

The unfolding of your words gives light.

The Temple of God

An Exposition of 1 Corinthians

⁹Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived^a; neither fornicators^b, nor idolaters^c, nor adulterers^d, nor effeminate^e, nor homosexuals^f, ¹⁰nor thieves^g, nor *the* covetous^h, nor drunkards^a, nor revilers^b, nor swindlers^c,

^a 6:9 **Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.** The purpose for starting this section with “the unrighteous” relates back to the lawsuits of the previous verses. He describes outsiders and their natural lifestyle and then points out that our philosophy of life cannot coincide with theirs.

He tells us not to be deceived. What is the deception? It is the idea that people who continue in their natural, sinful lifestyles will go to heaven. You are deceived if you think that Jesus died to pardon us but not to purify us.

^b 6:9 **fornicators.** This word is a generic reference to those who engage sexual sin. It was used in more specific contexts of male prostitutes.

^c 6:9 **idolaters.** An idolater is not only someone who worships images. Ezekiel (14:4) speaks of setting up idols in our hearts. When normal desires become ruling desires they become idols. In an Ephesians text that parallels this one, Paul described an idolatry of the heart:

For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Ephesians 5:5

^d 6:9 **adulterers.** This is the standard word used of those who engage in sexual activity outside of marriage. Jesus spoke of adultery as a heart sin as well (Matthew 5:28).

Marriage *is to be held* in honor among all, and the *marriage bed is to be undefiled*; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge. Hebrews 13:4

^e 6:9 **effeminate.** In Corinth these were the men who pretended to be women or allowed themselves to be used as women. Jesus used this word to describe the kind of person who was the exact opposite of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:8; Luke 7:25).

^f 6:9 **homosexuals.** This goes beyond the previous word because it speaks of men who actively pursue other men sexually.

realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching 1 Timothy 1:9-10

^g 6:10 **thieves.** This is the word for a common thief. Stealing of course includes more than taking physical property from another, but it starts with a selfish heart that wishes to receive rather than give.

He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have *something* to share with one who has need. Ephesians 4:28

^h 6:10 **covetous.** Coveting is being consumed by the desire to possess what is not yours to have. The Ten Commandments include this heart command lest God’s law should be mistaken to prohibit only outward sins.

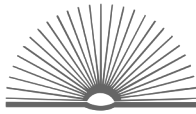
You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor. Exodus 20:17

The Epistle of 1 Corinthians
Steven Svendsen, Sr.

©Rice Lake Baptist Church, 104 East Barker Street, Rice Lake, Wisconsin, 54868 – <http://www.ricelakebaptist.org> – 715.234.1966

Permissions: You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided that you do not alter the wording in any way and that you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction.

Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.



The unfolding of your words gives light.

will inherit the kingdom of God^d. ¹¹Such were some of you^e; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God^{f,9}.

^a 6:10 **drunkards**. This word and others related to it are used most often of those who drink too much. Beyond that, drunkenness certainly includes other intoxicating chemicals.

^b 6:10 **revilers**. This has also been translated *railers*. It may seem odd to some that a sin of the tongue is included on this list, but Jesus put such sins in the same category as murder. Slander is an assault on the character of God like murder.

^c 6:10 **swindlers**. These characters stand in contrast to “thieves” because the word used includes man-on-man robbery and extortion.

^d 6:10 **will inherit the kingdom of God**. We may say simply that this kind of people will not go to heaven. If this troubles you it should. Something is wrong if you cannot see your own crimes on this list. Certainly the apostle speaks of those whose lives are characterized by these sins, but all of us see here why we have need of a lifestyle of repentance. Hope for the troubled penitent follows.

^e 6:11 **Such were some of you**. The “were” makes all the difference here. What follows is the reason the saints no longer have to identify themselves as fornicators, homosexuals or drunkards.

^f 6:11 **but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God**. To be “washed” is to be cleansed. The only other place the word is used is Acts 22:16, where Ananias told the newly-converted Paul to “be baptized and wash away your sins.” Certainly the physical washing of baptism does not cleanse spiritual impurity, but it symbolizes cleansing just as it symbolizes resurrection to a new life.

Sanctification is pictured three ways in Scripture. *Positional sanctification* is God’s work of setting His people apart (“saints,” 1 Corinthians 1:2). *Progressive sanctification* is God’s work of steadily making His people like Jesus (2 Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 1:6; 1 John 3:3). *Perfective sanctification* is God’s work that we will finally see when we stand before Him entirely holy (Philippians 3:12; 1 John 3:2).

Justification is an act by God the judge by which He declares a guilty sinner righteous based on the merits and violent death of Jesus (Romans 5:9; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

What you see here is the work of the Holy Triune God in making His own look like His own. The Father justifies or declares His people righteous based on the merits and death of His Son. The Son died to wash or purify His people from their old life. The Spirit works to progressively sanctify those people.

⁹ 6:9-11 What is the real difference between Christians and non-Christians? There is great hope for sinners in this text because here there is promise that you have an entirely new identity if you are in Christ. Here is the hope:

1. You are no longer identified by your uncleanness. You were washed. Like a leper healed by Jesus, the stains of the past are gone.
2. You are no longer identified as a citizen of this world. You were sanctified. You now have a life purpose far more noble than blending in.
3. You are no longer identified by your guilt. You were justified. The weight of much-deserved guilt is gone and you are free to serve a new master.

The Epistle of 1 Corinthians
Steven Svendsen, Sr.

©Rice Lake Baptist Church, 104 East Barker Street, Rice Lake, Wisconsin, 54868 – <http://www.ricelakebaptist.org> – 715.234.1966

Permissions: You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided that you do not alter the wording in any way and that you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction.

Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.