

Week 17 LEADER Discussion Questions

LEADERS—PICK WHAT'S HELPFUL FROM THE QUESTIONS BELOW AND FEEL FREE TO MODIFY WHAT'S HERE TO BEST SUIT YOUR GROUP'S DISCUSSION.

Text: 1 Cor 10:1-22

Icebreaker: Can you think of a time when you learned from seeing someone else's mistake? What did you learn from that experience?

1. Read this week's passage. What stands out to you from the text or from the sermon you heard Sunday?

2. Israel's example is meant as a warning to the Corinthians (v. 6). What are the major failures of Israel that Paul calls out in verses 6-10?

Paul mentions desiring evil, idolatry, sexual immorality, putting Christ to the test, and grumbling. Each of these can be thought of as a breakdown of their faith in God. It might be helpful in your preparation to go back to passages like Exodus 32, Numbers 25, 21, and 14 to refresh your memory of these specific failures of Israel.

Application: What lessons can we learn from their failures?

There are a lot of ways this might be answered but here are two things to consider. First, note that verses 12-13 are Paul's conclusion ("Therefore..."). What role did spiritual carelessness or pride play in their sin? Second, you might observe how witnessing God's supernatural acts is apparently not enough to sustain faith. We might think, "If only God would perform a miracle, then others would believe!" Israel was delivered through many miracles, yet they still failed to trust God. Faith is more than being impressed with or dazzled by God.

3. Verse 13 offers hope in temptation. Paul includes the hope of finding a way out—of escape—but also of enduring. What role do both escape and endurance play in resisting temptation?

As a comparison to the ESV, the NIV puts the last part of v. 13 like this: "But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." Temptation is something we often endure over time. There are moments of temptation, but they have a way of repeating. We look for a way to escape in the moment—at times avoiding a tempting situation altogether or entering into one with great care (e.g., with prayer, bringing a trusted friend along, etc.). At other times, it might be best to literally flee—to leave the room, end the conversation, or run for daylight! The hope of this verse is that we all face temptation and that "God is faithful." One of the lies we can fall into is the belief that we are alone—no one has ever faced what we're facing! We can find hope when we believe that what we're experiencing has been faced and endured before.

Application: What's one insight you've either heard or learned personally about resisting temptation that you could share with the group?

4. In verses 14-22, what is the danger of idolatry for someone who claims to follow Jesus?

Idolatry is incompatible with following Christ. It might be helpful to try to define what idol is. One definition offered by Tim Keller is that: "An idol is something that we look to for things that only God can give" (*Counterfeit Gods*, 131). An idol is a substitute for God or a rival with God in our hearts. Some might believe that we can maintain our idols and still love Jesus too but Paul's argument in these verses is that this is impossible.

Application: Idolatry was a major problem for Israel. It was a major problem for the Corinthians. Is it a problem for us today? Explain what you think.

5. *Application:* We talk often about the importance of being "in community" at Calvary. Israel, though, was also "in community," yet as was one that failed to please God!

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What's different about a community that pleases God over one that falls into sin together? Think in terms of their different commitments, practices, and attitudes.

Consider, for example, the commitments to know and follow God's Word, to prayer, and to sacrificially serving others.

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