

Small Group Discussion

Saints of God Covered in Mud - April 24, 2022

1 Corinthians 10:1-22 - "Idolatry Hurts"

1. Paul gives a little Old Testament bible study for the early church, verses 1-11 – why not read that together with the following question in mind: What can we learn about interpreting the Old Testament as Christians based on what Paul is teaching them? Are there general principles he is following or encouraging that help us?

Learning to interpret scripture tip: The New Testament is full of moments like this where the Old Testament passages and ideas are being referred to or quoted. When you start to watch and learn from them, it becomes very helpful in understanding the main concepts of the Old Testament as a whole. Also, how they relate to us now that we have (by faith) been adopted into God's redemptive plan through Christ. In this way, we allow 'scripture to interpret scripture'. This is one of the first things Jesus did after the resurrection, was to have an OT bible study with a couple of disciples to help them have a fuller understanding (Luke 24:27).

2. Idolatry for the Corinthians was so normal in the culture that it was not hard to fall back into 'blending' their faith in Jesus (taking communion) and participating in local feasts honouring other gods through a kind of partying and sexual immorality. Can that happen to us – perhaps not with pagan feasts but with other things? How can we tell when we are honouring, loving, or desiring something that is now replacing the space in our hearts and lives meant for God? What are the signs?

3. In the message, Pastor Mike mentioned two kinds of idolatry that have been impacting the modern church in Canada: One of them was a need for 'kings' (leading to a worship of success). Discuss this 'kings' idea – here's a brief description: We want kings - a cultural vision of leadership that invaded us long ago and we never sufficiently faced over a century and is killing us in days of challenge and hardship. Sure, Jesus is great, but we really would like successful looking and sounding people "at the top".

Also, these people should be successful in gathering large crowds, entertaining. They should operate the church like a successful business that we like so much. It feels so much like success - 'for Jesus' it makes us feel secure in our culture. We have our own kings. Pastor Mike shared that God was showing him how he didn't realize the personal impact of this.

Is this an idol you see in the culture? Have you ever felt this temptation at some point in your Christian life? What are the signs a 'good thing' might be becoming 'an ultimate' thing grabbing our hearts away from Christ?

4. Throughout history, revival or renewal in churches frequently included a season of humility and repentance in response to the Holy Spirit touching individual hearts and revealing where compromise or idolatry had crept into believers' lives. While sad, it's also a very wonderful thing that causes people to break free in repentance and faith. Also causing a joyful confidence in God's presence and power to fill their hearts.

Without judging others – why not take time to ask the Holy Spirit to do this in our time?