



REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

PEOPLE GROUPS BANNED FROM HEAVEN

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9–11



SERMON & PASTOR'S COMMENTARY

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PEOPLE GROUPS BANNED FROM HEAVEN

Aloha, and welcome to Reason Together Church from the beautiful Island of Oahu, Hawaii.

My name is Dr. Thomas Hawksley and I am blessed to be the Senior Pastor here and let me say that I am so thankful that you have joined us today.

Whether you are here with us in person or joining us online, you are part of this conversation.

At Reason Together Church, we believe that honest questions deserve honest Biblical answers.

So bring your questions.

Open your Bible.

And let's Reason Together the Word of God.

Before we begin, let us pray.

Our Heavenly Father,

Thank You for giving us Your Word.

Thank You that Your Word tells us the truth about our sin.

But thank You also that Your Word tells us the wonderful truth about Your grace.

Lord, some people may approach today's question with fear.

They may recognize themselves in the sins we are about to read.

They may wonder whether their past has placed them beyond Your forgiveness.

Help us to speak the truth without weakening Your warning.

Help us also to proclaim Your grace without limiting Your invitation.

Open our hearts.

Open our minds.

Open our Bibles.

And help us to reason together through Your Word.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Our primary Scripture today is 1 Corinthians 6:9–11.

The Apostle Paul wrote:

“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,

Nor thieves,

nor covetous,

nor drunkards,

nor revilers,

nor extortioners,

shall inherit the kingdom of God.

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.”

Those are serious words.

“The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Before we reason together through those words, let me take care of two brief matters.

At Reason Together Church, we do not pass an offering plate.

If you are our guest, we encourage you to support your home church.

For those who consider Reason Together Church their church home, giving boxes are in the back and other information about giving is available online or in your bulletin.

We never want money to become a barrier between anyone and the Word of God.

If this is your first time with us, we would also love to stay connected with you.

Our guest card asks for only your first name and email address.

That is all.

After our service, I hope you will join us in the Reason Together Café.

We have free locally grown coffee served in our Reason Together Church mugs.

And as always, we offer free refills on conversations.

Today’s working title is:

“People Groups Banned From Heaven.”

Our question is intensely personal.

If I am guilty of one of the sins that the Bible says will not inherit the kingdom of God, how can I go to Heaven?

Maybe you have read this passage before.

Maybe you arrived at one of the sins in the list and suddenly stopped.

Perhaps you thought:

“That describes me.”

“I have committed adultery.”

“I have lived in sexual immorality.”

“I have stolen.”

“I have been controlled by alcohol.”

“I have been greedy.”

“I have torn people apart with my words.”

“I have exploited other people.”

“I have engaged in homosexual conduct.”

“And the Bible says that people who do these things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

“So what does that mean for me?”

“Am I banned from Heaven?”

“Has my sin placed me beyond God’s forgiveness?”

“Is there any hope for someone like me?”

Those are not merely theological questions.

They are questions that can keep someone awake at night.

They can make a person afraid to enter a church.

They can make someone afraid to open a Bible.

They can even cause a person to believe that there is no reason to come to Jesus because Jesus would never receive someone like him.

We must answer that question truthfully.

We must not weaken the warning.

But we must also keep reading until we reach God’s answer.

Paul begins with these words:

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?”

The subject of the sentence is not merely adulterers.

It is not merely drunkards.

It is not merely thieves.

It is not merely people guilty of sexual sins.

Paul says:

“The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

That includes far more people than we might initially imagine.

In fact, it includes every one of us apart from Jesus Christ.

Paul then gives another warning:

“Be not deceived.”

That phrase tells us something important.

It is possible to deceive ourselves about sin.

We can convince ourselves that sin no longer matters.

We can decide that because society approves of something, God must approve of it too.

We can rename sin.

We can excuse sin.

We can celebrate sin.

We can hide sin.

We can compare our sin to someone else’s sin and conclude that ours is not very serious.

But changing what we call something does not change what God has said about it.

