

Five Pitfalls to Avoid Regarding Temptation
1 Cor 10:1-11:1

I. Introduction

A. Harvest Beef Stew

1. Ingredients
2. Parallel: The final product is the sum of all the components.

B. Paul's Response to the Question Regarding Eating Food Offered to Idols

1. 10:14 "Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry."
2. Akin to 1 Thessalonians 5:22 (KJV) ²² *Abstain from all appearance of evil.*
3. **Stay as far away from anything that looks like idolatry, both for your own sakes and for the sake of others.**

C. Paul provides five pitfalls to avoid.

II. Five Pitfalls to Avoid

A. Avoid practical unbelief

1. **1 Corinthians 10:5 (ESV) *Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.***
2. Paul points to the experience of ancient Israel in the wilderness as a warning that we not follow in practice as they did.
 - a. **Hebrews 3:7-19 (19) ¹⁹ *So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.***
 - b. Even though they experienced the presence of God and the operation of His power and promise through Christ, they fell in the wilderness, not because of their external experiences but because of their internal unbelief.
 - (1) They were practical atheists.
 - (2) They ate the manna but they did not receive God by faith.
 - (3) They drank the water from the Rock but they did not trust the Rock for their salvation.
 - (4) They loved the goods but not the Giver.
3. **1 Corinthians 10:6 (ESV) *Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did.***
 - a. They desired their own schedule, their own agenda, their own history.
 - b. They wanted to live without God's daily involvement
 - c. They wanted to cry out to God when they wanted, under their terms, on their conditions
 - d. They wanted to be the customers in the cosmic restaurant and God the waiter standing by to meet their every whim.
4. **Hebrews 3:12-13 (ESV) ¹² *Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. ¹³ But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.***

B. Avoid spiritual arrogance

1. **1 Corinthians 10:12 (ESV) *Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.***
2. Two kinds of people who might fall into spiritual arrogance

- a. Those who think they have arrived
- b. Those who think they have no need to go any further.
- 3. Any of us is vulnerable to spiritual sabotage and we need to actively (and aggressively) counter arrogance with humility and love
 - a. Those who think they have arrived:
 - (1) Serve
 - (2) **John 13:15 (ESV)** ¹⁵ *For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.*
 - (3) Find out how much more God has for you as you crucify your flesh and serve others around you relying on His grace and Spirit-given ability
 - b. Those who think they have no need to go further:
 - (1) Study
 - (2) **2 Timothy 2:15 (ESV)** ¹⁵ *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.*
 - (3) Get in a Bible study and make a habit of exploring for yourself Who God has revealed Himself to be in Christ and how God is at work to mold your life into the very likeness of Jesus Himself

C. **Avoid participatory idolatry**

- 1. **1 Corinthians 10:16 (ESV)** *The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?*
 - a. Just as by faith our participation in communion is a spiritual participation in the body and blood of Jesus, so our involvements in the world can carry an active participation in the things worshiped by the world.
 - b. Easiest illustration:
 - (1) love of sports (as personal recreation) vs love of worship (as personal devotion)
 - (2) not that sometimes we find ourselves in situations where we must choose one over the other, but
 - (a) when we prefer to choose recreation over worship
 - (b) when we feel no loss choosing recreation over worship
 - (c) when we feel more loss off recreation than we do loss of worship
- 2. Anytime we willingly, selfishly sacrifice the things of God for our own pleasure or convenience or advantage, we are in danger of participatory idolatry.
- 3. Warnings:
 - a. **1 Corinthians 10:21 (ESV)** *You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.*
 - b. **Matthew 6:24 (ESV)** ²⁴ *“No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.*
 - c. Christian, you must decide who you are going to serve:

- (1) God or self
- (2) Christ or the world
- (3) Holiness or sinfulness

D. Avoid relational indifference

1. **1 Corinthians 10:24 (ESV)** *Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.*
2. Is there anything here that is not clear? Any words that you can't understand?
 - a. Be selfless, not selfish.
 - b. Love one another.

E. Avoid theological insensitivity

1. **1 Corinthians 10:31 (ESV)** *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*
2. "Do all to the glory of God"
 - a. More than adding to the sense of God's glory among those who are watching
 - b. Means also doing what we do with the quality of God's glory
 - c. Means doing what we do, living as we live, aligned with God's glory as a means of honoring His glory
 - d. Means asking, in all life situations, does my heart, in this moment, radiate the glory of God and my love for His glory so that others may see His glory and be drawn to acknowledge His glory themselves.
 - e. Means asking, in my thinking at this moment, in my acting at this moment, in my feeling at this moment, in my whatever at this moment, am I proving that God is truly glorious and worthy of worship in all that He is?

III. The End

A. The End

1. In the end, eating food offered to idols is really a question about loving God in all His glory and letting my every action testify to His worthiness to loved, adore, glorified, and obeyed in everything.
2. **We have made Christian faith and discipleship too much about us and not enough about God in all His glory.**

B. Avoiding these pitfalls accomplishes two very important spiritual goals

1. Avoiding these pitfalls honors who God is and the work He is doing in our lives
2. Avoiding these pitfalls keeps the heart clear of guilt and nurtures a deeper love for Christ.