

1 CORINTHIANS 10

If you insist on using your rights, you may cause a weaker believer to stumble; *and you may also bring trouble on yourself*. When you face difficult decisions, take these elements into consideration.

God's blessing (1–5). The parallel to God's people today is obvious. We have been redeemed from the world, identified with Jesus Christ, and nourished by spiritual food and drink. But these blessings are no guarantee that we will be successful.

God's judgment (6–12). When Israel sinned, God disciplined them; and He will do the same to His people today. Do you practice and tolerate in your life any of the sins named here? God gives His children freedom, but the freedom to sin is not included.

God's promise (13–22). God knows how much we can take and always provides the way of escape. Sometimes the smartest thing to do is to flee (v. 14; 6:18). Always look for the open door and the blessing on the other side.

God's glory (23–33). Two extremes must be avoided: practicing license in the name of Christian freedom, and being so fussy that we cannot live in a real world and make rational decisions. When you seek to edify others and glorify the Lord, you will know what to do.

1 CORINTHIANS 11

Some matters discussed in this chapter may have only local significance, but the spiritual principles apply to us today. When it comes to sharing in public worship, we must ask ourselves serious questions.

Do I dishonor authority (1–16)? We must be careful not to dishonor the Lord, no matter what the cultural standards may be. God has established headship in creation and in the church, and we must respect it.

Do I despise the church (17–22)? We are one in Christ and in love must honor one another. By the way they ate their love feast, the rich embarrassed the poor and brought shame to the church.

Do I discern the body (23–34)? When we meet to celebrate the Communion service, we must examine ourselves and not one another; and we must be honest with the Lord as we confess our sins. We discern His body in the bread, but we also discern it in the members of the church who eat with us. The Lord's Supper is a family feast. While it must be personal, it must not become so individual that it becomes selfish. It should be a means of promoting the unity of the church.

1 CORINTHIANS 12

The Corinthian believers were especially gifted by God (1:4–7), but some of them were creating problems by using their spiritual gifts in unspiritual ways. Paul reminded those people of three basic truths.

There is one Lord (1–11). The Spirit glorifies Christ (John 16:14), not Himself. The Spirit gives us gifts so that we can serve Christ and His church “for the profit of all” (v. 7) and not for our own selfish enjoyment. Have you discovered what the Spirit has given you? Have you thanked God for it, and are you using your gift(s) under Christ’s lordship?

There is one body (12–31). As members of the same body, we belong to one another, and we need one another. The believers you think you can do without may be the ones you need the most! We must minister to one another and care for one another as one body.

There is one danger (25). When a part of your physical body declares independence from the other parts, it starts to die and you have to visit the doctor. Division in the local church brings weakness and pain (1:10–17) because no Christian can go it alone and be successful. Do you thank God for fellow Christians and seek to care for them?

1 CORINTHIANS 13

This so-called hymn to love was Paul’s prescription for solving the sickness in the church body in Corinth. The believers had spiritual gifts, but they lacked spiritual graces and needed to be reminded why love is so important in the Christian life.

Love puts *quality into service* (vv. 1–3). When you have love, your words and actions amount to something and help other people.

Love also puts *maturity into character* (vv. 4–7). The Corinthians were impatient with each other, suing each other, tolerating sin in the church, and creating problems because they did not have love. Whatever qualities you may have, they are nothing without love.

Love puts *eternity into life* (vv. 8–13). Love lasts, and what love does will last. Love is the greatest and does the greatest because “God is love” (1 John 4:8).

1 CORINTHIANS 14

Why go to church? God’s people assemble for one purpose: to worship God. They worship Him by their praying and singing (v. 15), teaching and preaching (v. 3). Worship should result in glory to God, blessing for God’s people (v. 3), and fear and conviction for sinners (vv. 23–25).

But for these things to happen, Jesus Christ must be Lord of our lives, and we must yield to the Holy Spirit. If we come to church to display our spirituality, we will not only miss the blessing ourselves but also cause others to miss the blessing. We come to honor Him.

A key word in this chapter is *edification* (vv. 3–5, 12, 17, 26), which means “building up.” A worship service should lift up the Lord and build up the saints, not puff up the participants.