God is the Creator.

God is the Lord.

God determines what is righteous and what is unrighteous.

Our opinions change.

Society’s standards change.

What one generation condemns, another generation may celebrate.

What one culture accepts, another culture may reject.

But the Word of God does not rise and fall with public opinion.

“Be not deceived.”

God loves us enough to warn us.

A warning is not evidence that God hates us.

A warning may be evidence of His love.

If a bridge has collapsed, the loving thing to do is to place a warning before the broken bridge.

It would not be loving to remove the warning because someone might find it offensive.

If a medicine is poisonous when taken incorrectly, the loving thing to do is to place a warning on the bottle.

It would not be loving to hide the danger because the truth might frighten someone.

God warns us about sin because sin is real.

Its consequences are real.

Judgment is real.

Eternity is real.

“The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

We cannot remove those words from the Bible.

We cannot preach grace faithfully by pretending that there is nothing from which we need to be saved.

But notice how broad Paul’s list is.

He mentions fornicators.

This refers to sexual activity outside the boundaries God established for marriage.

He mentions idolaters.

An idol is anything we allow to occupy the place that belongs to God.

We may picture a person kneeling before a carved statue.

But an idol can also be money.

An idol can be a career.

An idol can be power.

An idol can be another person.

An idol can even be our own desires.

He mentions adulterers.

Adultery violates the marriage covenant and causes wounds that may affect spouses, children, families and churches.

He mentions thieves.

We normally think of someone breaking into a house or robbing a store.

But theft includes taking anything that rightfully belongs to someone else.

It can involve money.

It can involve property.

It can involve dishonest business practices.

It can involve accepting payment for work we knowingly refused to perform.

Paul mentions the covetous.

Covetousness is an uncontrolled desire for what belongs to someone else.

It may be one of the most socially acceptable sins in the entire list.

A covetous person may appear respectable.

He may attend church.

He may have a good reputation.

But his heart is consumed by acquiring more.

Paul mentions drunkards.

The issue is not merely that someone once consumed alcohol.

We addressed that question more fully in our study, “Is Drinking a Little Alcohol Okay?”

Here, Paul describes a life characterized and controlled by drunkenness.

Paul mentions revilers.

A reviler uses words to abuse, insult, destroy or defame other people.

That belongs in the same Biblical warning as sexual immorality, theft and drunkenness.

Some people would never walk into a bar.

They would never steal someone’s wallet.

They would never commit adultery.

But they repeatedly wound their spouses, children, neighbors and fellow church members with cruel words.

Paul mentions extortioners.

These are people who take advantage of others through force, threats, fraud or abuse of power.

This list reaches into bedrooms.

It reaches into businesses.

It reaches into bank accounts.

It reaches into conversations.

It reaches into relationships.

And it reaches into churches.

The passage does not allow us to point at one group of people and say:

“This is about them.”

This passage is a mirror.

Sooner or later, if we look honestly, we will see ourselves.

Even if we have not committed every specific act in this list, the opening statement still applies:

“The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Romans 3:10 says:

“There is none righteous, no, not one.”

Romans 3:23 says:

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

“All” includes the adulterer.

“All” includes the thief.

“All” includes the drunkard.

“All” includes the sexually immoral.

But “all” also includes the respectable religious person.

“All” includes the pastor.

“All” includes the deacon.

“All” includes the Sunday school teacher.

“All” includes the person who has never been arrested and whose reputation appears spotless.

Every person is born with a sinful nature.

Every person is born spiritually lost.

Every person must repent.

Every person must be saved.

We are not born qualified for Heaven and then permanently banned after committing one particular sin.

We are all born in need of salvation.

That is why Jesus told Nicodemus:

“Ye must be born again.”

Nicodemus was not a notorious criminal.

He was not known as a drunkard.

He was not living publicly in sexual immorality.

Nicodemus was educated.

He was respected.

He was religious.

But Jesus did not tell Nicodemus that his religion was good enough.

Jesus said:

“Ye must be born again.”

