:4–6) “The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, “Who will give us meat to eat? {5} We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, {6} but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna.”

(Num 11:31) “Now there went forth a wind from the LORD and it brought quail from the sea, and let them fall beside the camp, about a day’s journey on this side and a day’s journey on the other side, all around the camp and about two cubits deep on the surface of the ground.”

(Num 11:33–34) “While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very severe plague. {34} So the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had been greedy.”

There is nothing evil about eating quail. It was a clean food, and permissible to eat. It was a craving for evil things, because they were discontent with God’s provision for them. In Paul’s first letter to Timothy, he wrote, “If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.” Paul did not just teach this principle, he lived it. In Philippians 4:11, he said, “not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.” The Israelites, though favored and blessed by God, had not learned to be content with God’s provision, and they craved for other things, and many died because of the plague that He struck them with.

(Heb 13:5) “Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,”

(1 Tim 6:8) “If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.”

(Phil 4:11) “Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.”

Does that mean that if I have an old car, and I want a new car that I am grumbling against God’s provision? Should I be content with an old beater? Does that mean that I should not try and get the promotion, or another job that pays better? Where do dreams and aspirations fit in with being content with what I currently have? Those are great questions, and we need to address them in our lives. I had a large family, and we were living in a 1,450 square foot home. Karen and I were content, but definitely feeling a little cramped. I asked the Lord to provide a bigger home for us, and He supernaturally provided a much bigger house for us. We would have been content to stay there, and I do not believe our desire was evil. I believe that God was well pleased to give us a bigger house. I have asked God for cars, vans, houses, trees, and many other things. He tells us to pray for our daily bread, so we have asked Him for all of those things. But we were not asking out of discontentment, and were not grumbling or complaining. We were also not putting our focus on material things; we were seeking God first in our lives. Those things were just God’s provision for us, not idols in our lives. When we ask questions about our desires, we need to consider all of those factors.

b. Idolatry

The second area that Paul brought up is idolatry. He said, “Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play.’” Paul is quoting Exodus 32, which is where Moses had been up on the mountain fasting and receiving God’s commandments. The Lord told Moses to go down immediately for the people had corrupted themselves. They had brought their gold to Aaron, and he had made it into a molten calf, and they were worshipping it. God was angry with them, and wanted to destroy them. Moses pleaded with God to forgive them, and the Lord changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do. Three thousand people lost their lives that day because of their idolatry.

(1 Cor 10:7) “Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, ‘THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY.’”

(Ex 32:7–10) “Then the LORD spoke to Moses, “Go down at once, for your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. {8} They have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshiped it and have sacrificed to it and said, ‘This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!’ {9} The LORD said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and behold, they are an obstinate people. {10} Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation....{14} So the LORD changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people.”

That was not the only case of idolatry. In Acts 7, in Stephen’s message, he quotes from Amos, saying that they had worshiped Moloch and the star of the god Rompha. The nation of Israel had committed much idolatry.

(Acts 7:42–43) “But God turned away and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, ‘IT WAS NOT TO ME THAT YOU OFFERED VICTIMS AND SACRIFICES FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS, WAS IT, O HOUSE OF ISRAEL? {43} YOU ALSO TOOK ALONG THE TABERNACLE OF MOLOCH AND THE STAR OF THE GOD ROMPHA, THE IMAGES WHICH YOU MADE TO WORSHIP. I ALSO WILL REMOVE YOU BEYOND BABYLON.’”

In Colossians 3:5, God tells us to consider the members of our earthly bodies as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. When we place anything before God, it is an idol. When we have greedy desires for things, and put them before God, it amounts to idolatry. In our lives, we have to be careful not to place anything else before God. It may not be money, but it could include sports, hobbies, and other things that we place before God.

