

First Corinthians (and Second) “The Roll Call of the Damned”

What are the hot button social issues of our day? How about Critical Race Theory? That so-called theory is touted as an intellectual movement. It's being sold to a gullible and ignorant and hate-filled public as the answer to the problem of systemic racism in America. It teaches our little children in our public schools that white people are the source of systemic racism. So, ironically, CRT is itself a source of systemic racism.

In the news this morning there is a video of a little boy on a scooter along with an adult female who is on a bicycle riding down their street when they see a small American flag sticking out of a yard. The little boy stops and rips the flag out of the ground and throws it onto the ground. The adult says and does nothing, and they continue their ride. That, beloved, is the result of CRT and Cancel Culture..

And what about Black Lives Matter? Founded by two lesbians who are professing Marxists. And Cancel Culture, that is as we speak rewriting American history and are responsible for tearing down objects they object to. And the dramatic rise of homosexuality in our country? These are hot button issues the true church must face up to and deal with. Systemic racism exists because human beings are dead in their trespasses and sins, disciples of the prince of the power of the air, not because of the color of their skin.

The church has always dealt with social and cultural and religious issues as they came up in the regions where the local church found itself. Some of those issues were black or white and left no wiggle room. Others, the non-essentials of the faith, were pretty much left up to each assembly and each individual.

But there were others that depended on the maturity of the believers involved. For instance, the issues of eating certain foods that were once forbidden of the Jews but had been declared clean by the Lord Himself were still seen as unclean by believers who were ignorant and weak in their faith. They were basing their beliefs on what they had witnessed in Roman society that repulsed them. There was also the

matter of what day should we assemble on? How did Paul address that issue? And the issue of social drinking has been around as long as wine has and the saints in Rome were faced with whether or not disciples of Christ could partake.

Many of the Roman saints were again repulsed by what the average Roman citizens practiced with their celebrations where they would get plastered, regurgitate, and then go back for more. They were basing their beliefs about these issues not on what the word of God says but on the wicked behavior of the Romans. This was Paul's very wise and inspired counsel on those issues, and they apply to us as well as they did to the first century church.

Romans 14:1 *Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.*

² *One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only.* Vegetarians who were misled into believing that it was a sin to eat meat weren't vegetarians because it was a healthier lifestyle. They were afraid to eat meat. It is perfectly fine to be vegetarian as long as one eats that way for his or her health and not to earn God's approval. That's called "works salvation." Personally, I'm looking forward to someday having a black bean burger. I hear they are great. Romans 14:3,

³ *The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him. (Rom. 14:1-3 NAU)*

¹³ *Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this-- not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.*

¹⁴ *I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*

¹⁵ *For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. (Rom. 14:13-15 NAU)* The word "destroy" means do not do them harm, do not break down their faith. Verse 21,

²¹ *It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.*

²² *The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. (Rom. 14:21-22 NAU)* Beloved, that means that what we do is between us and God and is really no one's business. Don't ask; don't tell.

The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. So, if you have faith that allows you to have a glass of wine, keep it to yourself. Just remember, ²¹ *It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.*

And the matter of what day one should worship on. The legalist cult member insists that Saturday is the only day we can worship on. The law says so. But that is not what the Bible says. Read this.

⁵ *One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind.*

⁶ *He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord... (Rom. 14:5-6 NAU)*

And what does it mean to make someone stumble? It means that should you have a glass of wine or a beer in a restaurant and the weaker brother sees you, they may decide to have a drink themselves even though they really don't know if they can or not. When they are falsely emboldened to take that glass of wine or that bottle of beer, you have made them stumble and sin against their consciences. ²³ *But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin. (Rom. 14:23 NAU)*

And Paul and Peter both said this about that. ¹³ *For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. (Gal. 5:13 NAU)*

1 Peter 2:16 *Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. (1 Pet. 2:16 NAU)*

We are free in Christ but we must not exercise that freedom if it will make a weaker brother or sister stumble.