The immoral person must be born again.

The moral person must be born again.

The person with a criminal record must be born again.

The person with a perfect public reputation must be born again.

The poor must be born again.

The wealthy must be born again.

The person sitting in a bar must be born again.

And the person sitting in a church must be born again.

No one enters Heaven by belonging to the right earthly group.

No one is saved because he compared himself to someone whose sins appeared worse.

No one inherits the kingdom of God because he managed to keep his failures out of public view.

We need the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

This leads us back to the title:

“People Groups Banned From Heaven.”

The title expresses the fear people experience when they read this passage.

They see categories of people and wonder whether God has permanently closed Heaven to everyone who has ever belonged to one of them.

But Paul is not identifying groups of people whom Jesus refuses to save.

Paul is describing unrighteous lives that need to be redeemed.

The passage does not tell us whom Jesus refuses to save.

It tells us what Jesus must save us from.

There is no contradiction between God's love and His warning.

God's love does not require Him to pretend that sin is righteousness.

And God's righteousness does not prevent Him from showing mercy to sinners.

At the cross, we see both His righteousness and His love.

God did not ignore sin.

Jesus paid for it.

God did not pretend that sin was harmless.

Jesus bore its penalty.

God did not lower His righteous standard.

Jesus fulfilled it.

The cross tells us that our sin was so serious that Jesus Christ had to die.

But the cross also tells us that God loved us enough to send His Son to die for us.

Romans 5:8 says:

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Not after we repaired ourselves.

Not after we conquered every habit.

Not after we proved that we deserved another opportunity.

“While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Now we arrive at the six words that change the entire passage:

“And such were some of you.”

Let us say those six words again:

“And such were some of you.”

Paul was writing to people in the church at Corinth.

The people described in verses 9 and 10 were not merely hypothetical sinners living somewhere outside the church.

Some of them were sitting inside the church.

Some of the Corinthian believers had been fornicators.

Some had been idolaters.

Some had been adulterers.

Some had been thieves.

Some had been covetous.

Some had been drunkards.

Some had been revilers.

Some had been extortioners.

Some had been involved in the sexual conduct described by Paul.

But Paul did not say:

“And such are all of you, and there is no hope.”

He said:

“And such were some of you.”

That little word “were” matters.

Their past had been real.

Their guilt had been real.

Their sins had not been imaginary or insignificant.

But those sins no longer defined their standing before God.

Something had happened to them.

Paul explains what happened:

“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.”

They had been washed.

Sin stains us in ways that we cannot cleanse by ourselves.

We may hide the visible evidence.

We may repair some of the earthly damage.

We may apologize to people we have injured.

We should do those things whenever possible.

But we cannot wash away our own guilt before God.

The blood of Jesus Christ can do what our efforts cannot do.

First John 1:7 says:

“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Notice that final word:

“All.”

Not some sin.

Not only socially respectable sin.

Not every sin except the one you committed.

“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Paul then says:

“But ye are sanctified.”

To be sanctified is to be set apart for God.

These people had belonged to sin.

Now they belonged to God.

Their sanctification did not mean that they had instantly reached sinless perfection.

The Corinthian church had many problems.

Paul wrote this letter partly because they still needed correction.

But they had been set apart as God’s people.

And God had begun the work of changing them.

Salvation is not merely God changing our destination after death.

Salvation begins changing our lives now.

Then Paul says:

“But ye are justified.”

To be justified means to be declared righteous before God.

How could guilty people be declared righteous?

Did God pretend they had never sinned?

No.

Did God decide that righteousness no longer mattered?

No.

Were they justified because they had accumulated enough good works to outweigh their bad works?

No.

They were justified because Jesus Christ had paid the penalty for their sins and provided the righteousness they could never produce for themselves.

Second Corinthians 5:21 says:

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;
that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Jesus took our place.

He bore our sin.

He paid our penalty.

And everyone who places faith in Him receives a righteousness that does not come from human achievement.

