

Hunger For Truth

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Greetings

Hello and welcome to another issue of Hunger For Truth. I want to start by saying “**HAPPY NEW YEAR**” to each and every reader!

The new year with HFT is going to start with a very powerful article! The other columns in this newsletter will be shortened for “The 21st Century Wilderness” by Brother Andrew Lacroix. This was based on a message preached at Heritage Baptist Church late last year. I hope it will be a blessing.

Please note that in the last issue, I included an outline on NT Baptism. I neglected to mention an important link relating to it. The link is:

http://www.bbc-cromwell.org/Seminary_Articles/Ye-are-Body-of-Christ.pdf

Please note that back issues of Hunger For Truth are viewable and printable at www.studytoanswer.net.

It is my desire that Hunger For Truth edifies, blesses and encourages you in your walk with the Lord.

Thank you all for taking the time to read this and for your prayers for me. I greatly appreciate your comments and I praise God for each and every one of you.

Proverbs 7:2

Matt. 5:6

John 8:32

II Timothy 3:16-17

Heb. 4:2

“Let us Hunger For Truth”



The 21st Century

Wilderness ~ By Andrew

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The 21st Century Wilderness: Part 1

Text: I Corinthians 10:1-5

Note: Various other texts are in Exodus unless noted.

Paul here is going to give a history lesson to the church of Corinth as the chapter begins. The lesson is supposed to be pretty simple: learn from the past so you don't fail in the present and in the future. His lesson takes us back to the early days following the Israelites' release from Pharaoh's bondage (Exodus 12:30-31). God, having already demonstrated what He can do upon Pharaoh, continues to establish a proven track record; He wants the Israelites' to trust and depend solely upon Him. Paul has spent much of his first letter to Corinth taking them to task on their various sins and transgressions. It seemed as if they were spurning the One who saved them from their sins. Paul reminds them of what “their fathers” (referring to the Israelites) saw on the road to the Promised Land as he shows them **five ways of God's faithfulness** in that time.

First, God showed them His **protection** by a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire (v.1). They didn't have GPS or navigation systems back then, and I'm pretty confident that they didn't have maps either. Someone needed to show over six hundred thousand people where to go and where not to go. There was a shorter route available, but God in His Sovereignty opted not to take them by way of the Philistines “peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt” (Ex. 13:17). He led them through the wilderness by a pillar of cloud in the day, and in the pitch dark He led them by a pillar of fire (13:21-22)...

...Second, God showed them His **path** through the Red Sea (v.1). The Israelites camped next to the sea, where God allows Pharaoh and his cronies to catch up to them. Upon seeing “The Egyptians are coming! The Egyptians are coming!” Israel cries out, and Moses responds with the ever comforting phrase, “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord...” (14:13) God opened a wide path through the Red Sea, which is not exactly a small body of water, but yet God leads His dear children along. After they safely crossed, the pursuing Egyptians were left in the path in the Red Sea...until God restored the Sea to its normal depth, thereby drowning the Egyptians and proving Himself to His people. As a due result, the Israelites “feared the Lord” (14:31).

Third, I'd like to show you God's **privileged servant**, Moses (v.2). Note Paul's usage of the Greek word *baptizo*. Baptize in the Bible means “to immerse”, and the Israelites were immersed under the authority of His servant, Moses. It is just like after an individual comes to Christ, then they are scripturally immersed (not sprinkled) in water; to not only identify with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; but to be subjected under the authority of the local church (cf. Acts 2:41-47). Moses was called “His Servant” at least twice in the OT: Exodus 14:31 “His servant Moses”, and Joshua 1:2 “Moses my servant”. Being a servant is a privilege, not a right. Remember, we are owed nothing, because without Him, all we are is nothing! (cf. John 15:5)

Fourth, we see God's **provisions** of manna from Heaven (v.3). This is the spiritual meat of the Israelites, and we find its origin in Exodus 16. Here God's people are in the wilderness of Sin and they murmur against God's servant Moses (16:3). God responds to their cry with the raining of bread. It was then later called manna, which tasted “like wafers made with honey” (16:31).

