

The Old Paths

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“And Such Were Some Of You”

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The title above comes from the first phrase in I Corinthians 6:11. In context, I Corinthians 6:9-11 stands as a warning against Christians engaging in various sins, and the reminder that many folks who have become Christians came from very sinful backgrounds, and have been forgiven much. This section also shines brightly because it stands as a reminder to the Corinthians (and to us) that it is Christ who has made forgiveness of sins possible. Let us read I Corinthians 6:9-11 and make some applications.

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (I Cor. 6:9-11). Our study will focus upon the statement in verse 11, “*And such were some of you*”. To me, this statement speaks volumes. Let us study this phrase and see what we can learn from these inspired words.

“Such”

In context, this word means

“of like manner.” After reading the list of sins from verses 9 and 10, some might be inclined to look down on others and say, “I would never want to be around people like that!” The apostle Paul’s statement reminds the Corinthians that this church was made up of folks who *had* committed such sins, but were now forgiven (v. 11).

In history, Corinth was known as a very immoral city. They were so wicked that those in the first century who lived a life of drunkenness and immorality were said to “live like a Corinthian.” It is in this immoral climate that the apostle Paul entered Corinth and preached the gospel, converting many people to Christ (Acts 18:8; I Cor. 1:14-16). In fact, God told Paul, “*I have many people in this city*” (Acts 18:10)! For this reason, Paul stayed there a year and a half preaching the word to the people and converting many.

There is no question that the Corinthian Christians had been guilty of various sins (I Cor. 6:9-10)! Perhaps they were taught to be like that by their parents. We know it was encouraged in their society; but these people learned better through the preaching of the gospel (Acts 18).

“Were”

Though the people had been guilty of sin (Rom. 3:23), the apostle Paul is declaring that they were forgiven people in Christ. They had

repented (Lk. 13:3; Acts 17:30) and had been baptized into Christ (Acts 18:8, 2:38). Therefore, though they “were” in sin (including sins listed in I Cor. 6:9-10), they had since followed the Lord’s plan for salvation and had been forgiven by Christ when baptized (Acts 18:8).

No one can escape his past! Even the apostle Paul, though forgiven and looking forward to a “*crown of righteousness*” (II Tim. 4:6-8), said he was the “chief” of sinners when he reflected upon his past life (I Tim. 1:15). The Corinthians were reminded that they “were” in sin, but they had received the forgiveness of Christ!

In this context, “were” is an amazing and powerful word. Can it be said that you “were” guilty of sin and now are not? Or is it that you are still living in your sin? Why not come out of that and be baptized and forgiven of your sins (Mk. 16:16)?

“Some”

This word lets us know in no uncertain terms that the sins listed in I Corinthians 6:9-10 entangled the members of the Corinthian church. This is significant for three reasons:

1) It says something about the apostle Paul who went to Corinth! He was willing and ready to preach the gospel to whomever would listen! (Just like he did at Rome - Rom. 1:16.) He understood Christ’s words to preach the gospel to “*every creature*” (Mk. 16:15), and this includes preaching to folks who have committed some of the most heinous sins! They needed forgiveness just as Paul did and as we all do. Yet, they could not be forgiven until they were told what to do to be saved (Mk.

16:16). When this happened, it is then that we know that folks accepted and were “washed”, “sanctified”, and “justified”.

2) It also tells us that people engaged in sins can come out of those sins and do what is right! Look again to I Corinthians 6:9-10 and see the list of sins of which Paul said those folks had been guilty. Do we see any that folks today either claim as not sinful, or merely some sort of “disease”? Yet, what does God call them?

The list of sins in I Corinthians 6:9-10, as well as similar lists in other verses are there to remind us that God has set a standard for all of us. He expects us to come out of those sins and live a righteous life. Sometimes, we are told by men that folks’ sins are a “disease,” or that they are somehow inbred into their genetic code. This is wrong. This passage makes it clear that regardless of the sin under consideration, one can be forgiven when he willingly listens to and obeys the gospel of Christ (Acts 18:8; Heb. 5:8-9).

3) We see that God considered this church as “His” even though it was made up of such former sinners (I Cor. 1:2, 14:37). Truly, God is forgiving, loving, and “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Pet. 3:9). When these folks repented of sins, and were baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38, 18:8), God accepted them and added them to His church (Acts 2:47)!

“Of You”

This phrase speaks not only to the Corinthians, but also to the other readers of this letter. May all Christians beware of arrogance and pride! You may have been guilty of the very sins mentioned here! No one can say that he has never sinned (I Jn. 1:10). There-

fore, let no one look down upon one who repents of sin and is baptized, or is restored as an erring Christian (Acts 2:38, 8:22; I Jn. 1:9). We, like the Corinthians, need to be “washed ... sanctified” and “justified”; and we will be when we do only what the Lord says!

Conclusion

Let us learn well the lessons the apostle Paul was teaching. In many ways, we are like these Corinthians, and we need to be reminded about where we came from, as well as what we are in Christ. Had it not been for Him, we would have no hope (Eph. 2:11-22)! At the same time, perhaps it is that we need to be reminded not to look down upon others in their sin, but give them a hand-up to get out of the mess they have made by teaching them the gospel that we learned (II Tim. 2:2). Let us care enough for people to teach them the truth that they might also be “washed”, “sanctified”, and “justified”!

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Faith Without Works Is A Farce.**

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**By J. C. ROADY, Evangelist
Sullivan, Indiana**

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It wears a Scriptural name. Rom. 16: 16. 1 Tim. 3: 15. Heb. 12: 22-23.

It has an infallible head. Col. 1: 18. Eph. 1: 22-23. Eph. 5-23.

It has a sure foundation. Eph. 2: 19-22. Acts 4: 11-12. 2 Tim. 2: 19.

It has a complete organization. Col. 2: 9-10. Eph. 3: 10-21.

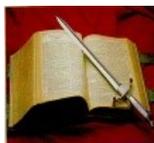
It has an open door. John 10: 9. John 14:6. Rev. 3: 7.

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