The Corinthians were not saved because their sins were small.

They were saved because their Savior is great.

They were not saved because they had repaired their past.

They were saved because Jesus had paid for it.

They were not saved because they had never belonged to the groups in Paul’s list.

They were saved because Christ had washed, sanctified and justified them.

Perhaps someone is thinking:

“That sounds wonderful, but what must I do before Jesus will receive me?”

“Do I have to conquer every sinful habit first?”

“Do I have to repair everything I have broken?”

“Do I have to prove that I can live a righteous life before I ask Him to save me?”

No.

If you could make yourself righteous, you would not need a Savior.

If you could wash away your own sin, you would not need the blood of Christ.

If you could justify yourself, Jesus would not have needed to die.

You come to Christ as a sinner.

But you do not come demanding that He approve of your sin.

You come in repentance and faith.

Acts 20:21 speaks of:

“Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Repentance is not payment for salvation.

Repentance is not a good work that earns God’s grace.

Repentance is a change of mind that turns us toward God.

We stop defending our sin against Him.

We agree with what He has said.

We recognize that we cannot save ourselves.

And we place our faith in Jesus Christ.

We do not change ourselves so that Christ will agree to save us.

We come to Christ in repentance and faith, and He begins changing us.

There is no salvation without repentance.

But repentance does not mean becoming perfect before coming to Jesus.

If you are drowning, you do not learn to swim before calling for help.

If you are sick, you do not cure yourself before going to the physician.

Jesus said in Mark 2:17:

“They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick:

I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

The Great Physician does not tell sick people to cure themselves before entering His office.

He calls sinners to come to Him.

But when we come, we must allow the Physician to tell us what is wrong.

We cannot demand that Jesus save us while denying that we need to be saved.

We cannot insist that He forgive our sin while declaring that our sin is actually righteousness.

We come honestly.

We come humbly.

We come repentantly.

And we come believing that Jesus Christ is able and willing to save us.

This raises another important question.

Does becoming a Christian mean that we will never sin again?

No.

First John 1:8 says:

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

Christians still struggle with temptation.

Christians sometimes fall.

Christians sometimes commit serious sins.

Christians require God’s correction, forgiveness and restoration.

If committing any single sin in Paul’s list caused a believer instantly to lose salvation, then salvation would become an endless cycle.

Saved today.

Lost tomorrow.

Saved again on Sunday.

Lost again on Monday.

That is not the security Jesus gives His sheep.

But we must not travel to the opposite error.

Grace is not permission to live in deliberate rebellion against God.

A person cannot honestly say:

“I belong to Jesus, but I reject His authority.”

“I belong to Jesus, but I intend to continue defending what He calls sin.”

“I want Jesus as my Savior, but I refuse Him as my Lord.”

The issue is not sinless perfection.

The issue is the direction and allegiance of the heart.

A genuine believer may fall into sin.

When the Holy Spirit brings conviction, that believer may resist for a time.

He may require correction.

He may experience painful consequences.

But God does not leave His children comfortably and permanently surrendered to sin.

First John 1:9 says:

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Again, we find the language of cleansing.

Again, we find hope.

The Christian life is not a life in which we never fall.

It is a life in which Christ does not abandon us where we fell.

Let us return to some of the people described in Paul’s list.

What about the person who committed adultery?

Adultery is serious.

It violates a covenant.

It betrays trust.

It can tear apart a family.

Forgiveness does not erase every earthly consequence.

Forgiveness does not mean that injured people must pretend nothing happened.

But adultery is not beyond the blood of Christ.

David committed adultery with Bathsheba.

David's sin was followed by deception and the arranged death of Uriah.

The consequences were terrible.

God did not excuse David's conduct.

But when David was confronted, he confessed:

"I have sinned against the Lord."

Psalm 51 records the cry of his repentant heart:

"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."

David needed to be washed.

And so do we.

What about the person who has stolen?

The thief on the cross could not return what he had taken.

He could not rebuild his reputation.

He could not perform years of community service.

