

The Example of Those Who Fell in the Wilderness

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: 1 Corinthians 10:1-12

Paul began this section by reminding the brethren of parallels between them and the Israelites (v. 1-4). Yet “with most of them God was not well-pleased,” and they died in the wilderness (v. 5). “Now these things happened as examples for us...” (v. 6). Let us consider what their example teaches us.

Do Not Crave Evil Things (v. 6)

- This was the fundamental problem that led to the others
- We will never overcome sin if we desire it (James 1:14-15)
- How to overcome this – we must crave/desire what is good (Colossians 3:1-2)

Do Not Be Idolaters (v. 7)

- Example of the golden calf (Exodus 32:1-6)
- An idol is anything that replaces God as an object of our devotion/allegiance
- How to overcome this – recognize that God is the only being worthy of worship (Exodus 20:3-5, 11)

Do Not Act Immorally (v. 8)

- Example of the sin of Peor (Numbers 25:1-9)
- Sexual immorality includes anything contrary to God’s plan for marriage (Hebrews 13:4) – fornication, adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, pornography
- How to overcome this – self-control (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5); not tolerating it in the church (1 Corinthians 5:1-2, 6)

Do Not Try the Lord (v. 9)

- Example of the fiery serpents (Numbers 21:4-9) – they complained; ignored what God provided
- We try the Lord when we desire something more/different than what He provides
- How to overcome this – show gratitude (Philippians 4:6); learn contentment (Philippians 4:11)

Do Not Grumble (v. 10)

- Example of those who grumbled over the fate of Korah and his followers (Numbers 16:41) – they rebelled against Moses (Numbers 16:1-3); God made a clear distinction between who was right and wrong (Numbers 16:31-33)

- We can be guilty of the same when we are upset about sin/error being condemned/exposed
- How to overcome this – recognize that sin has no place among God’s people (Ephesians 5:3-11)

Do Not Think That You Cannot Fall (v. 11)

- Though the Israelites lived under a different law, we share some similarities (v. 1-4)
- But the lesson for us is that even a faithful Christian can fall away – by craving evil things, turning to idols, acting immorally, tempting God, or grumbling
- The wise man warned that pride goes before destruction (Proverbs 16:18)

Conclusion

- These examples show us that God expects His people to live in a way that is pleasing to Him
- If we are faithfully serving the Lord, let’s continue to do so while also guarding against what can cause us to fall