

Dear Brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, our Savior:

Don't Live Your Faith in Ignorance!

- I. Remember the example of our spiritual forefathers
- II. Don't overlook Paul's warning for believers

INTRODUCTION

I think I can safely say that we're enjoying the taste of spring we've had the last few days, but maybe it happened to you this morning as you went out to get the paper or maybe it happened in the parking lot as you went to work last week or as you were going into a store. You were walking along and all of the sudden you slipped and perhaps fell on a little patch of ice. You know what happens next – you quickly get up, dust off yourself and your pride and quick look around to make sure no one saw you. We don't like people to see us in moments of weakness or stumbling. Did you ever think about how far we go to make sure we portray a good, clean image?

But do we take the same care to make sure we don't stumble and fall in our faith? That is the subject the apostle Paul addresses in our text for today. We hear Paul remind us **Don't Live Your Faith in Ignorance!** Paul encourages us to first of all remember the example of our spiritual forefathers, but then also we can't overlook Paul's warning for all believers. I invite you to hear the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:1-13.

I. Remember the example of our spiritual forefathers

Perhaps you have heard how federal agents of our country are taught how to spot counterfeit bills. They are not first shown the counterfeit bills, instead they are shown the real thing and are taught to notice all the fibers of the paper and the special little features of the bills which counterfeiters often overlook. It is then and only then after they know the real thing that they are shown the counterfeits and are taught to distinguish the difference.

In a spiritual sense, Paul does the same thing in our text for today. He tells us that *“our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.”* We have the real thing spiritually in Christ our Savior.

Have you ever thought when you are going through a difficult time or fighting a temptation “No one else understands what I'm dealing with or how I'm feeling”? Paul then goes on to show us through the example of those who have gone before us spiritually how the devil loves to throw counterfeits in the way to challenge and tempt our faith. He first goes back to the children of Israel and recounts how they were tempted by idolatry, sexual immorality, testing God and even groaning and complaining against God. Paul lists those things for the Corinthians because they were the very same temptations which the Christians at Corinth were succumbing to.

If you fast forward to March of 2007, you see that things have not changed at all. The very same temptations which faced our spiritual forefathers are the very same ones which still today the devil tries to pass off as counterfeits disguised as good. That is why Paul reminds us *“For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers...”*

But Paul does not just want us to remember the example of what happened to our forefathers. How easy it is to think that this can happen to someone else, but I am spiritually immune of above such a thing!

II. Don't overlook Paul's warning for believers

On the basis of that, Paul gives a warning for all believers of all times *“These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!”* Do we ever hear or read of all the terrible things going on in our world and we might even think to ourselves *“How could someone be so foolish or dumb to do that?”*? It is for exactly such a situation that Paul's warning comes into play.

Thankfully Paul doesn't just give us the example of our spiritual forefathers and the warning for believers of all times. If all we heard was those, it might cause us to despair. Paul goes on to tell us how we can avoid the spiritual pitfalls of those who have gone before us. *“God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”* Paul reminds us to rely on God's faithfulness and he couples that promise of God's faithfulness with a passage that probably just about each one of us have repeated or said to ourselves. We know that the Bible tells us that God is not going to give us any more than we can handle. Paul states that here as a reminder of God's faithfulness and an assurance that God is true to his Word.

CONCLUSION

The devil will continue to try to tempt us to fall until the end of time. May God help us to keep in mind the example of our spiritual forefathers while remember Paul's warning for believers until we see him face to face in heaven. Amen.