His hands were fastened to a cross.

His remaining earthly life was measured in hours.

But he turned to Jesus and said:

"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

Jesus answered:

“Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”

The thief could do nothing to earn salvation.

But he could place his faith in the Savior beside him.

What about the drunkard?

Addiction can damage the body.

It can destroy relationships.

It can consume money needed by a family.

It can lead to violence, neglect and shame.

But the drunkard is not beyond the reach of Jesus Christ.

The Lord can forgive him.

The Lord can give him a new beginning.

The Lord can use other believers, counselors, physicians, treatment and accountability to help him walk in freedom.

What about the covetous person?

He may not appear scandalous.

He may live behind an attractive front door.

He may wear expensive clothing.

He may sit faithfully in a church pew.

But his heart may worship possessions.

He needs the same repentance and the same Savior.

What about the reviler?

Perhaps cruel words have become so normal that the person no longer recognizes them as abuse.

Perhaps he humiliates his spouse.

Perhaps she destroys the reputation of a neighbor.

Perhaps he uses social media to attack anyone who disagrees with him.

Words can wound people for years.

But the reviler can be forgiven.

A mouth once used to destroy people can be transformed into a mouth that encourages, comforts and proclaims the gospel.

What about the extortioner or swindler?

Forgiveness does not mean keeping everything dishonestly obtained.

Repentance may require restitution when restitution is possible.

But restitution does not purchase salvation.

It is evidence that Christ has begun changing the heart.

Then we come to homosexual conduct.

It belongs in this study because it appears in our primary passage.

We must not remove it from Scripture.

But we must not pretend that it is the only sin in Scripture.

The KJV uses the expressions “effeminate” and “abusers of themselves with mankind.”

One clear contemporary rendering of these expressions refers to men who submit to or perform homosexual acts.

We examined the distinction between temptation, identity and conduct more fully in our previous Reason Together Study, “Is It a Sin to Be Gay?”

We do not need to repeat that entire study today.

For our present question, the essential truth is clear.

Homosexual conduct is not excluded from God’s moral warning.

But neither is a person who has practiced homosexuality excluded from God’s offer of salvation.

That person is no further beyond the saving power of Jesus Christ than the adulterer.

He is no further beyond the saving power of Christ than the thief.

He is no further beyond the saving power of Christ than the drunkard.

He is no further beyond the saving power of Christ than the covetous person.

He is no further beyond the saving power of Christ than the reviler or extortioner.

The same six words apply:

“And such were some of you.”

We must never remove a sin from God’s warning because society finds the warning uncomfortable.

But we must also never remove a sinner from God’s invitation because we find that person’s past uncomfortable.

The gospel does not belong only to people whose sins resemble ours.

The ground at the foot of the cross is level.

Every one of us comes as a sinner.

Every one of us comes through repentance and faith.

Every one of us must be washed.

Every one of us must be sanctified.

Every one of us must be justified.

And every one of us who is saved is saved in the name of the Lord Jesus.

So let us return to the question:

“If I am guilty of one of the sins that the Bible says will not inherit the kingdom of God, how can I go to Heaven?”

Here is the answer.

You cannot enter Heaven because your sin was unimportant.

You cannot enter Heaven because other people have done worse things.

You cannot enter Heaven because society approves of what you did.

You cannot enter Heaven because you have accumulated more good deeds than bad deeds.

You cannot enter Heaven because you joined a church.

You cannot enter Heaven because you were baptized.

You cannot enter Heaven because your parents were Christians.

You cannot enter Heaven because a pastor spoke kindly about you.

You can enter only through Jesus Christ.

Jesus said in John 14:6:

“I am the way, the truth, and the life:

no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

That is exclusive concerning the way of salvation.

There is only one way.

But that one way is open to every kind of sinner.

Jesus also said in John 6:37:

“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

Think carefully about that promise.

“Him that cometh to me.”

The adulterer may come.

The fornicator may come.

The idolater may come.

The thief may come.

The covetous person may come.