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Prayer Requests

- Salvation of Tom, Nick, Susan and Gary
- Salvation of my sister Wendy, nephew Jacob and Aunt's Sybil and Bernice
- Unspoken requests for HFT editor and several others.

Praises

- I praise God for safety and security!
- I praise God that I am now on the third year of publishing Hunger For Truth!

The 21st Century Wilderness ~ continued

Fifth, we'll look at God's **power** in making water come from the rock (v.4). In chapter 17, once again God's children are thirsty, so naturally they complain. They were provided these regular nourishments in Egypt, and here it seemed like (to them) nothing got done without a little whining. God has Moses strike the rock, that it would bring forth drinking water. Even though Moses struck the rock with his rod, it was God's power that enabled a rock to burst forth with drinking water. I know if I tried to hit a rock with a walking stick, my hand will sting (as a due result of the action-reaction law of motion), but with God all things are possible.

Paul concludes the first part of his history lesson in verse five. He concludes that, "with many of them God was not well pleased..." and therefore many never made it to the Promised Land.

I know our text does not speak of this, but I'd like to show you two more ways of God's faithfulness to the Israelites. Sixth, we see God's **preserving** of the Israelites from defeat and chaos in their first battle after the rock (17:8-16; chapter 18). They had no experience in battle, yet the Lord undertook for them. Lastly, we see God's **patience**. This might just be the best way God has shown His faithfulness not only to the Israelites, but to the Corinthians, and to us as well. Despite all their murmuring, their sins, and their lack of faith (and ours too), God has been and will continue to be patient with us. Remember the Psalmist's praise in 103:8: "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."

The 21st Century Wilderness: Part 2

Text: I Corinthians 10:5-11

In the first part of this devotional, we saw **five ways of God's faithfulness** to the Israelites, retold to a struggling Corinthian church by the zealous apostle Paul. Yet, despite first-hand eye witnessing God's protection, path, privileged servant, provisions, and power; leading to their preservation, and His patience with them; they rebelled, showed no faith, and further tempted the Lord their God.

Paul continues this history lesson to a body of believers that were much like the Israelites of long ago. God had demonstrated who exactly He was and what exactly He would do for them to simply put their trust in Him. A few exemplified simple, child-like faith, and benefited. God was not pleased with the remainder, and we'll see that those who lacked this simple trust never made it to their destination. Paul wanted to make something really clear to Corinth: continuation down the same path will yield the same results. Over verses six to ten, Paul gives **five examples of forsaking the One who spared them**.

Verse six underlines a **mesmerizing of evil things**. In each of the five transgressions of the Israelites, Paul points out a specific passage of Scripture to back up His argument. Here he is referring to Numbers 11. The whole chapter outlines all the details, but we'll share just a few. Many of the irritated Israelites were, once again, complaining. Here they were unsatisfied with what God provided, and they went lusting for the "Egypt Smorgasbord": fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic (11:5). That was compared to the "wonderful" manna, given from Heaven. God hears and grants them their request... at a price. Instead of physical leanness, He gave them spiritual leanness. The Psalmist said, "And He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul." (Ps. 106:15) Contentment amongst Christians ought to be higher, noting what Paul later said to his faithful friend Timothy, "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (I Tim. 6:8). So instead of manna, quail was given, and while it was given, God sent a plague. We are not told how many were smote and killed as a result of their cravings, but where they were buried is Kibbroth-Hattavah, Hebrew for "Graves of Craving". Be careful what you ask for.