(Col 3:5) “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

c. Acting Immorally

The third area that Paul tells the Corinthians to learn from their fathers was not to act immorally. This refers to the account in Numbers 25, where Israel was at Shittim, and began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab. They not only worshiped the gods of the people, but they acted immorally. One of the sons of Israel brought a Midianite woman to his tent. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, and took a spear in his hand, and pierced both of them through. When he did that, the plague was checked, but twenty-four thousand had died. Paul wrote that twenty-three thousand fell in one day. There is not an error in Scripture, and scholars say that the plague probably brought a total of twenty-four thousand, but in one day, twenty-three thousand had died.

(1 Cor 10:8) “Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day.”

(Num 25:1–9) “While Israel remained at Shittim, the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab. {2} For they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. {3} So Israel joined themselves to Baal of Peor, and the LORD was angry against Israel. {4} The LORD said to Moses, “Take all the leaders

of the people and execute them in broad daylight before the LORD, so that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel.” {5} So Moses said to the judges of Israel, “Each of you slay his men who have joined themselves to Baal of Peor.” {6} Then behold, one of the sons of Israel came and brought to his relatives a Midianite woman, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the sons of Israel, while they were weeping at the doorway of the tent of meeting. {7} When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he arose from the midst of the congregation and took a spear in his hand, {8} and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and pierced both of them through, the man of Israel and the woman, through the body. So the plague on the sons of Israel was checked. {9} Those who died by the plague were 24,000.”

d. Trying the Lord

The fourth area that Paul wanted the Corinthians to be aware of is how the Jewish fathers had tried the Lord, and had been destroyed by the serpents. The account is given in Numbers 21. The people became impatient and spoke against God and Moses, saying, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food.” The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people and many people died. They came to Moses and confessed their sin and asked him to intercede with the Lord, which Moses did. He made a fiery serpent and put it on a standard, and when any of them were bitten, they looked at it, and lived.

(1 Cor 10:9) “Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents.”

(Num 21:4–9) “Then they set out from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the people became impatient because of the journey. {5} The people spoke against God and Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food.” {6} The LORD sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. {7} So the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and you; intercede with the LORD, that He may remove the serpents from us.” And Moses interceded for the people. {8} Then the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live.” {9} And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived.”

e. Grumbling

The fifth example that Paul mentioned was how the Jews had grumbled and were destroyed by the destroyer. This account is found in Numbers 16. Korah and two hundred and fifty leaders assembled against Moses and Aaron. God opened up the earth and it swallowed up all the men that belonged to Korah, and their possessions. On the next day, the congregation grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and said that they had caused the death of the Lord’s people. It was not Moses that had caused Korah and the other leaders to rebel. Many times, we blame others for our sins and failures, rather than owning up to our own poor decisions and sinful actions. God did not take kindly to their grumbling against Moses, the leader that He had appointed. He defended His leaders when Korah spoke against them, and He defended His leaders when the congregation grumbled against them. He told Moses to “Get away from among the congregation,

that I may consume them instantly.” Moses and Aaron fell on their faces. Then, Moses told Aaron to take his censer and put it in fire from the altar and lay incense on it, and make atonement for the congregation, for the plague had begun. Incense represents prayers, so Moses and Aaron were praying and interceding on behalf of the people that had just spoken against them. Leaders can’t be offended, even when spoken against; they need to intercede on behalf of those that come against them. Their prayers checked the plague, but not before 14,700 people had died, not including the ones who died on account of Korah. God does not like grumbling and we need to learn the lessons from God’s dealings with the Jewish fathers.

(1 Cor 10:10) “Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.”

(Num 16:41–49) “But on the next day all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, “You are the ones who have caused the death of the LORD’S people.” {42} It came about, however, when the congregation had assembled against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tent of meeting, and behold, the cloud covered it and the glory of the LORD appeared. {43} Then Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting, {44} and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, {45} “Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them instantly.” Then they fell on their faces. {46} Moses said to Aaron, “Take your censer and put in it fire from the altar, and lay incense on it; then bring it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone forth from the LORD, the plague has begun!” {47} Then Aaron took it as Moses had spoken, and ran into the midst of the assembly, for behold, the plague had begun among the people. So he put on the incense and made atonement for the people. {48} He took his stand between the dead and the living, so that the plague was checked. {49} But those who died by the plague were 14,700, besides those who died on account of Korah.”