The drunkard may come.

The reviler may come.

The extortioner may come.

The person who has practiced homosexuality may come.

The respectable religious sinner may come.

The person whose sin is known throughout the community may come.

The person whose sin remains hidden from everyone except God may come.

“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

Jesus did not say:

“I will receive you if your past is not too terrible.”

He did not say:

“I will receive you if you first make yourself worthy.”

He did not say:

“I will receive you unless your sin appears in 1 Corinthians 6.”

He said:

“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

Second Peter 3:9 tells us that the Lord is:

“Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

God’s desire is not to assemble a list of people He enjoys excluding.

God calls sinners to repentance because He desires to save them.

The warning and the invitation belong together.

“The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

That is the warning.

“And such were some of you.”

That is the testimony.

“But ye are washed.”

That is cleansing.

“But ye are sanctified.”

That is a new belonging.

“But ye are justified.”

That is a new standing before God.

“In the name of the Lord Jesus.”

That is the only Savior.

Perhaps you have spent years believing that your past placed you beyond the reach of God.

Perhaps someone told you that Jesus would never receive a person like you.

Perhaps you have been afraid to pray because you thought God did not want to hear your voice.

Perhaps you have avoided church because you believed that everyone inside was righteous and you were the only sinner.

Let me tell you the truth.

Churches are not museums filled with perfect people.

At their best, churches are families of sinners who have been rescued by Jesus Christ.

Some of us have different histories.

Some of us carry different scars.

Some of our sins became public.

Some remained private.

But none of us stands before God on the strength of our own righteousness.

We stand only in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

The list in 1 Corinthians 6 tells us why we need salvation.

Verse 11 tells us what salvation can do.

The Bible does not give us a list of people whom Jesus refuses to save.

It gives us a list of sins from which Jesus came to save people.

If this passage describes your past, do not stop reading at verse 10.

Read verse 11.

“And such were some of you.”

If this passage describes your present life, do not use God’s grace as an excuse to remain where you are.

Hear His warning.

Respond to His call.

Come to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith.

You can be washed.

You can be sanctified.

You can be justified.

Not because you deserve it.

Not because you earned it.

Not because your sin did not matter.

But because Jesus died for sinners and rose again.

There may still be consequences from your past.

There may still be relationships requiring repair.

There may still be habits that must be overcome one day at a time.

There may still be temptations you must resist.

There may still be a long process of healing and growth.

But none of those things means that Jesus cannot save you today.

Second Corinthians 5:17 says:

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:

old things are passed away;

behold, all things are become new.”

The verse does not say:

“If any nearly perfect person be in Christ.”

It says:

“If any man be in Christ.”

Your deepest identity does not have to remain attached to the worst thing you ever did.

In Christ, you can become a new creature.

So are there people groups banned from Heaven?

There are no categories of sinners whom Jesus refuses to receive when they come to Him in repentance and faith.

But there is also no alternative entrance for those who reject Him.

Apart from Christ, all of us stand condemned.

In Christ, every repentant believer can be washed, sanctified and justified.

The final question is not:

“Is my sin worse than someone else’s?”

The final question is:

“Have I come to Jesus Christ?”

Have you admitted that you are a sinner?

Have you stopped trusting in your own righteousness?

Have you turned toward God in repentance?

Have you placed your faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

If not, you can come today.

Whether you are sitting here with us today, watching or listening to this message online or reading this study wherever you may be, these next words are for you.

You do not have to wait until the end of the service, be inside a church building or have a pastor standing beside you to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior.

You can come to Him right now, wherever you are.

First, admit to God that you are a sinner and cannot save yourself.

Believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that He died on the cross for your sins, that He was buried and that He rose again.

Turn toward God in repentance and place your faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

Romans 10:9 says:

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,
and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead,
thou shalt be saved.”

Romans 10:13 gives this wonderful promise:

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

You may speak to God in your own words.

No particular arrangement of words saves you.

A prayer is not a magic formula.