Next, I'd like to show you Israel's **misguided worship** (v.7). Paul makes an argument for true worship of the God of the Bible over the pagan idols of the day. He even quotes OT Scripture; the passage is found as part of the travesty trail in Exodus 32:1-8. Moses was on Mount Sinai for a long time; in fact, it was forty days and forty nights (Ex. 24:18). Not knowing where he went, Israel decides they want a leader they can trust will stay with them and do what they want. They ask Aaron to make gods for them. Aaron sins by making a golden calf out of broken earrings. Furthermore they make the calf the one that brought them out of Egypt, and not Moses, and on top of it, Aaron proclaims a "feast to the Lord". He gave all the children of Israel offerings to this molten, golden calf, and then they committed gross, vile sins with Aaron's created being. God immediately sends Moses back to the people, and He desires to destroy them. Moses pleads with God to spare them, destroys the calf, and turns to Aaron for an explanation. Aaron confesses and the result is the slaying of three thousand men (v. 27-28). Israel's offerings should have been to the Lord, for He gets all the glory, not some golden idol.

Third, we find the **mortal immorality** of the Israelites (v.8). These grievous wrongdoings are found in Numbers chapter 25, and focus on verses one through nine. Once again Israel falls into idolatry and begins to commit whoredom. They ate of the sacrifices of Baalpeor and other Moab gods, which broke the dietary laws God established in Leviticus 11, amongst other transgressions. Moses told the judges of Israel to "slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor" (25:5). This idolatry act cost twenty-four thousand their lives. Paul, speaking to Corinth, the carnal church (more on this later), speaks of the death toll as twenty-three thousand in one day. The other thousand may have died the next day or shortly thereafter, but it is as a result of this heinous act of immorality. Pureness is required amongst God's children.

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Fourth, we find the **mistake of tempting the Lord** (v.9). It is easy to see what Paul is talking about here: this is the well known brass serpent on a pole passage, found in Numbers 21:4-9. Well before this passage were the Israelites tempting the Lord, but here the temptation went too far. Not only do they want food and water, but they also loathe the manna God gives them. This time God sends fiery serpents amongst His children, and many were bitten and died as a result. Here Israel does a first: recognizes where and how they sinned. God then commands Moses to build a brass serpent and place it upon a pole; whoever was left that was bitten would have to look upon the serpent on the pole and they would live; failure to do just that resulted in death. Today this passage is often taught as a salvation message; the brass serpent represents Christ on the cross (pole), and to receive Him, we have to “look and live”. Here Paul’s challenge is simple: never tempt the Lord your God.

Finally, in verse ten, I see the **murmuring of all murmurings**. This was the most severe of all the punishments Israel got for their various transgressions. This passage is also familiar to us: Numbers 14:27-37. Turn back to Exodus 16:2 first though. Some of Israel’s first murmurings were for food. In Numbers 13, the latest grumbings were of the ten spies who viewed the Promised Land from a far. They saw a land flowing with milk and honey, but infiltrated with many whom they feared they could not beat. Caleb and Joshua viewed the same land from a far: a land flowing with milk and honey, and a few people. Then Caleb said, “Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it” (13:30). The Israelites believed the majority over the mighty. In every other transgression we have seen only a few or the very minority affected. Not this time. All over twenty who failed to believe Caleb and Joshua would die without entering the Promised Land (14:29-32). Those who did believe or were under twenty lost forty years because of the...



...unbelief of generations past (33-34). The ten spies were smote immediately (36-37). Furthermore, those who were to die in the wilderness were left no inheritance. (26:63-65)

In five different ways the Israelites forsook the One who spared them. Four of them resulted in a small loss of life. The fifth was the most grievous. How long will it take for us to make mistake after mistake before our Christian life “wanders in the wilderness”? These examples, Paul argues, were written “for our admonition”, so we can learn and then not repeat the mistakes “our fathers” made.

The 21st Century Wilderness: Part 3

Text: I Corinthians 10:11-13

Note: All texts, unless marked, are in I Corinthians

In parts one and two of this devotional, we covered five ways of God’s faithfulness to the Israelites and five ways Israel forsook the One who spare them.