In verse eleven, Paul said that these things happened to them as an example, and were written for our instruction. In verse six he said that these things happened as examples, and then after giving the five examples, he tells them again that these things happened as an example. God wants us to be aware of, and to learn from the past mistakes of our spiritual fathers. Though these things happened thousands of years ago, they apply to all of us in the ends of the ages.

(1 Cor 10:11) “Now these things happened to them as an **example**, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”

3. **Take Heed** (1 Cor 10:12-13)

Paul concludes by telling the Corinthians to take heed so that they do not fall. If the forefathers, who were supernaturally led, protected, and fed by God, could fall, they should not be arrogant, and think that they cannot fall. Paul said, “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.”

(1 Cor 10:12) “**Therefore** let him who thinks he stands **take heed** that he does not fall.”

Paul is going to give some wonderful truths about overcoming temptations, but unless you have a sober estimation of your ability to fall, they won’t mean much. We must have a sober estimation of ourselves, that we can also fall, and we need to take heed. When Jesus was about to be arrested and crucified, He was in the garden of Gethsemane praying. He took Peter, James, and John with Him to pray. He asked them to keep watch with Him, meaning to pray with Him. When He checked on them the first time, He found them sleeping, and He said to them, “So, you

men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” After going away a second time and returning, He found them sleeping. He left them and went to pray again. When He came back a third time, they were still sleeping. The disciples did not take heed about falling. This account comes right after all of them had said that they would never deny Jesus. The Lord told Peter that this very night, before a rooster crows, he would deny Him three times. Peter was going to face a temptation to deny Jesus. We know that Peter did deny Jesus that night, just as Jesus had prophesied to him. If Peter and the disciples had taken heed, that they could fall, they would have taken Jesus’ invitation to pray about temptations more seriously.

(Matt 26:33–46) “But Peter said to Him, “Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away.” {34} Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you that this very night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” {35} Peter said to Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You.” All the disciples said the same thing too. {36} Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” {37} And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. {38} Then He said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.” {39} And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.” {40} And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? {41} Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” {42} He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, “My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done.” {43} Again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. {44} And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. {45} Then He came to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. {46} Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!”

God tells all of us to pray that we will not be led into temptation. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, He taught them the Lord’s Prayer. This is an outline for prayer, with different areas that we are to spend time praying. We begin with hallowing or praising God. We are to pray for His kingdom to come, and His will to be done in our lives. We are to pray for God’s provision in our lives. We are to pray for forgiveness of our sins, and we are to forgive those who have sinned against us. Then, Jesus said that we need to pray that we are not led into temptation, and to be delivered from evil. Unless we take heed, that we could also fall, we will not pray and deal with the temptations like we should.

(Luke 11:2–4) “And He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. {3} ‘Give us each day our daily bread. {4} ‘And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.’”

Paul gives three great truths about temptations. The first thing that he said is that all of the temptations that we face are common to man. There is nothing that we are facing that has not been faced by others. Other people have faced the same temptation and have overcome it. We can also overcome it.

(1 Cor 10:13) “No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”

The second thing Paul said is that God is faithful, and He will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability. God has made a promise to you and I that He won't let us be tempted beyond our ability to stand against it. God is watching over us and He is not going to let us down. He will be faithful to help us and come to our aid. I am encouraged and strengthened to know that God is constantly watching over my life, and will not allow me to be tempted beyond what I am able to handle.

The third truth is that God will provide a way of escape so that we can endure the temptation. When we face temptations in our lives, we need to look for God's plan of escape for us. When we see how God wants us to handle and escape from the temptation, we need to follow His leading.

(1 Cor 10:13) “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”

God has already told us many things about temptations. In Proverbs 5:8, He tells us not to go near the door of the house of an adulteress. In 1 Corinthians 6:18, God tells us to flee immorality. If we do get in a situation where we are tempted to commit sexual immorality, we need to flee immediately. That is what Joseph did when Potiphar's wife approached him. He did not wait around. He did not try to talk her out of it. He fled! That was the way of escape that God gave Joseph.