Jesus Christ saves you when you come to Him with genuine repentance and faith.

If you are unsure what to say, you may pray something like this:

“Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner.

I know that I cannot save myself.

I believe that You are the Son of God.

I believe that You died on the cross for my sins, that You were buried and that You rose again.

I turn from trusting in myself and place my faith in You alone.

Please forgive me, save me and make me a new creature.

I receive You as my personal Savior.

Thank You for receiving me and giving me eternal life.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.”

The prayer itself is not what saves you.

Your salvation rests upon Jesus Christ and what He accomplished through His death, burial and resurrection.

You do not have to hide your past from Him.

He already knows it.

You do not have to minimize your guilt.

He already paid for it.

You do not have to make yourself worthy.

You must trust in the One who is worthy.

And Jesus has promised:

“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

If you are here with us today and have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, please speak with me after the service.

I would consider it a privilege to pray with you and help you connect with a church family and other believers who can encourage you, help you understand God's Word and walk beside you as you begin your new life in Christ.

If you are watching or listening to this study online or reading this message through our website or social media, please let us know if you have trusted Christ as your Savior today.

You can contact us through our website at www.ReasonTogether.Church or email me directly at Pastor@ReasonTogether.Church.

We would love to hear from you, pray with you and help you connect with a faithful, Bible-believing church where you can grow in your new life with Christ.

Let us pray.

Our Heavenly Father,

Thank You for telling us the truth.

Thank You for warning us that the unrighteous shall not inherit Your kingdom.

Keep us from deceiving ourselves about sin.

But Father, thank You that the warning is not the end of the passage.

Thank You for those six wonderful words:

“And such were some of you.”

Thank You that sinners can be washed.

Thank You that sinners can be sanctified.

Thank You that sinners can be justified in the name of the Lord Jesus.

For anyone who believes that his past has placed him beyond Your forgiveness, help him to hear the promise of Jesus:

“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

For anyone using grace as permission to remain in rebellion, help that person to hear Your warning and come to repentance.

For those of us who have already trusted in Christ, keep us humble.

Never allow us to look down upon another sinner as though we saved ourselves.

Help us remember what we were.

Help us remember what Christ has done.

Help us proclaim both Your truth and Your grace.

And if someone is ready to receive Jesus Christ today, help that person to turn toward You in repentance and place complete faith in Jesus as Savior.

Thank You that there is no sin too great for the blood of Jesus to cleanse when a sinner comes to Him in repentance and faith.

We ask these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.

If today's question has raised something personal for you, I would be honored to speak with you.

You do not have to share your story publicly.

You do not have to face your questions alone.

Please join us after the service in the Reason Together Café.

The coffee is free.

The conversation is free.

And the grace of God is beyond price.

Thank you for reasoning together with us through the Word of God.

To all our first-time guests, Aloha Nui Loa.

REASON TOGETHER STUDIES

PASTOR'S COMMENTARY

PEOPLE GROUPS BANNED FROM HEAVEN

1 Corinthians 6:9–11

*“And such were some of you: but ye are washed,
but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified.” 1 Corinthians 6:11*

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Pastor & Teacher

Commentary in Brief

CENTRAL CONCLUSION First Corinthians 6:9–11 does not identify classes of sinners whom Jesus Christ refuses to save. It warns that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God, then testifies that people formerly characterized by the very sins Paul named had been washed, sanctified and justified. Every person begins lost, every person must repent and every person who places faith in Jesus Christ alone may be saved.

The title sounds as though Heaven has a list of permanently prohibited people. That is the fear beneath the question. A reader reaches adultery, fornication, drunkenness, theft, greed, reviling, extortion or homosexual conduct and thinks, “That describes me. Has God closed the door?” The question is not merely whether these acts are sinful. The question is whether a guilty person can still be received by Christ.

