

**Message #36****I Corinthians 10:14-22**

According to the Bible, there are some things that will harm the believer and there are some things the believer should flee:

- 1) The believer should flee fornication. I Cor. 6:18
- 2) The believer should flee youthful lusts. II Tim. 2:22
- 3) The believer should flee idolatry. **I Cor. 10:14**

One of the most abominable sins, in the estimation of God, is the sin of idolatry. In the famous Ten Commandments, the first two of those ten have to do with the sin of idolatry (Ex. 20:1-4; Deut. 5:7-8).

Idolatry was a sin that was to be punished by death (Deut. 17:2-7). It is a serious, dangerous sin and God commands His people to stay far away from it.

**WISE BELIEVERS WILL CONTINUALLY RUN AWAY FROM ANYTHING IDOLATROUS .**

According to the N.T., covetousness—a longing after something that someone else has—is classified by God as idolatry (Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5). Paul himself at one time struggled with covetousness (Rom. 7:7).

According to the N.T., a total devotion to money is classified by God as idolatry (Matt. 6:21-24). In fact, Paul warned the man of God to flee from the love of money (I Tim. 6:10-11), which is idolatry.

**REASON #1 – Because it is a command of God. **10:14****

The “therefore” which begins **verse 14** makes it clear that contextually the point is it is possible for a believer to lose all rewards if he or she does not flee from idolatry.

The word “beloved” indicates that this command is addressed to believers who CAN lose rewards but CANNOT lose salvation.

The verb “flee” is an imperative, meaning it is a command of God.

**REASON #2 – Because it is the mark of wisdom. **10:15****

The word used for “wise” in this verse speaks of a mind that thinks and understands in accordance with God’s Word.

This is a very practical wisdom.

**REASON #3** – Because of a union with Jesus Christ. **10:16-17**

Paul uses the illustration of a communion service to demonstrate that one who is a believer is one who has fellowship and communion with Jesus Christ.

A person unites himself with whatever he participates in.

If you have Jesus Christ in your life, it is expected that you will be loyal to Him and abide by His governing rules. If you do, Christ will fellowship with you, use you, defend you and make you a powerful person.

**REASON #4** – Because of partaking with something sacred. **10:18**

The second illustration Paul uses to demonstrate how detestable it is to be involved in idolatry is O.T. Israel. After the sacrifice some of the meat would be eaten by the one who brought it (Lev. 7:15; 8:31; Deut. 12:18).

When the people would eat the meat, they were actually partaking and sharing in a worship service that linked them with the Holy God.

**REASON #5** – Because of fellowship with demons. **10:20-21**

When one participates in idolatry of any form, one is participating in something demonic. Dr. John MacArthur said that “Demons are the spiritual force behind all idolatry.”

Satan has his own theology (I Tim. 4:1). Satan has his own clergy (II Cor. 11:13-15).

When a believer participates or attends a false religious service, he is actually participating in something demonic. **Verse 21** is clear to point out that it is impossible to have fellowship with God and with demons at the same time.

What this means is that no matter what a person appears to be, if he is involved in something idolatrous, he does not have true fellowship with God; he has fellowship with demons.

You cannot have communion with God and with demons. You cannot have it both ways. If a person won't give up his idol, he will give up his intimate relationship with God.

**REASON #6** – Because of the jealousy of God. **10:22**

God is a very jealous God against any form of idolatry (Deut. 32:15-18).

God WILL NOT share His glory with anything (Is. 42:8; 48:11; Ps. 96:1-13).

God can be provoked by His children and He can and will pour out His chastisement.

Which way are you moving in your life, toward God and away from idols or away from God toward idols?