

First Corinthians (and Second)
An Expository Series
“The Unrighteous”

Let's open our Bibles to 1st Cor. 6 and v.9. We are continuing our study in the two existing letters written by Paul to the saints in Corinth. You will recall that there was another letter which would be first Corinthians, but it was lost, so our first Corinthians would be Second Corinthians and our Second Corinthians would be Third Corinthians. By the providence and preservation of the Spirit we have the letters we are supposed to have.

We are about to read a list of sinners whom Paul refers to as “the unrighteous” and who, except God grants them repentance and life and light and faith in Christ, will not in anyway inherit the kingdom of God. These men and women were living lifestyles that let the saints in Corinth know that they were unregenerate and outside the covenants and promises of God. The Corinthians had adjusted to having these people in their church and even went so far as to brag about having them. That's in chapter 5. Beloved, things haven't changed. The visible church in our day welcomes the unrighteous and unbelieving and those of other religions and treats them as though they are our brothers and sisters. They are not.

On the other side of our fair city there are quite a few churches that advertise themselves as liberal and progressive and LGBTQ friendly. At least four of them are Baptist and make no bones about their being liberal and unbelieving. One of them is **Wedgewood Baptist** and when I googled their name, this is what came up: “**Wedgewood** is a liberal, culturally diverse, service-oriented, interfaith **church** in **Charlotte, NC** with members who are Progressive Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, Pagans, Atheists, Agnostics, and many other faith journeys and perspectives. When we say everyone is welcome at **Wedgewood**, we mean EVERYONE! Join us as we try to change the world.” And I would say the world has changed **Wedgewood Baptist Church**.

And then there is **Sardis Baptist Church**, none of these churches are Southern Baptist by the way. Here is what they say about themselves:

“Sardis is a congregation where women are pastors, children lead worship, theological diversity is valued and people are welcomed as they are.” Remember how the choir at the end of every Billy Graham crusade sang “Just As I Am?” These liberal churches have taken that idea and perverted to say “and so I will stay.”

And one more, Park Road Baptist: “Park Road is a thinking congregation. Members express diverse theological perspectives but approach faith with an open mind, acknowledging other perspectives and appreciating the insights of all religious traditions.” And this, **“Our congregation actively supported the Civil Rights Movement, opened the first interracial church Child Development Center in the city, was one of the first Baptist congregations in North Carolina to recognize the ordination of women,** has championed the cause of recognizing same sex marriage, and we work every day with those suffering the effects of the growing economic inequalities in our country. Any person, regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity or non-gender identity, socio-economic status, or theological belief, who seeks to live in Christian community will find welcome here.”

The Bible says, “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?” Apparently not. And, “Do not be deceived.” Or better, “Stop being deceived.”

The above named congregations and hundreds of others like them have deliberately rejected the Bible and the gospel. They are willfully ignorant of the holiness of God and the holiness to which our God calls us. They have opened their doors to every form of sexual immorality and sexual perversions imaginable. They welcome and worship alongside the antichrist religion of Islam. They teach that all roads lead to heaven. The Buddhist road and the Hindu road and the atheist road and the Muslim road and the Mormon road and the Roman Catholic road and the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses road. They deliberately and happily reject the words of the Bible when it says, *“Jesus answered and*

said to him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me.'

And this from the book of the Acts of the Apostles, ¹² "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12 NAU)

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. (1 Cor. 6:9-10 NAU)

We have previously examined the context of these verses so this morning I want us to cut to the chase and examine the particular sinners he included in this partial list of the unrighteous.

First, lets define and identify "fornicators."

Don't miss the fact that this word refers to people, sinners, not their sins. They are identified by their particular sin but Paul is calling out the sinner.

The Greek word behind our English word fornicators is familiar to all of us. It is pornos. Pornos. And immediately you can see that it's where we get our modern English word "pornography." But in Paul's day it did not mean pornography, it did not refer to pictures. They certainly had such lude depictions either painted on papyri, the paper of that time, or engraved in stone. And when you look at the statues that were popular in those days, you will see explicit depictions of our subject matter. But still, the word *pornos* or the plural, *pornoi* , did not refer to men who were voyeurs.

Pornos referred to men who visited the temple prostitutes who served in the Temple of Aphrodite. The temple boasted of hundreds and hundreds of temple prostitutes and was one of the attractions found in the City of Corinth. When the apostle rebuked the men in the church at

Corinth for their continuing the practice of visiting the temple prostitutes, that's what he had in mind.

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¹⁰ *nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 6:9-10 NAU)*

It goes without saying but it still must be said, "Flee fornication!" "Flee sexual immorality of all kinds!" But I will add this, beloved, for a disciple of Christ who commits sexual immorality and repents, it is not the end of the world. God never gives anyone permission to commit fornication or adultery, but if one does, he or she should repent of it and confess it and move on. ⁹ *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 Jn. 1:9 NAU)*

1 John 2:1 *My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;*

² *and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. (1 Jn. 2:1-2 NAU)*

Our Father knows that we are but dust. And for that reason He has put on His Son the sins of us all and He poured out His wrath onto His Son, not only for those who are in Christ, but for the sins of the whole world. And that is why the world has not yet been destroyed. *and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.* The word "propitiation" means that God's wrath has been satisfied through the life, suffering, death, burial, resurrection and ascension of His Son on our behalf. And would we dare make Jesus a part of humanity's practice of sexual immorality?

We are a God-fearing, Bible believing, Christ trusting congregation who knows what the word of God commands. Do not be deceived.