



## **“Jesus as the Rock”**

Text: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13  
3 March 2013—Communion Meditation  
3rd Sunday of Lent

Like most preachers I remember a rare and distinctive moment when everything went right when speaking to a group of people. Several years ago a local service club—like the Lions, Kiwanis, or Rotary Club—asked me to do a program for them. Because most of the members were well-heeled business people, I decided to begin with an amusing look at some items appropriated from actual resumes of people looking for work.

Some of them were funny, but in a sad, pathetic sort of way. Included in the errant resumes were these seven statements:

- Wholly responsible for two (2) failed financial institutions.
- Failed bar exam with relatively high grades.
- It’s best for my employers that I not work with people.
- I have an excellent track record, although I am not a horse.
- Instrumental in ruining entire operation for a Midwest chain store.
- Note: Please don’t misconstrue my 14 jobs as job hopping. I have never quit a job.
- The company made me a scapegoat, just like my three previous employers.

The people in attendance at the luncheon knowingly laughed. They recognized the kinds of people about which I spoke. These business people had experienced these kinds of resumes firsthand. In a like manner most of us know too much about sin and death—it is part and parcel of being a human being. Lent too is about sin and death. The Apostle Paul knows a thing or two about these subjects as well. Today’s lesson concerns Paul’s warning to the believers in the church at Corinth and offers a promise too. Hear our lesson:

1 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 and all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. 6 Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire



evil as they did. 7 Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.”

8 We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. 9 We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. 10 And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. 13 No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it (1 Cor. 10:1-13).

As today is communion, I would like to focus on one verse as part of our mediation for Lent today. In verse 12 Paul writes: “So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall.” Most of our lesson consists of Paul writing to the Corinthians that some of them are not on the road to eternal life. His warning uses some examples of the Israelites who were the Church’s spiritual “ancestors.” In these negative samples Paul reminds the church what happens to those who think of themselves as “chosen people,” yet do not act overly chosen. In the examples Paul notes how the people met a bad end and no doubt Paul would have chalked up their demise to one word: “Pride.”

This notion of pride brings us back around to sin and death and Lent. Martin Luther wrote that sin comes in two guises—pride and despair. The sin of pride displays itself in human self-deception that assumes we can live life fully and meaningfully apart from God’s sovereignty. As Proverbs 16:18 reminds is: “Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

However concerning despair—pride seems harder to grasp. Despair, contrary to those who in pride say they have no need of God, takes the opposite tack. Despairing people say, “My life is so hopeless that even God is of no use to me.” Either way, in the sin of pride or in the sin of despair, people cut themselves off from God. This is sin’s core: “to cut ourselves off from God” or “to alienate ourselves from God.” For this



reason Paul writes a verse that targets pride—“So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall.” It is a warning.

We began a few minutes ago by looking at some statements from people’s resumes. My personal favorite is: “Please don’t misconstrue my 14 jobs as job hopping. I have never quit a job.” So as we believers journey through Lent and approach the Lord’s Table this morning, I want you to entertain a question: “What do you want on your spiritual resume?”

I think I might want someone to write of you: Jesus said to him, “Well done, good slave! Because you have been trustworthy in a very small thing, take charge of ten cities.” Now that would read well on a resume! Amen.

**David Neil Mosser, FUMC, Arlington, TX 76011**