

An artistic painting of a church with a bell tower, set against a background of vibrant, abstract colors. The scene is framed by thick, dripping paint in shades of orange, red, blue, and dark brown, creating a 'messy' or 'raw' aesthetic. The church itself is rendered in a more traditional, somewhat weathered style, with a cross on its roof.

1 Corinthians

MESSY CHURCH
MIGHTY CHRIST

1 Corinthians 10:12

So, whoever thinks he stands must be careful not to fall.

1 Corinthians 8:4

About eating food sacrificed to idols, then, we know that “an idol is nothing in the world,” and that “there is no God but one.”

1 Corinthians 8:8

Food will not bring us close to God. We are not worse off if we don't eat, and we are not better if we do eat.

Exodus 20:3-6

Do not have other gods besides me. ⁴ Do not make an idol for yourself, whether in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. ⁵ Do not bow in worship to them, and do not serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, bringing the consequences of the fathers' iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me...

⁶ but showing faithful love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commands.

...whatever your heart clings to and relies upon, that is your God; trust and faith of the heart alone make both God and idol.

Martin Luther

Since God has prescribed to us how He would be worshipped by us, whenever we turn away in the very smallest degree from this rule, we make to ourselves other gods, and degrade Him from His right place.

John Calvin

1 Corinthians 10:1-5

Now I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. ³ They all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless God was not pleased with most of them, since they were struck down in the wilderness.

Psalm 78:35

They remembered that God was their rock, the Most High God, their Redeemer.

All of the Israelites had experienced something analogous to Christian “baptism” and “Lord’s supper,” yet the vast majority of them also experienced God’s judgment and failed of the prize. Therefore, take heed.

Gordon Fee

1 Corinthians 6:6-12

Now these things took place as examples for us, so that we will not desire evil things as they did.⁷ Don't become idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and got up to party."⁸ Let us not commit sexual immorality as some of them did, and in a single day twenty-three thousand people died.⁹ Let us not test Christ as some of them did and were destroyed by snakes...

¹⁰ And don't grumble as some of them did, and were killed by the destroyer. ¹¹ These things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our instruction, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² So, whoever thinks he stands must be careful not to fall.

Four Words Marking a Path to Idolatry:

Desire

Doubt

Detest

Deceive

Exodus 32:1

When the people saw that Moses delayed in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said to him, “Come, make gods for us who will go before us because this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt—we don’t know what has happened to him!”

1 Corinthians 10:9-10

Let us not test Christ as some of them did and were destroyed by snakes. ¹⁰ And don't grumble as some of them did, and were killed by the destroyer.

Numbers 21:5-6

The people spoke against God and Moses: “Why have you led us up from Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread or water, and we detest this wretched food!” ⁶ Then the LORD sent poisonous snakes among the people, and they bit them so that many Israelites died.

1 Corinthians 10:12

So, whoever thinks he stands must be careful not to fall.

1 Corinthians 10:14-22

So then, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. ¹⁵ I am speaking as to sensible people. Judge for yourselves what I am saying. ¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, since all of us share the one bread...

¹⁸ Consider the people of Israel. Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar? ¹⁹ What am I saying then? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? ²⁰ No, but I do say that what they sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons! ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot share in the Lord's table and the table of demons. ²² Or are we provoking the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has come upon you except what is common to humanity. But God is faithful; he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to bear it.

**A two-pronged message of hope:
God's faithfulness and our empowered capacity to
flee.**