(Pro 5:8) “Keep your way far from her And do not go near the door of her house,”

(1 Cor 6:18) “Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

(Gen 39:12) “She caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me!” And he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside.”

He will give us a way of escape, and many times the Holy Spirit will give us a Scripture. It is important for us to hide Scripture in our hearts. In Psalm 119:9-11, God tells us how a young man (or woman) can keep his way pure. It is by keeping it according to God's word. He must hide God's word in his heart so that he does not sin against God. God uses His word to warn us, and to give us ways of escape.

(Ps 119:9–11) “How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word.... {11} Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.”

When we look to God for the way of escape, we are drawing near to God to get His grace and help in our time of need. In Hebrews 2:18, God tells us that Jesus will come to our aid when we are tempted. The aid He gives may be a verse, a word of knowledge or wisdom, a plan of action, or something else. In Hebrews 4:15-16 we read that our High Priest, Jesus, sympathizes with our weaknesses. He was tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. We are encouraged to draw

near to Him in our time of need because He will give grace and mercy in our time of need. Don't just look for the way of escape. Look for His grace and mercy and help in our time of need.

(Heb 2:18) "For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted."

(Heb 4:15-16) "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin. {16} Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Conclusion and Applications

God wants us to be aware of our spiritual forefathers. We need to learn from them, both positive things, and also from their failures. Paul gave five examples of the failures and the consequences from those sins. The Israelites craved evil things, and many died because of it. They were idolaters and put other things before God, and many died because of that. The Jews acted immorally, and twenty-three thousand died. The fathers tried the Lord, and were destroyed by serpents. The Jews grumbled and many were destroyed. There were consequences for their sins.

Even though they were a chosen and favored people, God was not well-pleased. Even though He supernaturally led and protected them with a cloud, they still fell. Even though He fed them and gave them water to drink from the rock, they still fell. The Corinthians were a gifted church. God had called and chosen them. He had poured out His Spirit on them, and they were being led by the Spirit. Yet, they were involved in greed, which amounts to idolatry. They were taking one another to court, and trying to materially take advantage of one another. There was immorality in the church. There were divisions and strife over the leaders that God had placed over them. The Corinthians were facing many of the same struggles that the Jewish forefathers had faced. Paul wanted them to be aware of them, learn from them, and take heed, lest they also fall and face the same consequences in their lives.

We live in a time where greed is rampant. We live in a day where sexual immorality is prevalent everywhere. It is not just in the world, but in the church. We live in a day where we have put many things before God; we have many idols. God is speaking to the church today about these same issues. "Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction (in 2022), upon whom the ends of the ages have come." We need to take heed, lest we also fall.

Prayer

Father God, thank You for the letter to the Corinthians. Thank You for the examples that we have by our spiritual forefathers. Help us read and study the Scriptures so that we have a keen awareness of these examples. Help us not to just be aware, but to learn from them, and apply the lessons in our lives. Father God, we want to take heed of these things. We want to successfully endure the temptations that You allow us to go through. Thank you for Your promises that You will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to withstand. Thank You for being faithful and for coming to our rescue in our time of need. Thank You for promising to give us a way of escape when we are tempted. Help us to live lives that are well-pleasing in Your sight. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Introduction (1 Cor 10:1–13)

1. **Don't Be Unaware** (1 Cor 10:1-5)

2. **Learn from Their Examples** (1 Cor 10:6-11, Acts 7:44, Matt 27:38, Num 11:4–6, 11:31, 11:33-34, Heb 13:5, 1 Tim 6:8, Phil 4:11, Ex 32:7–10, Acts 7:42-43, Col 3:5, Num 25:1–9, Num 21:4–9, Num 16:41–49)

3. **Take Heed** (1 Cor 10:12-13, Matt 26:33–46, Luke 11:2–4, Pro 5:8, 1 Cor 6:18, Gen 39:12, Ps 119:9-11, Heb 2:18, 4:15-16)

Conclusion and Applications