

1 Corinthian Series #16
"Bought at a Price" - 1 Cor. 6:9-20

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Two Facts

1. Grace changes us!
 - a. Jesus came to save us from sin, not make us feel good
 - b. the Gospel heals and forgives
 - c. when the grace of God takes hold of a man or woman, something miraculous happens
 - 1) they are transformed from sinner to saint
 - 2) they are transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light
 - d. spiritual new birth is pictured by the change a caterpillar goes through when it turns into a butterfly
 - 1) the butterfly would never go back to crawling on its belly in the mud
 - 2) chewing on the soggy undergrowth of bitter plants
 - 3) its proper domain is the sky
 - 4) its food, the sweet nectar of the flowers which bask in the light of the sun
 - 5) in like manner, the Christian is a new person
 - e. 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
 - f. that is not just fanciful, religious jargon
 - g. it is a bold statement of absolute fact
 - h. GRACE CHANGES US!
2. The world affects us
 - a. the culture we live in influences us
 - b. and because we are complex beings who long to belong, we are influenced by the world ways
 - c. the problem is, this world is in rebellion against God
 - d. it opposes Him at every turn
 - e. and the voices of the world are loud, convincing and incessant
 - f. THE WORLD AFFECTS US!

B. The Result

1. As Christians, we live in a constant state of tension
2. The Spirit of God is transforming us into the image of Christ
3. While the world is attempting to influence us to return to it's

- ways and once again embrace the image of fallen mankind
- 4. We all know this tension & struggle
 - a. we hear the call to holiness and our spirit's yearn to be like Christ
 - b. but we also know the vicious hunger that rises from our flesh to seek after selfish gratification
- 5. In the City of Corinth, the Christians were losing the battle and were adopting the ways of the world

II. TEXT

A. Vs. 9-11

9 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 homosexuals, nor sodomites,

10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

- 1. Corinth a city filled with vice
- 2. This catalog of sins was well represented in Corinth
- 3. The church filled with people who had at one time walked in these things
- 4. But their lives were no longer characterized by them
- 5. Or at least, they shouldn't have been characterized by them
- 6. There were many who professed Christ but whose lives were marked by gross sin
- 7. Paul draws the line between heaven & hell; between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the devil
- 8. The list of sins he gives is not exhaustive, but it is representative
- 9. Are not going to take the time to do a detailed word study on each of these things today
- 10. But notice the common thing in the first sins listed:
 - a. they are sexual sins
 - b. even idolatry is a part of these sexual sins for this reason . . .
 - 1) greatest building in Corinth - Temple to Venus
 - 2) 1000 temple prostitutes
 - 3) worship by sex
 - 4) a part of the social scene
 - 5) expected of good Corinthians
 - c. the church at Corinth had been deeply affected by the sexual laxity of the City
- 11. There is one sin in this list that I think it would be good to

take a closer look at . . .

- a. end of v. 9; "homosexuals and sodomites"
- b. there is much discussion today over the role of homosexuals in the social scene
 - 1) special civil rights
 - 2) lifting the ban in the military
 - 3) current administration has openly endorsed the homosexual agenda and has appointed many homosexuals to key government posts - not because they are the best qualified for the position, but because they are homosexual
- c. the debate may rage while the world tries to make up its mind
- d. but the word of God is very clear: homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God
- e. why? because it is sin

12. Homosexuality

- a. some would say that what we find here is merely an outdated and old fashioned morality
- b. that has been superseded by a more enlightened age
- c. but that response, and it is very common, is woefully ignorant of history
- d. for at the time Paul wrote this, homosexuality was a well accepted practice in the Greek and Roman world
- e. in fact, the Greeks were so well known for their practice of homosexuality it was called, "Greek love."
 - 1) Socrates practiced it
 - 2) Plato practiced it
 - 3) Plato wrote *The Symposium*, which is recognized by many scholars as one of the finest writings in all literature on love - it deals with homosexuality
 - 4) 14 of the first 15 Roman emperors were homosexuals
 - 5) Nero, who very likely ruled at the time Paul wrote this letter, had married a young boy named Sporus and taken him as his wife
 - 6) he later took a man named Pythagoras as his husband
 - 7) there is more but it gets gross and I don't care to go in to it
- f. classical historians agree that homosexuality not only marked the decline of Greece and Rome, it led to that decline
- g. when men and women forsake the normal & natural

- use of each other and burn in their desires for those of the same sex, it leads to an obvious breakdown of the family, and eventually society
- h. when homosexuality became accepted in society and endorsed by the government, both Greece, and then later, Rome fell
 - i. when Rome fell, we entered into what is called the Dark Ages
 - j. those who do not learn the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them
 - k. today, we are walking down the same path with the debate over homosexuals in the military and the willing embrace by society of homosexuality as a viable alternative lifestyle
 - l. we are poised on the edge of a new Dark Ages
 - m. (to homosexuals)

II And such were some of you.

