

1 Corinthians 10:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written,
The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

Analysis

Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play—Paul cites Exodus 32:6, the golden calf incident, Israel's paradigmatic idolatry. The quotation emphasizes the festive, celebratory nature of their sin: **sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play**. The verb *paizein* (παίζειν, "to play") implies revelry, sexual immorality, and religious dancing before the calf.

This directly addresses Corinthian participation in idol-temple banquets (8:10). They argued such meals were mere social occasions with no spiritual significance. Paul counters: Israel also treated worship as a social event, combining religious ritual with eating, drinking, and entertainment. God called it idolatry and killed 3,000 people (Exodus 32:28). Eating at an idol's table, even if you "don't believe" in the idol, participates in demonic worship (v. 20-21).

The warning **neither be ye idolaters** uses present imperative—stop being/don't become idolaters. Some Corinthians were already crossing this line. Paul's urgency shows that intellectual sophistication ("we know an idol is nothing," 8:4) doesn't protect against spiritual compromise when actions contradict profession.

Historical Context

The golden calf episode occurred while Moses received the Law on Sinai. Aaron fashioned the calf, and the people declared, "These are your gods, O Israel, who

brought you up out of Egypt" (Exodus 32:4). The combination of false worship and immoral revelry brought severe judgment. Paul draws the parallel to Corinthian temple meals where religious, social, and immoral elements mingled. Greco-Roman banquets often included sexual promiscuity.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What modern "temple meals" might you justify as harmless social participation while actually compromising spiritual integrity?
2. How can you discern when cultural engagement crosses the line into spiritual unfaithfulness?
3. In what ways do entertainment and pleasure-seeking compete with wholehearted worship in your life?

Interlinear Text

μηδὲ	εἰδωλολάτραι	γίνεσθε	καθώς	τινες	αὐτῶν	ὥς	
Neither	idolaters	be ye	as	were some	of them	as	
G3366	G1496	G1096	G2531	G5100	G846	G5613	
γέγραπται	Ἐκάθισεν	ὁ	λαὸς	φαγεῖν	καὶ	πιεῖν	καὶ
it is written	sat down	G3588	The people	to eat	and	drink	and
G1125	G2523		G2992	G5315	G2532	G4095	G2532
ἀνέστησαν	παίζειν						
rose up	to play						
G450	G3815						

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 6:9 (Parallel theme): Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

1 Corinthians 10:14 (Parallel theme): Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

Deuteronomy 9:12 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image.

1 Corinthians 5:11 (Parallel theme): But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

1 John 5:21 (Parallel theme): Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

Exodus 32:19 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.

Exodus 32:4 (Parallel theme): And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

Exodus 32:17 (Parallel theme): And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp.