

Sunday, August 7, 2016—I Corinthians 6:9-11: Such Were Some of You

Introduction

- Last week during our time together we considered verses 4 through 8. In these verses we studied the meat of Paul’s rebuke of the Corinthians for going to law before the unjust and not before the saints.
- In verses 7 and 8, Paul finds the Corinthians to be at fault because they were going to law with one another. Instead of allowing themselves to take wrong or be defrauded (v. 7) they were actively doing wrong via their conduct in verse 8.
- This morning I want to finish up this section of Chapter 6 by looking at verses 9 through 11.

I Corinthians 6:9

- **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,**
- Given the propensity that verses 9-11 have for being misunderstood, we need to be careful to note how these verses fit into the context of Chapter 6. My Bible places a heading into the text between verses 8 and 9, thereby giving the reader the visual cue that there is a break between verses 8 and 9. This leaves the reader with the impression or that verse 9 is somehow talking about something different from verse 8.
- Verses 9-11 are part of the same paragraph as verses 1 through 8. The new paragraph does not start until verse 12. Therefore, verses 9 through 11 are not their own independent section but a continuation of verses 1 through 8.
- Verses 7 and 8 have just held the Corinthians to be at fault for wronging and defrauding their brethren. Following his pattern throughout this chapter, Paul follows up his statement in verse 8 by asking a question at the beginning of verse 9.
- *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God*—this is not the first time in this chapter that Paul has asked the Corinthians a question regarding something they should have known.
 - Verse 2—“Do you not know. . .”
 - Verse 3—“Know ye not. . .”
- This question at the head of verse 9 in conjunction with what comes next has been used to teach all manner of unsound things.

- Before we begin moving through these verses and we lose sight of it, I want to raise the following question. According to verses 7 and 8, when the Corinthians were going to law with each other were they acting like believers or unbelievers?
 - Answer: Unbelievers
- *Fornicators*—according to Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828) the English word “fornication” carries the following meanings:
 - The incontinence or lewdness of unmarried persons, male or female; also, the criminal conversation of a married man with an unmarried woman.
 - Adultery. (Matt. 5:32)
 - Incest. (I Cor. 5:1)
 - Idolatry; a forsaking of the true God, and worshipping of idols. (II Chro. 21:11, Rev. 19:2)
- As the English definitions suggest, in the Bible, “fornication” deals with a variety of sexual sins of the flesh.
 - Matthew 5:32, 19:9—during his earthly ministry Christ said that “fornication” was the only acceptable grounds for divorce. Therefore, in this case “fornication” would equal “adultery.”
 - I Corinthians 7:2—in this context “fornication” is avoided via marriage. Therefore, Paul is talking about pre-marital or sex outside of marriage.
- I Corinthians 6:9—given the fact that adulterers are specifically mentioned separately in verse 9 it is clear that “fornication” in verse 9 is referring to pre-marital or sex outside of marriage.
- *Idolaters*—“A worshiper of idols; one who pays divine honors to images, statues, or representations of anything made by hands; one who worships as a deity that which is not God; a pagan.” (*Webster’s 1828*)
 - I Thessalonians 1:9—remember that the temple of the Greek goddess Aphrodite was located in the city of Corinth.
 - I Corinthians 8:1—things sacrificed to idols is going to be a big topic later in I Corinthians.
- *Effeminate*—is derived from a Latin word that means “to grow or make womanish.”

- Noah Webster defines the English word as follows:
 - Having the qualities of the female sex; soft or delicate to an unmanly degree; tender; womanish; voluptuous.
 - Womanish; weak; resembling the practice or qualities of the sex; as an *effeminate* peace; an *effeminate* life.
 - Womanlike, tender, in a sense not reproachful.
- Simply stated, “effeminate” is dealing with men who wish to look and act like woman.
- *Abusers of themselves with mankind*—this 5 word phrase in English is a translation of a single Greek word *arsenokoitēs*. According to Strong’s Concordance the Greek word means: “one who lies with a male as with a female, sodomite, homosexual”
 - I Timothy 1:10—“them that defile themselves with mankind”
 - Romans 1:24-27

I Corinthians 6:10

- **Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.**
- *Covetous*—“Inordinately desirous; excessively eager to obtain and possess; directed to money or goods, avaricious.” (*Webster’s 1828*)
- *Revilers*—“One who reviles another; one who treats another with contemptuous language.” (*Webster’s 1828*)
- *Extortioners*—“The act of extorting; the act or practice of wresting anything from a person by force, duress, menaces, authority, or by any undue exercise of power; illegal exaction; illegal compulsion to pay money, or to do some other act. . . 1) Force or illegal compulsion by which anything is taken from a person.” (*Webster’s 1828*)
- *Shall not inherit the kingdom of God*—notice how this statement at the end of verse 10 takes the read straight back to Paul’s question at the beginning of verse 9.
 - Ephesians 5:3-7
- I Corinthians 6:9-10—this list and those like it in other passages are non-discriminatory. Any person who is characterized and/or described by any of the behaviors (sins) in the list “shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

- If one is going to say based upon these verses that no “effeminate” person or homosexual can be saved they are going to have to say the same thing about the fornicator, adulterer, idolater, thief, covetous, and the drunkard. How many religious people who would tell us that “effeminate” and/or homosexuals cannot be saved have ever committed fornication, adultery, stolen something, coveted something that wasn’t theirs, or been drunk?
- Religious people will make a big deal about one sin(s) while they tolerate the others.

I Corinthians 6:11

- **And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.**
- *And such were some of you*—the church at Corinth was comprised of every kind of person mentioned in verses 9 and 10 including the “effeminate” and “abusers of themselves with mankind.”
- What does this tell us about Paul’s attitude toward these issues?
- Note the past tense in the expression, “such were some of you.” Verses 9 and 10 describe who the Corinthians used to be before they trusted Christ. God will save any person who trusts the finished work of his son.
- Not only will he saved you, but he gives believers a completely new identity as expressed by these three contrasting present tense statements.
- *But ye are washed*—the Corinthians have been made clean in Christ.
 - Titus 3:5
- *But ye are sanctified*—the Corinthians have already been sanctified and set apart in Christ.
 - I Corinthians 1:2
- *But ye are justified*—the Corinthians have already been declared right with God.
 - Romans 5:1

Conclusion

- I Corinthians 5:11—how many of the sins listed here are repeated in I Corinthians 6:9-10?
 - Fornication
 - Covetous

- Idolatry
 - Revilers
 - Drunkenness
 - Extortioner
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- I Corinthians 5:11—can one be a “brother” i.e., a saved person and still be partaking in the behaviors that characterized them before they were saved?

 - I Corinthians 6:1-11—all of this speaks to Paul’s main point in the first part of chapter 6. When the Corinthians are taking each other to law and thereby inflicting wrong upon each other they are operating out of their old identity and who they used to be.