

NO LIMITS! – 1 Corinthians 10:1-11

Is God ever limited? The answer to that question is “no and yes!” God is *unlimited*, unmatched in His sovereign power, authority, and love. ***(Ephesians 3:20) “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.”*** Herein lies the issue; *although God is unlimited we often limit His power working in us through unbelief.*

In our text Paul exhorts the church *in Corinth* to not limit God. He does so *despite* the social challenges facing them. The city of Corinth was much like our society today. ***Historians tell us the city of Corinth was a melting pot (as is America) for approximately 500,000 people who lived there at the time of Paul's arrival. Merchants and sailors, anxious to work the docks, migrated to Corinth. Professional gamblers and athletes, betting on the regional games, took up residence. Slaves, sometimes freed but with no place to go, roamed the streets day and night. And prostitutes (both male and female) were abundant.***

People from Rome, the rest of Greece, Egypt, Asia Minor-indeed, all of the Mediterranean world-relished the lack of standards and freedom of thought that prevailed in the city. These were the people who eventually made up the Corinthian church. They had to learn to live together in harmony, although their national, social, economic, and religious backgrounds were very different. (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

These differences, *worldly influences*, threaten to limit the faith of many of the believers *in Paul's day* and even today. Thus, Paul warns them against placing limitations on God by reminding them of Israel's rebellion in the wilderness. (v.1-6).

Scripture declares: (Psalm 78:41) **Yes, again and again they tempted God, And limited the Holy One of Israel.** The believers in Corinth were in *danger* of doing the same. (2 Corinthians 6:12) **You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections.** Have we placed restrictions upon the power of God in our lives? What would our lives look like if we didn't limit God?

Notice: It is possible to experience the miracles of God, eat from His table, drink from the Rock, who is Christ; and still limit God through our unbelief! Not **only** *were bodies scattered in the wilderness but hopes and dreams*! The hope of reaching the land of promise and dreams of a better future than the one they experienced in Egypt. **But because they limited God the wilderness won!**

Hopes and dreams scattered because the desire for evil things had taken the place of **eternal things**. In the following verses, (v.7-11) Paul exhorts the saints in Corinth to *avoid* **four pitfalls** which will limit the work (power) of God in their lives! The **First pitfall** is - idolatry. **Lust – meaning: one who longs for, a craver, lover, one eager for.** Everyone is tempted from time to time, but when we find ourselves longing for or craving the things which are offensive to God we are

now lusting *after* another lover! Paul warned in the *last days* men would be (2 Timothy 3:4b-5) “...lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” It is *possible* to have a *form of godliness* and not love God!

As believers we should enjoy life, the *fruits* of our labor. But we are never to come under the power of the things we enjoy! (*Broncos/couldn't worship*). (1 Corinthians 6:12) All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Idolatry brings us under the power of another other than Christ! Thus, limiting the work, the power of God in our lives!

The Second *pitfall* to avoid is – Sexual Immorality. (v.8) The prophet Amos reveals as Israel journeyed through the wilderness those forty years they continued to worship pagan gods! (Amos 5:25-27) "Did you offer Me sacrifices and offerings In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? You also carried Sikkuth your king And Chiun, your idols, The star of your gods, Which you made for yourselves. Therefore I will send you into captivity beyond Damascus," Says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.

Sikkuth – in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the O.T.) and the Vulgate (Latin) reads; “*tabernacle of Molech.*” Molech/Moloch – means: king or lord. Chiun – were images the people made for themselves in homage, worship of Molech. Biblical Historians note: *In*

addition to sexual rituals, Moloch worship included child sacrifice, or “passing children through the fire.” The image of Moloch was a human figure with a bull's head and outstretched arms, ready to receive the children destined for sacrifice. The image of metal was heated red hot by a fire kindled within, and the children laid on its arms rolled off into the fiery pit below. In order to drown the cries of the victims, flutes were played, and drums were beaten; and mothers stood by without tears or sobs, to give the impression of the voluntary character of the offering. They believed that Moloch would ensure financial prosperity for the family and future children. (gotquestions.org/ Rawlinson's Phoenicia, 113 f, for fuller details).

To say the least, God was not well pleased with them! Today we live in a culture driven by the worship of Molech. Sexual immorality along with the *abortion* of babies, *passing them through the fire*, a fire fueled by a “woman’s right to choose!” All under the guise of “planned parenthood” and the lie of prosperity!

But the silent screams society refuses to hear are piercing the ears of Almighty God! They will never be drowned out by the drum beat of *political* correctness! The good news is God is a merciful God! **(Isaiah 1:18a) “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow!”**

What is God’s perspective on sexual immorality? (ttt) I Corinthians 6:13-20 - Glorify God in your body and spirit. It’s not “either or” but both. **Sexual immorality is a lie; it does not produce the satisfaction, peace, and life it promises. Billionaire Jeffery Epstein owned a so-called “sex island” but his life ended in shame and destruction. For**

those caught up in sexual immorality there is good news! **God will never give up on you!** No matter how far we have fallen! **(Micah 7:8) Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; When I fall, I will arise; When I sit in darkness, The Lord will be a light to me.** Repentance, however, is the only remedy. **(Proverbs 28:13) He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.**

King David, who had his own *issues* with sexual immorality, prayed in Psalms 32, ***“For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to you...”*** For what cause? Because our God is a merciful and forgiving God! Sexual immorality limits true pleasure, which can only be found in God. **(Psalm 16:11) You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.**

The third *pitfall* - do not Tempt Christ. (v.9) To question the *purpose* and *plan* of God! **Literally means - exhibition of distrust.** To know God's clear instruction in His word and yet disobey it is to tempt Christ! Jeremiah 42; Should we go to Egypt? ***“Whether pleasing or displeasing we will obey the Lord!”*** The Lord said, ***“Do not go to Egypt!” “If you go the sword you fear shall overtake you there.”*** The People replied, ***“You speak falsely!”*** ***We are all exhibitionists of faith or distrust!***

The last *pitfall* is – Complaining – (v.10) Complaining is another *manifestation* of unbelief. **(Psalm 19:14) Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.** Complaining is not only external but

internal; God sees both! *“Don't complain and talk about all your problems--80 percent of people don't care; the other 20 percent will think you deserve them.” Mark Twain.*

The antidote to complaining is thanksgiving. **(1 Thessalonians 5:18)**
“...in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” Show me an ungrateful believer and I'll show you a believer without faith! ***And without faith no one can please God!*** Poem –
“FORGIVE ME WHEN I WHINE”

CONCLUSION: We can live *by faith, without limits*, because of God's limitless love! *(Ephesians 3:19) “...to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”* Fear, the temptation to not trust God fully, limits; but perfect love cast out fear! **(1 Corinthians 2:9) "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."**