

First Corinthians (and Second)
An Expository Series
1 Corinthians 6:9
“Adulterers” Part One

Open your Bibles to 1st Corinthians chapter 6, 1st Cor. 6 and verse 9. We will focus once again on one group of people, men and women, who fall under the heading “the unrighteous” that Paul includes in this particular list of the unrighteous. He has other lists of those people who will not inherit the kingdom of God, except grant them repentance and light and life and faith. Here is one of his other list: ¹⁹ *Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,*
²⁰ *idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,*
²¹ *envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Gal. 5:19-21 NAU)*

Please note the word “practice” in v.21. Those are men and women whose lives are characterized by the sins Paul lists in those 3 verses.

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...will inherit the kingdom of God, (1 Cor. 6:9 NAU).* I am stopping each week now with the particular group we will be studying that morning. This morning it is a group we are all very familiar with, **adulterers.** ⁹ *Or do you not know that adulterers will not inherit the kingdom of God?”*

I remember my mother buying Hollywood gossip magazines back in the 1950’s and keeping up with the torrid love affairs of people like Eddie Fisher and Elizabeth Taylor. What a scandal! Eddie Fisher was married at the time to Debbie Reynolds, and she was one of Hollywood’s sweethearts, as pure as the driven snow. Elizabeth Taylor went on to be married and divorced 8 times. Zsa Zsa Gabor was married 9 times. Clint Eastwood has only been married twice but he has lived

with quite a list of ladies and has 8 children from those different relationships.

But Hollywood doesn't own the exclusive rights to serial adulterers. I have a friend who has been married and divorced 7 times and another who has been divorced 4 times and married 5. And lest I make anyone think I am without sin, well, I'll save that for later.

"Adulterers." I used to describe such people as "sorry." I have since discovered from the Bible that the act of adultery involves more than what one might think and includes more people than one might think.

Adultery has always been popular, but it took a strong turn upward on the approval scale during the 1960's with the sexual revolution. **The sexual revolution was a demonic knee-jerk reaction to the war in Vietnam.** It was like a relief valve for the pent-up frustrations and depression and hopelessness our nation was experiencing all because of our involvement in a war on the other side of the planet that was taking the lives of thousands and thousands of souls. Our nation alone lost around 58,500 of our citizens and the Vietnamese lost millions of lives.

The mantra of the people protesting the war was "make love, not war." That was when our people redefined love. And suddenly it was mainstream to commit and live in, sexual immorality, including adultery. Our nation took its moral cue from the sexual revolution and hippies rather than the Bible.

Now, did you know there are three kinds of adultery in the Bible? There is **literal adultery**, there is **metaphorical adultery**, and there is **heart adultery**. And make no mistake about it, all three are considered adultery by God.

Three kinds of adultery.

First, Literal adultery.

¹⁴ "You shall not commit adultery. (Exod. 20:14 NAU) What was forbidden by the 7th commandment is physical, literal adultery. But what we do not see in the 7th commandment in Exodus 20 is that it is a crime against God that warrants the death penalty. Adultery was punishable by

death under the old covenant if the adulterers were caught by two or three witnesses.

Lev. 20:10 If there is a man who commits adultery with another man's wife, one who commits adultery with his friend's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. And here is the safeguard against any miscarriage of justice:

*Deut. 17:6-7*⁶ "On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. (Deut. 17:6 NAU)

Keep in mind, beloved of God, the law was given to the Jews and affected the Jews and the punishment demanded by the law was applied to the Jews and to the Jews alone. As wicked and as vile as were the pagans and the heathens who occupied the nations that the Jews would pass through, the law did not apply to them. God would deal with them through other means. But the law was given only to the Jews. Under the New Covenant in Christ's blood, the law was nailed to the cross in Christ's body and we were crucified with Christ so that we are not under the law but under grace. Just remember that neither God nor grace give anyone permission to sin. But God has made gracious provision for our sins in the blood of His Son.

Second, Metaphorical adultery: What in the world is metaphorical adultery? When adultery is used as a metaphor it refers to spiritual adultery committed against God. It is when one who is a child of God goes after other gods. If you have ever read the book of the prophet Hosea, you have read the sad story of God commanding Hosea to take a prostitute to be his wife solely for the purpose of showing Israel what they had done to their God and their Redeemer. Israel had gone a whoring after other gods on numerous occasions. And that is metaphorical adultery. We even find it in the New Testament. Here it is in James.

James 4:4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend

of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (Jas. 4:4 NAU). That was a written warning to those in the visible church who loved the world.

Friendship with the world is adultery. And by the world, James meant this fallen and evil world system that hates God and hates the truth.

Here's how John put it.

¹⁵ *Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

¹⁶ *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.*

¹⁷ *The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. (1 Jn. 2:15-17 NAU)*

And finally, the third kind of adultery.

Heart adultery: ²⁷ *"You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY';*

²⁸ ***but I say***, Jesus was emphatic, 'but I myself say to you,' *that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matt. 5:27-28 NAU)* "But I just looked at her. It's not like I actually committed adultery with her. I would like to, but I didn't. So what's the big deal?" ²⁸ ***but I say***, *to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. And that's why I said earlier that adultery includes more people than one might have thought.*

The heart of man or to put it another way, the nature of man, has not changed since the fall. Jeremiah put it this way, ⁹ *"The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?*

¹⁰ *"I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds. (Jer. 17:9-10 NAU)*

And Jesus put it this way, ¹⁷ *"Do you not understand that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and is eliminated?*

¹⁸ *"But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man.*

¹⁹ *"For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.*

²⁰ *"These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man." (Matt. 15:17-20 NAU)*

There is only one power that can change man's nature, and that is the grace of God that gives new life to those who come to faith in Jesus by the working of the Holy Spirit.

Lust is never acceptable. Sin is never acceptable. But for those who are in Christ, it is all forgiven. After all, we are living under that grace that is greater than all our sins.