*I want to give you a heads up about what is coming up in this sermon series as we deal head-on with certain social issues. It's going to get moderately graphic because the social and cultural and religious issues the early church had to grapple with were best done matter-of-factly. I'm going to deal with our text from 1 Corinthians chapter 6 in a matter-of-fact manner. I'm going to call a spade a spade and sin, sin.

Next week, if the Lord wills, I will be examining the word of God's teaching on fornication, which is sexual immorality, which means intimate relationships apart from the sanctity of marriage, adultery and homosexuality and the people who practice that lifestyle. Do any of these lost people have a chance at being transformed? Do they have a chance at being delivered from a practice and a lifestyle that God says is an abomination? They certainly do.

Our text: ⁹ *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,*
¹⁰ *nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.*

¹¹ *Such were some of you; 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. (1 Cor. 6:9-11 NAU)*

I'm going to make two observations from this passage this morning and here is the first:

First, "The apostle rebuked the saints in Corinth for choosing willful ignorance over truth."

After watching hundreds of hours of videos exposing the false teachers and false prophets of our day and observing how blatantly heretical they are, I am amazed at the innumerable number of followers they have who have been deceived into believing their obvious heresies. These millions of people have deliberately chosen to accept what they are hearing from these deceivers in spite of having more sense than that,

somewhere in the back of their minds. Why? Because **lies are more acceptable and pleasing to them than truth**. These last-days-professors of faith do not like the sound of the truth. They are willingly being deceived into believing that everyone is going to heaven. They are willingly being deceived into believing that it doesn't really matter what one believes, we're all going to be ok. I mean, how can a believer listen to the likes of men and women like Bill Johnson of Bethel Church in Redding, Ca., and Joyce Meyer and Steven Furtick and Joel Osteen without getting nauseous?

Now notice Paul's question, "*Or do you not know...?*" This is more of an accusation than a question. The answer is, "Yes, you do know, but you have chosen to ignore what you know to be the truth about the unrighteous."

The apostle used this phrase, "do you not know," a total of 10 times in this one epistle, and each time he implied that the saints in Corinth did in fact know whatever it was he named. I'm going to refer to 8 of those times.

NAU 1 Cor. 3:16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

NAU 1 Cor. 5:6 Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump *of dough*?

NAU 1 Cor. 6:2 Or that the saints will judge the world?

NAU 1 Cor. 6:3 that we will judge angels?

NAU 1 Cor. 6:9 Or that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?

NAU 1 Cor. 6:15 or that your bodies are members of Christ?

NAU 1 Cor. 6:16 Or that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body *with her*?

NAU 1 Cor. 6:19 Or that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit

And the answer is, "Of course you know these things. I taught them to you while I was with you as your interim pastor for a year and a half.

Jesus said in John 8:32 that you will know the truth and the truth will set you free. **Deceptions, willful and otherwise, keep one in bondage to the devil.**

My second and final observation is this, “The apostle addresses his word to a specific people group, the unrighteous.

⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?

Do you know what a “people group” is? They are all around us. They are the whites and the blacks and the Latinos and the Asians in our neighborhoods. They are the Muslims and the Buddhists and the Hindu’s and the atheists. Those are people groups.

But that verse begs the questions, “Who are the unrighteous and why will they not inherit the kingdom of God?” And the answer is simple enough. First, **the unrighteous are all who are not in Christ.** And second, **no one can inherit the kingdom of God without being declared righteous by God.** The unrighteous are all who are not in Christ. Jesus says to the unrighteous, “*You must be born again.*”

The only way anyone can become righteous, the only way one can be born again, is by God graciously calling him or her unto Himself through the preaching of the gospel. And when God does that, when He draws sinners to His Son then He along with that call declares them justified, righteous, right with Him.

To be willfully ignorant of the destiny of the unrighteous is to play a part in their destiny when we can so easily play a part in changing their destiny by preaching the life-changing, destiny-changing gospel. There is power in the preaching of the gospel, the power of God in preaching the gospel.

The people who are willingly deceived by Critical Race Theory and Cancel Culture and Black Lives Matter need that power. It is the only way their lives have a chance at being changed.

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.