

Will Not Inherit the Kingdom of God – 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

Introduction – We live in a twisted culture where desires define identity and where desires rule. Whatever desire I have I can require of you to recognize as legitimate. The Lord does not see it this way and so Paul, in this chapter, is preaching to their shame (v5). Desires left unchecked do not lead to self-fulfillment and identity; they will send us to hell (James 1:14-15, Rom 6:23). Twice Paul says of the following list that a certain class of people will not inherit the kingdom. This is hate speech in our day and culture. “*Do not be deceived,*” Paul replies. Such hard words are needed to produce soft hearts. If these things will send us to hell, we ought to carefully step back and ask if this describes my life.

“**...will not inherit the kingdom of God..**” – To begin with, we might ask *who will* inherit the kingdom of God? Jesus says they are the poor in spirit (Matt 5:3), the meek (Matt 5:5), and those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake (Matt 5:10). They will inherit the kingdom, they will not work for it, they will not earn it, they will not deserve it, and they will know so (Eph 2:8-9). It will be the grace of God that they are poor in spirit, that they are meek, and that they are persecuted for righteousness’ sake for they will have been given faith in the faithfulness of Another who has lived, died, and been raised from the dead, conquering the foes who enslave our race. Sin comes in bunches, and so there are often lists like this (Gal 5:19-21, Rev 21:6-8). These are sins which must not characterize Christians. If they do, we lose our assurance of salvation. It is therefore worth considering each in turn (setting aside two for separate consideration next week).

Fornicators – This is where we get our word, “porn.” It is a word that has a broad definition including any kind of sexual uncleanness. Paul will deal with this in the particular problem Corinth faced in vv12ff. Holy living should be front and center in a Christian’s mind and this area is one where our mind and body must be in conformity with God (1 Thess 4:3-8). A practical definition would be that pornos/fornication is any kind of unmarried fooling around, and every reasonable person knows what fooling around includes. The problem is that our flesh tends to make us very unreasonable people.

Idolaters – This is in the middle of sexual sins because idolatry was often linked to spiritual adultery in the OT. Calvin said that the human mind is a perpetual forge of idols. We are constantly remaking God in our own image. Someone has said that you can identify your idol by filling in the blank, “I will only be satisfied/happy when I have _____.” Our country worships Demos, and Statism is our savior. Ironically, human enlightenment also has caused us to make an idol of our individual selves.

Adulterers – While this falls under the general sin of fornication, adultery gets special mention because adultery is treason against the family and God hates it particularly (Lev 20:10, Heb 13:4). And Jesus teaches us that adultery begins in the heart (Matt 5:27-30). God sees the heart, and what does He see there? A lot of adultery (Matt 15:19). The source of sins is sin and the source of sin is the human heart. Adultery should be a thing of horror to us such that we would cut off anything that causes us to fall into this sin rather than have that sin and go to hell. When someone commits adultery, he may think that he is getting away from God and going his own way. But Proverbs 22:14 tells us that it is actually evidence of God capturing him.

Thieves – Are we not a nation of thieves? Why are there locks on all our doors, expensive security systems everywhere – and passwords on everything? Our government is full of thievery by fiat because her people love to steal whenever they get the chance. Socialism is really just bad math, but each of us would be tempted to vote for it if we ourselves got more – which is why we have approved so many socialistic programs.

Covetous – Thievery is thriving because of envy and covetousness, and Paul calls this idolatry as well (Col 3:5). We are commanded to be content and contentment is a gift from God (Phil 4:11-13), and grumblers/complainers are the ungodly who walk according to their own lusts (Jude 14-15). If you are discontent, you are guilty of covetousness.

Drunkards – Wine is a blessing from God (Psalm 104:14-15) but it is also a mocker (Prov 20:1). This is a problem like other blessings (i.e. sexual intimacy) which God gives but which we can pervert. We must walk in the Spirit of soberness and self-control. Drunkards, coke-snorters, meth-heads, and pot-smokers are all condemned in this word.

Revilers – The world-conquering power of Christ is even displayed in the use of the tongue. Even when we are reviled, we are not to revile in return (Matt 5:11, 1 Pet 3:9), for we have the power and example of Christ (1 Pet 2:23). Revilers cuss at their spouses and children, mock and disrespect their parents and other authorities, and return evil words with evil words. And the kingdom is not for them.

Extortioners – Theft occurs when someone steals without consent. Extortion occurs when someone steals with consent by force, blackmail, or backroom deals and threats. If socialists are thieves, crony-capitalists (as opposed to free market capitalists) are extortioners. And if you threaten a member of your family if they dare to reveal to authorities some sin or crime you have committed, you are an extortioner.

You Do Not Want to Hear These Words: “*Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels...*” (Matt 25:41).

When They Say Don’t Talk Like That - Our culture, our generation, our people, are defined by this list. And that is why, while we are *in* the world, we must not be *of* the world. The world is in the process of telling Christians that they may not say that those who do these things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But it is a gift from God to be told just that – for we do not even deserve to be told. This is also why this world needs the gospel – needs to be saved – needs to be rescued by the One Who died to take away these sins. And when you take this list seriously and fall on your face before God, then you may read verse 11 and take great comfort.

Dave Hatcher – September 9, 2018

Notes for Little Saints

Growing up in your Christian faith means learning more and more to love God and more and more to hate sin. Hating your sin is difficult – we sin because we desire it, we like it. It takes God’s Word and His Spirit to change the way we think and the way we deal with our desires.

Psalm 1 is a great psalm to help us think about that. Turn there. Read it – then draw a picture of that tree which you are to be like, described in verse 3.