

**A reading from 1 Corinthians chapter 9 verses 24 through 27 and chapter 10 verses 6 through 13. You can find the reading on page 957 in your pew Bible.**

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

**The Word of the Lord.**  
***Thanks be to God.***

Please join me in praying Psalm 141.

Leader: O LORD, I call upon you; hasten to me!  
Give ear to my voice when I call to you!

**People: Let my prayer be counted as incense before you,  
and the lifting up of my hands  
as the evening sacrifice!**

Leader: Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth;  
keep watch over the door of my lips!

**People: Do not let my heart incline to any evil,  
to busy myself with wicked deeds  
in company with men who work iniquity,  
and let me not eat of their delicacies!**

Leader: Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness;  
let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head;  
let my head not refuse it.

**People: Yet my prayer is continually against their evil deeds.  
When their judges are thrown over the cliff,  
then they shall hear my words, for they are pleasant.**

Leader: As when one plows and breaks up the earth,  
so shall our bones be scattered at the mouth of Sheol.

**People: But my eyes are toward you, O GOD, my Lord;  
in you I seek refuge; leave me not defenseless!**

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**Leader:** Keep me from the trap that they have laid for me  
and from the snares of evildoers!

**People:** Let the wicked fall into their own nets,  
while I pass by safely.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it  
was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. *Amen.***

**Leader: Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.**

*(allow them time to stand)*

**The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Mark.**

***People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.***

And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

**Leader: The Gospel of the Lord**

***People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.***