Paul’s history lesson concluded, but ours does not. In the entire letter of I Corinthians, Paul has addressed a vast number of issues within the Corinthian church. It seemed as if they too saw ways of God’s faithfulness, and yet also forsook the One who spared them. I’d like to call this section **five ways of failure the Corinthians exhibited**. Now, every church has their problems; remember no church is perfect. Corinth, though, had major issues that Paul had to deal with.

Conclusion on Page 4

Song of the Month

MY LORD KNOWS THE WAY THRU THE WILDERNESS

This old chorus is often sung in churches today. I am thankful He does know the way thru the wilderness of life and it’s trials (Psalm 136:16).

My Lord knows the way thru the wilderness. All I have to do is follow. My Lord knows the way thru the wilderness. All I have to do is follow.

Strength for today is mine all the way, and all I need for tomorrow. My Lord knows the way thru the wilderness. All I have to do is follow.

Quotes

“The person of intellect is lost unless they unite with energy of character.”

*Lewis Cass, 1782 – 1866
American Diplomat*

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God in all that you do.” *-Anonymous*

☺ **Children for Christ** ☺

Memory Verse: *John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”*

Take a sheet of paper and write down your salvation testimony and put Bible verses to show a Bible reason to show you are saved. When done, share this testimony with others.

Stop and Think

“Is the object of your faith you, your faith, another person, a religion, or is it Jesus Christ and His word?” *-Anonymous*

Hunger For Truth is a bi-monthly e-newsletter publication edited by Craig Glickman who is a member of Heritage Baptist Church of Norwood, MA where the Pastor is Steve Hathaway.

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Thank you for reading this. I praise God for all my dear brothers and sisters in Christ and I greatly appreciate your prayers. May each and every one of you be richly blessed as we serve our precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

*His Servant,
Craig Glickman
Prov. 3:5-6*

The first problem was a **breakup amongst brethren** (1:10-11). Churches are to be a safe haven where people of like precious faith and practice can gather and honor the Lord by worshipping Him. Evidently, those at Corinth developed a wall between those who were baptized by Paul, and those under Apollos. This issue was so adamant among them that a family had to write Paul concerning this. The prophet Amos remarked, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (3:3) The lack of a uniform testimony amongst God’s people not only divides the church, it shows hypocrisy to the children of the church, and is most certainly a detriment when attempting to reach the lost with the saving Gospel. It doesn’t matter who in the church brought you to salvation, because Christ is the One who saves you! Fighting is of the world, is a tool of Satan, and it only leads to quarrels and disaster.

Second, there was **carnality amongst Christians** (3:1-4). Newborn babies cannot handle steak. They can only handle milk. Yet why are “adults” here still only on a milk diet? Many of these Christians were personally taught by the apostle Paul, yet grew no further in their walk with the Lord. The inability to grow spiritually, compounded further by fleshly desires, results in carnal Christians. These were some that were not willing to grow, nor keep friendships. This type of discord and behavior amongst God’s children will easily destroy a church unless it is dealt with immediately. Paul then tells Corinth that each leader co-labors with God, in an effort to end the strife between the believers.

Thirdly, Corinth **failed to deal with fornication** (chapter 5). Paul here gives a stern warning of their attitude towards the heinous act of fornication. It didn’t seem like they favored it, but by failing to properly discipline the one in the act, they were favoring this particular action. If they were properly showing love, Paul argues that they would have kicked the fornicator out until he got right (which did happen and he did get right in 2 Corinthians). Paul utilizes the phrase “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (v.6) to exemplify that this one sin infiltrates the whole church, thus rendering it unclean. One sin in a camp cost 36 men their lives at Ai (Joshua 7). One sin in a church can either destroy it or cause it to have its candlestick removed (Ephesus leaving their first love in Revelation 2).

