

Hebrews 10:26-27 (NKJV)

²⁶ For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,
²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

INTRODUCTION

In this week's lesson Paul details some of the willful sins committed by the Israelites during their wandering in the desert. Most of Paul's "listening" audience did not have a Jewish background so they had no idea what God was like then, or what the Israelites were like during that time. The Israelites exercised a disciplined life on occasion, but drifted from that discipline when they lost faith and or hope in God's plan (*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Rom. 3:23*). God wants the readers of His word to know that His ways never change. When His chosen people decided they were going to do things their way, they had to pay pre-determined consequences. God also wants all to know that what He determines as sin is sin no matter who commits it, when it is committed, or for what reason or reasons it's committed. The government, the culture, the locally accepted customs and behaviors will not dictate what the morals for God's people will be. Only the Holy One of heaven can make those determinations. Just as God has determined what sin is, He has also equipped us all to avoid it.

1 Corinthians 10:7-13 (NKJV)

⁷ And do not become idolaters as *were* some of them. As it is written, "*The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*" (Exodus 32:4-6)

⁸ Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; (Num. 25:1-9)

⁹ *nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted,* and were destroyed by serpents; (Num. 21:4-6)

¹⁰ nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. (i.e. Num.14 & 16)

¹¹ Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

¹² Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; *but God is faithful,* who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*

Vs. 7 It is alright to eat and drink, but the problem was a portion of the food and drink was offered to the golden calf that "jumped out of the fire" (Ex. 32:24). When the Bible speaks of His people "rose up to play" does not mean they started a couple of track and field teams or began to play with a dreidel. The children of Israel demonstrated pagan sexual exploits between "consenting adults"; some of which they probably learned in Egypt. What are our idols today?

Vs. 8 Despite the social norms of today, men and women should not have sex before marriage. Sex was reserved by God for a one man and one woman in holy matrimony.

Vs. 9 I can remember my Mother saying to me "Don't try me boy!". I knew what she meant and "tried" her anyway. As a result, I met the board of correction.

The Israelites had a tendency to try God through the men of God (Moses and Aaron) by questioning God's authority through them. Unfortunately for them, they created a situation for strong correction.

Vs. 10 The Israelites often took God's blessings for granted by not following His direction due to doubt, disbelief, or dissatisfaction with the process (Ex. 16:3, Num. 11:4-9).

What may be reasons why we would take God's blessings for granted?

Vs. 11 The scriptures before warns us that God still takes sin seriously and we should take sin seriously as well.

Vs. 12 We have to make sure we don't get over-confident in our battle against temptation. We can't fight temptation on our own. Whatever victory we had in the past concerning this area, we have to remember Who it is that preserves us and it's not us! In other words, we better check ourselves before we wreck ourselves.

Vs. 13 No devil, nor man nor woman can entice us with a temptation that isn't readily recognizable. God will not allow it. In our lives we realize that recognizing the problem is half the battle. In fact, if we don't admit we have a problem, there is no way we can begin to correct it. The second part of this verse tells us something that we should be fully aware, "***but God is faithful!***" As one theologian stated, God is faithful even when we are unfaithful, unloving, unforgiving and ungrateful. He'll not allow us to suffer above what we are able to bear and the same time, give us an escape route away from the source of temptation so that we don't commit sin.

What motivates you to follow God's ways more, God's love or God's judgement? Why?