

Wickedness

I Corinthians 6:9-12

Thank you for joining me once again today for "It's a Good Life." We want to look today in the book of I Corinthians chapter 6, verses 9 through 12. We're going to look there about the wickedness that was found in Corinth during those days that Paul was there. First Corinthians chapter 6, verses 9 through 12, says: *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,* ¹⁰*Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.* ¹¹*And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* ¹²*All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

After preaching at Athens, the apostle Paul traveled to Corinth, according to Acts chapter 18, verses 1 through 18. Now, Corinth was the most important city Paul had visited since he left Antioch of Syria, and with the exception of Ephesus, he stayed at Corinth longer than any other city we know of. In Acts chapter 18, verses 2 through 3, we see that Paul stayed with Aquila and Priscilla, two Jewish tentmakers from Rome.

Corinth became not only a synonym for wealth and luxury, drunkenness and debauchery, but also for filth. I would have you notice first of all about this place that Corinth was wicked because people were religious. In that city, Aphrodite was worshiped. She was known as the goddess of love. There were ten thousand prostitutes used in connection with this false religion, and we also see that their religion said everyone had to speak in tongues. Now, don't get mad at me. If you want to get mad at someone, you get mad at God,

and I warn you about that, because God will not put up with foolishness. As we look at these Scriptures, we see that their religion said that everyone had to speak in tongues, and Paul rebukes these people sharply. In I Corinthians chapter 14, verses 18 through 22, Paul says, *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:* ¹⁹*Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that [by my voice] I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.* ²⁰*Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.* ²¹*In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.* ²²*Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.*

Something else that Paul reprimanded these people for in this area and this town was because there was a homosexual church in their town. In verse 9, the Bible says, *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind.*

Now the word "effeminate" is used in verse 9. The word "effeminate" means soft to the touch, one who has the appearance of a woman yet is not a woman. One of the curses of today for America is to have a bunch of men who look like women, act like women, and walk like women. On the other hand, look at the women who act like men. God help us. Only He can. And let me quickly add that God hates the sin, but He loves the sinner. He hates the sin of homosexuality, but He loves that person. He wants that person to

know Him as their Lord and Savior and turn away from that sin.

Something else that I would have you to know today about this place of Corinth is Corinth was a very religious place, but their religion had not changed them. And I would say to you today, if your religion hasn't changed your life, you need to change your religion. "Religion" is mentioned seven times in the Bible. The only time it is used to mean something good is found in James chapter 1 and verse 27. It says there, *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*

Every type of religion was present at Corinth, and I've already mentioned Aphrodite, the goddess of love. There were others there, present there, Poseidon, ruler of the sea; Apollo; Hermes; Venus; Fortuna; Isis; and on and on the list goes. And when we stop to think, do some of those religions sound familiar? Well, try these: humanism, socialism, communism, homosexualism... that's my term for sexual deviant behavior... Mormonism, another name for Latter Day Saints; Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Unitarian Universalism, orthodox church, Scientology, Dianetics. These last that I've mentioned, Scientology and Dianetics, were founded by L. Ron Hubbard, a science fiction writer. On and on the list goes.

You don't need religion; you need salvation.

You don't need an experience; you need a Savior.

You don't need a second blessing; you need the first.

You don't need a dose of sugar water; you need a dose of Heaven-sent medicine; you need the Lord today.

Something else about this place of Corinth. We need to learn this from the Bible. In Romans 5:20, it says: *Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:* Thank God for His grace. But for the grace of God, we would all go to Hell. Thank God for the grace that saves. A person's faith is important. A person's repentance is important. Living a Christian life is important. But without the grace of God, we would all be lost.

A beggar stopped a lawyer on the street in a large southern city and asked him for a quarter. Taking a long hard look into the man's unshaven face, the attorney asked, "Don't I know you from somewhere?"

"You should," came the reply from the man. "I'm your former classmate. Remember? Second floor? Old main hall?"

"Why, Sam, of course, I know you." Without further question, the lawyer wrote a check for \$100. "Here take this and get a new start. I don't care what happened in the past. It's the future that counts." And with that, he hurried on.

Tears welled up in the man's eyes as he walked to a bank nearby, stopping at the door, he saw through the glass well-dressed tellers and a spotlessly clean interior. Then he looked at his filthy rags. "They won't take this from me. They'll swear that I forged it," he muttered as he turned away.

The next day, the two men met again, "Why, Sam, what did you do with my check? Gamble it away? Drink it up?"

"No," said the beggar as he pulled it out of his dirty shirt pocket and told why he hadn't cashed it.

"Listen, friend," said the lawyer, "what makes that check good is not your clothes or appearance but my signature. Go on, cash it."

The Bible says, *Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved* (Romans 10:13). And I'll have you know today that that promise is a negotiable note of infinite value, and as sinners, all we need to do is exchange it by faith for eternal life. Don't let the tattered clothes of your past keep you from cashing God's check of salvation. Won't you turn to Him today? It's by grace that a person is saved, not of works lest any man should boast. The old song says, "Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that will pardon and cleanse within. Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is greater than all our sin."

I don't care what you've done in the past. I don't care who you are, where you are. If you've never trusted the Lord as your Savior, you can do so right now. He doesn't care who you are except that He knows that Jesus died for you. God wants to save you today. Jesus wants to come into your heart. It's all of grace. Romans 1:16 says this: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

Only the Gospel can change vile sinners. Isaiah 55:1 says, *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.* God's speaking there of salvation. He doesn't care what you have. He wants to give you what you don't have, and that is salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. Why not bow your head where you're at and receive Him today.

"Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive You as my Savior right now. I'm sorry for my sin. Please save me so I can go to Heaven."

If you'll pray that prayer today, God will save you right where you're at. Ask Him to come into your heart. And if you're a Christian and you've gotten away from Him.... I didn't say you'd lost

your salvation; I said you've gotten away from Him, you've turned from Him. He didn't turn from you. You can get back to Him today by saying, "Lord, I'm sorry." The Bible says in I John 1:9, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

If you'll do that, God will use you in the work today. And I remind you, as an unsaved person that God doesn't care who you are, what you are, what you've been. He wants to save you right where you're at.

Well, it's been good being with you today on "It's a Good Life." Let me encourage you to look at the website today, www.LRWM.org. On that website, you'll be able to leave requests for us to pray with you about any request that you have, something that's on your heart. We'll be glad to pray with you, take it to the Lord, and ask Him to answer that prayer.

You can also send us an email there and let us know that you're listening to the program. Let me know today that the program has been a blessing to you. And if you have something... some criticism that you'd like to make, you can also leave that there. But I would encourage you today to look at the website, www.LRWM.org, or you can write to me, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731.

It's always a joy to be able to speak to you each week, and I trust that the program is being a blessing to you. And if you would like to receive information on how you can receive Bible studies, look at the website, www.LRWM.org, or write to me, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731.

Until this same time next week, may the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.