Fourth, I’d like us to view the **suing of the saved** (6:1-8). These carnal Christians were going before the lost leaders of the day to settle their claims! Paul is outraged at this, and says “I speak to your shame” (v.5). Those who ought to know better called upon those who definitely didn’t know better! This is like one speck of dirt making fun of another speck of dirt for being dirt! Not only was this a shame upon those at Corinth, it was a poor testimony to those who were without, and most of all, it showcased their pride. Proud people don’t like admitting they’re wrong, and in so doing, they’ll go before people who are different in beliefs and not saved to prove they are right. Humility and accepting the blame ought always to be at the forefront of our lives, and issues, if they can’t be settled between the two parties, ought to then go before one or two others, and then in front of the church if necessary. Christians should NEVER be on “The People’s Court”.

Finally, there was the **lack of looking inward at the Lord’s Table** (11:20-32). Corinth regularly gathered to commemorate the Lord’s Supper, and this was usually a feast (Baptists are known for spreads that feed half their town, so I’m sure this one was big). However, the Lord’s Supper is to be preceded with a sober evaluation of every aspect of our walk with the Lord (v.28-29). We are not only to confess sin, but allow the Lord to show us if we were at fault with anyone, whether at church or elsewhere. If we were and we resolve before God to make it right, then we can “eat of that bread and drink of that cup”. Those who eat and drink unworthily are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and were subject to sharp chastening, and even death. Paul said “If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged” (v.30). Corinth failed to realize the true meaning of the Lord’s Supper, and this was just yet another one of their struggles.

So now, we have looked at five ways of faithfulness, five ways of forsaking the One who spared us, and five ways of failure that Corinth exhibited. All of these are written for our admonition. The Israelites though they could do this journey by themselves or with false idols. Corinth failed to recognize who their Head was. Verse twelve comes as a stern warning for us: “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”. Does anyone think they can live a successful, close Christian walk without the Lord or being part of an assembly of believers? Then you’re next. Check your pride at the door. We need the divine guidance of the graceful God we have in each and every aspect of our lives and our ministries. If we think we can stand we most certainly will fall.

However, there is one thing we can fall back on: God will not tempt us above what we are able to handle. Job is a wonderful example. This man feared God and eschewed evil, and underwent one of the greatest trials known to man, and through the Lord he got through it. Any temptation in our lives can be overcome with a humble, submissive spirit and giving the trial over to God. This is admitting we can’t stand unless our feet are upon the Rock.

In the final part of this devotional, I’ll share how this series was titled and I’ll wrap up the study of 1 Corinthians 10:1-13.

The 21st Century Wilderness: Part 4 Text: I Corinthians 10:1-13

There is no doubt we are in the last days, and perilous times are most certainly upon us (cf. 2 Tim. 3:1). Some firm believers have gone like Demas, having loved this present world, and many more have been given over to itching ears and believing lies (cf. 2 Tim. 4:3-10) over Truth in Scripture. We make the same mistakes as the Israelites and as the Corinthians did. Are we too in a wilderness, stuck in the same spiritual condition for forty years? Is this the 21st century wilderness?

Now is not the time to crumble, now is not the time to collapse, and now is not the time for catastrophe. Every day thousands perish, and they will spend eternity somewhere. We shouldn’t be walking in circles because we are unwilling to grow; we should be hitting the streets, giving the Gospel out, and showing those closest to us what true religion is (cf. James 1:27). It is not what the Israelites did; nor is it what Corinth did for a long time; nor how any of the churches of Revelation became. There is still work for us to do; there is still time for spiritual growth to happen amongst God’s people. Are we going to be better than those at Corinth and the Israelites or will we stumble, falter, and fail like our fathers? Will we be “overthrown in the wilderness”? I pray not. God help us all to strive to live for Him like never before, recognize His headship as the authority of our local churches, and though Him we can avoid the spiritual door-slamming that can become a 21st century wilderness.

God has shown us His faithfulness, but Israel forsook the One who spared them. Corinth failed to learn from the fathers’ mistakes. Are we going to repeat history or are we learning from the past and not repeating it? Stand strong in this time, be humble, and avoid the 21st century wilderness.

By: Andrew Lacroix