

And Such Were Some of You – 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Introduction – Our emphasis this sermon will be on the words of verse 11 and the need of the hour for a full-throated, typhoon-strength, Spirit-wrought gospel that turns us away from a “can-do” Christianity as well as any excuse-making for any sin that seems to still grip us. Without the efficacious work of God through Jesus Christ alone, there is not a chance in the world that you could be saved. And without the efficacious work of God through Christ alone, there is not a chance in the world you can walk in obedience, put off sin, and grow in holiness. But in Christ, you can and you must.

Watch the Verb Tense (v11) – In vv. 9-10, Paul *identifies* sinners in their sin. They are not simply those who fornicate, they are fornicators; they are not simply those who got drunk, they are drunkards. And so on. And those will not inherit the kingdom of God. And then, very importantly, he states, “*and such were some of you.*” There was a time where, for some of the Corinthians, their identity was tied up in their sin. They were lost in it; they were completely enslaved in it. But now their identity is no longer at all tied to the previous sin. They *were*, but they *are* no longer. God once spoke and said, “*Let there be light.*” In the new creation, God again spoke with His Word but this time the Word took on flesh and dwelt among us. This Word willingly took on Himself all our shame, guilt, and the death-sentence of our dark sins and in His death, He crushed it all, even death itself, and satisfied God’s justice. On the third day, this Word rose from the dead in order to make all things new. This is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God (2 Cor 4:6) and this is why we are new in Christ, separated from the old (2 Cor 5:17). This is what was done for us in Christ (Titus 3:3-7). It is appropriated by faith, itself a gift of God, and not by any works of our own (Eph 2:8-9) – and this is why the verbs remain passive and in the past tense in the rest of 1 Cor 6:11.

You Were Washed – This is referring to your baptism, “*the washing of regeneration*” in Titus 3:5. Baptism is not primarily the declaration of anything you have done. Baptism is a declaration of what God has done. You didn’t wash yourself; you were washed. You don’t come to Christ with anything but your sins and your sinfulness – your covenantal identification with fallen Adam. And then you are placed in Christ and you die with Him in baptism to be raised to new life in His resurrection life – all by faith alone in the power of the Holy Spirit, by which you then cry out, “*Abba, Father*” (Rom 6:3-10, 8:15-16).

You Were Sanctified – While there is the process of sanctification, Paul here is speaking of the one-time setting apart that takes place at conversion. This is why he had earlier called the Corinthians sanctified, or set-apart ones, called to be saints, or set-apart ones (1 Cor 1:2). They were called (by God), they were set-apart (by God). We only set ourselves apart for God because He first set us apart for Him.

You Were Justified – Theologically, this means you have been declared “righteous” by God. The wrath of God has been fully satisfied by the blood of Christ and His righteousness is imputed to you fully and completely. Relationally, this means you are at peace with God (Rom 5:1). You who once were His enemy have been made His friend.

In the Name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God – All of this has been done in His name and not in yours. All of this has been done by the Spirit and none of it by you. You can never earn this, you can never add to this, you can never help or improve on this. As Jesus said on the cross, “*It is finished.*” All you do is believe. *Grace to you, and peace* (1 Cor 1:3). This is the Good News for us because we know that if anything depended upon us, we would certainly mess it up.

Am I Messing This Up? - So how come I still struggle with these temptations? Why do I seem to still so easily fall? Am I really a Christian? If you are a normal and honest man or woman, you have, from time to time, these questions. As we all know, our ongoing sanctification is no cakewalk. Often, our old sinful patterns are like street car rails slicing across the straight road to the Celestial City that, if we slip into, will veer us off that road onto another path. And because we live in a culture that worships our desires, we give in to our old paths as though they were still “natural.” “Christians aren’t perfect, just forgiven.” Yes, true. But that justifying forgiveness puts a true Christian on a path to battle against his lusts. He signs no armistice with them. But why are we still so dogged by these temptations? Is it not so that we would regularly fall on our face, repent of our pride, and cling to Christ and Christ alone in this ongoing battle

(Rom 12:2). This world would press us into its mold. But we are to be transformed by the renewing of our mind. Renewing is the ongoing, present work of our life in Christ.

Identity that Breaks the Power of Sin – Our identity in Christ, which is ours by faith, is that which grants us the power (by means of the Spirit) to say “no” to temptation. And so do not attempt this on your own (Gal 3:3). But we must “*put to death*” our “*members*” (Col 3:5ff) which are not according to our nature anymore. These lists are similar, not because we still have reigning sin, but because we have remaining sin that must be mortified. And so, while we have come to Christ and found rest (Matt 11:28-29), in this life it will be an already/not yet sort of thing. We are given rest, but we yearn for rest. We are cleansed and we look forward to our final cleansing. John Owen famously said that a man should not think he makes any progress in godliness “*who walks not daily over the bellies of his lusts.*” And C.S. Lewis rightly warned, “*Failures will be forgiven; it is acquiescence that is fatal, the permitted, regularized presence of an area in ourselves which we still claim for our own.*”

And Such Were... - But you aren’t anymore. And He who began a good work in you, will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. No excuses. Go fight. Victory will be ours. No, victory will be Christ’s.

Dave Hatcher – September 23, 2018

Notes for Little Saints

Last week I had you write out verse 11 of 1 Corinthians 6. Do so again....

This is talking about us – this is talking about you. It’s about what God has done in you through Jesus. And it’s wonderful.

You were washed – Your baptism is God’s declaration that He bought you and owns you. He has made you clean. Romans 6:4 says that we were buried with Christ in His _____ so that we could be raised with Him to walk in newness of _____.

You were sanctified – One way to think of this is that God chose you, by name, to be His, to be in His family, on His team. He did so because He loved you – even before you were born. In fact, Ephesians 1:4 says that He chose you before the _____ of the _____. That’s a long time ago!

You were justified – This means that God took all your sins and placed them on Christ and took all of Christ’s righteousness and placed them on you. And because of this, we have _____ with God (look up Romans 5:1).

We will sing “Rock of Ages” and I love this line:

“Nothing in my hands I bring; simply to Thy cross I cling.”