- 13. The church made up of Corinthians who had at one time been these
- 14. But grace had changed them

But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

- 15. They had been washed by the new birth of the Spirit
 - a. Titus 3:5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,
 - b. 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
- 16. They have been sanctified - set apart from the world to God
- 17. They have been justified - forgiven their prior sins and now stand before God as righteous

B. General/Specific

- 1. Paul has drawn a bold line between the world and God, sin and grace
- 2. Now in vs. 12-20, he gets real specific on how and why there is such a sharp contrast between our lives before and after Christ

C. Vs. 12-14

12 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body *is* not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

14 And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.

1. In order to follow what he says here, we need to understand something about the way the Greeks saw the human body
 - a. they thought the soul of man was inherently good
 - b. but the body was inherently evil
 - c. they despised the body
 - 1) "The body is a tomb"
 - 2) "I am a soul shackled to a corpse"
 - d. they simply did not care about the body
2. This led to 2 different reactions from people
 - a. extreme discipline = whip it in to submission
 - b. extreme moral looseness = do what you like
3. The entire city of Corinth followed this second view
4. The Christians there had come from this mind set of moral laxity
5. Then they heard that they were free in Christ
 - a. they were no longer under the law, they were told
 - b. but they mistook this to mean that they were totally free to do whatever they liked
 - c. that in effect, no matter what they did, it wasn't sin
6. One of their slogans was, "All things are lawful for me."
7. They wore it like a badge of moral and spiritual superiority
8. Paul uses their own slogan but shows them how the thinking behind it is all wrong

12 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

9. Paul is free, but he will not let his freedom bring him in to bondage to anything
10. His freedom is not a freedom TO sin but a freedom FROM sin.
11. The man who proudly says, "I will do what I like" really means "I am a slave to my desires."

13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body *is* not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

12. The specific Paul wants to zero in on was the sexual immorality of the Corinthians

13. He does so by repeating one of the other slogans "Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods"
 - a. the reasoning went like this - the stomach is made for food, and food for the stomach
 - b. so eat up
 - c. this is fine as far as it goes
 - d. but they had used this little bit of wit and applied to a different area - sex
 - e. the body is made for sex, and sex for the body
 - f. so go for it
14. Paul points them in the right direction
 - a. yes the stomach is for food and vice versa
 - b. but remember that ultimately you will stand before God to give account of all things
 - c. so be careful what and how you eat!
 - d. No, the body was not made for sexual immorality!
 - e. it was made for God
 - f. and contrary to what the Greeks thought, God is interested in how we use and treat our bodies, especially sexually
15. The final proof that God cares about our bodies is that they will be resurrected to dwell with Him eternally

C. Vs. 15-17

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot? Certainly not!

16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body *with her*? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh."

17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*.

1. Some still going to the temple of Venus
2. They must understand they cannot do this
3. These verses are critical to our understanding of what God intends sex to be among His people
4. The point Paul makes is this: Sex is not something we do, it is something we are
 - a. we are not merely a soul in a body
 - b. the body is part of what we are: it is part of our total humanity
 - c. this is proven by the fact that when we go to be with Christ, this body is transformed
 - d. we do take it with us, because it is an essential part of us
 - e. also, God made us male and female
 - f. our sexual identity is an integral part of our unique personhood

- g. when a man and woman are sexually involved, there is a merging, not just of the bodies but of the total person
 - h. there is intimate union
 - i. that's why he quotes Gen 2:24 "The two," He says, "shall become one flesh."
5. As Christians, we are joined in intimate union with Christ as total persons
 6. As we'll see in the next ch., the only other intimate union God sanctions is between a husband and wife, which God intends to be a picture of His union with us.
 7. Every marriage is meant to be a living object lesson on our relationship with Christ.

D. V. 18

18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

1. Sexual sin is fundamentally different from all other sin in that it marks one deeply.
2. Because sex is a sharing of the deepest person, when a person is involved in sexual sin, his or her inner person is being marked and changed.
 - a. there are memories that are left behind
 - b. there are deep and mysterious way that our understanding of ourselves is effected
 - c. the guilt is tremendous
 - d. the anguish crushing
3. So flee sexual sin
 - a. don't be afraid to get up and get out of the place of temptation
 - b. don't play chicken with sexual sin
 - c. remember Joseph

E. Vs. 19-20

19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

1. Paul gets down to the nitty gritty here, he cuts to the heart of the matter
2. Christians cannot commit sexual sin for the simple reason that they do not belong to themselves
 - a. they do not live a live a self-gratification and

- pleasure
 - b. they have been bought at a price
 - c. that price is the blood of Jesus Christ
 - d. we were slaves of sin and death
 - e. but Christ redeemed us
- 3. And now He indwells us
 - a. we are the temple of God
 - b. no longer does the presence of God dwell in some stone or brick building
 - c. we are the dwelling place of God among men
- 4. Paul concludes this section with a statement destined to blow the minds of the Corinthians = "Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."
- 5. Because God created, redeemed, and owns you - glorify Him with all you are, including your body.
- 6. To the Greeks who thought the body utterly evil, this would have been revolutionary

III. CONCLUSION

- A. The More Things Change, The More They Stay The Same
 - 1. As I read this letter, I am continually surprised by how similar Corinth at this time was to Southern California of today.
 - 2. Some of us were fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, covetous, drunks, revilers, and extortioners.
 - 3. But we have been washed, we have been set apart, we have been made new in Christ.
 - 4. Will we go back to all that which we have been delivered from?
 - 5. Like the dog that returns to its vomit, will we go back to the world?
 - 6. Or like the sow which has been washed yet gone back to its wallowing in the mire will we turn from the narrow path of life to the broad way of destruction?
 - 7. Resisting sin is an active not a passive thing
 - 8. And the best way to resist the influences of this world is to draw close to Christ.
 - 9. Therefore, glorify God in all you are and all you do.
- B. To The Lost