Paul’s answer requires us to keep three verses together. Verses 9 and 10 give a warning that must not be softened. Verse 11 gives a testimony that must not be postponed. The same passage that exposes unrighteousness also announces cleansing, sanctification and justification in the name of the Lord Jesus. If we stop at verse 10, we can leave a repentant sinner in despair. If we ignore verses 9 and 10, we can leave a deceived sinner undisturbed. Faithful ministry speaks both truths.

This commentary follows the passage from warning to gospel. It explains why the list is a mirror rather than a weapon, why “And such were some of you” changes the direction of the passage and why grace neither excuses rebellion nor demands that a sinner repair himself before coming to Christ. The final purpose is personal: to help the reader answer not merely “What group am I in?” but “Have I come to Jesus Christ?”

1. Begin with the Question Beneath the Question

The Fear of Permanent Exclusion

Many people do not approach 1 Corinthians 6 as detached students. They approach it with a memory. They remember a marriage they violated, a body they misused, money they stole, years controlled by alcohol, people they wounded with words or conduct they now understand differently. When Paul says that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God, the warning feels like a verdict attached to their name.

That fear can produce two opposite reactions. One person may stay away from Christ because he assumes Christ will reject him. Another may redefine the sin because admitting guilt feels unbearable. The gospel permits neither response. Christ does not require the sinner to pretend innocence, and He does not tell the guilty person that mercy is unavailable. He calls sinners to come honestly.

A Passage Addressed to a Church

Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, not merely to observers outside it. Chapters 5 and 6 address tolerated immorality, lawsuits, defrauding believers and misuse of the body. The vice list therefore functions as pastoral correction. Paul reminds professing believers that the conduct of the unrighteous contradicts the identity and calling of those who belong to Christ.

The church setting also supplies hope. Paul is not describing a population so distant that no redeemed person could recognize it. He says that some members of the Corinthian church had lived in the named patterns. The warning is addressed seriously to the church, and the testimony of transformation is found within the church.

PASTORAL STARTING POINT Do not begin by asking which other people belong in Paul's list. Begin by allowing the passage to expose our shared need for the righteousness of Christ.

2. The Warning and the Invitation Belong Together

A Warning Is Not Hatred

Modern discussion sometimes treats any moral warning as evidence of rejection. Scripture presents warning differently. A warning can be an act of love because it tells the truth about danger before the consequence arrives. God does not love sinners by pretending that sin is harmless. He loves sinners by telling the truth, providing a Savior and calling them to repentance while the invitation remains open.

The cross joins righteousness and love. God did not rename sin, lower His standard or overlook guilt. Jesus bore sin's penalty. Romans 5:8 says that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The seriousness of the cross tells us that sin could not simply be ignored. The gift of the cross tells us that sinners were not abandoned.

Neither Half Can Replace the Other

A message containing only warning may sound Biblical while failing to reach Paul's own gospel conclusion. A message containing only welcome may sound compassionate while withholding the reason anyone needs to be saved. Paul gives us the warning, "shall not inherit," and the testimony, "such were some of you." The church must preserve the order and force of both.

GOSPEL BALANCE Grace is not faithful when it denies the danger from which Christ saves us. Warning is not faithful when it hides the Savior who receives repentant sinners.

3. "The Unrighteous" Is the Controlling Category

The Sentence Begins Before the List

Paul begins, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" The controlling word is unrighteous. The nouns that follow provide recognizable examples, but the problem is larger than any one example. The passage does not divide humanity into respectable righteous people and a few scandalous groups. Apart from Christ, all stand on the wrong side of the word unrighteous.

Romans 3:10 says, "There is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The word all prevents moral comparison from becoming a plan of salvation. A hidden sin does not make a person righteous. A good public reputation does not provide the righteousness God requires. Religious service cannot create it. The pastor, deacon, church member, criminal and outwardly respectable neighbor all need Christ.

Born Lost, Not Later Disqualified

We are not born qualified for Heaven and then permanently disqualified when we commit one particular act. We are born spiritually lost and must be born again. Jesus spoke those words to Nicodemus, a learned and respected religious man. “Ye must be born again” applies as truly to the churchgoing moralist as it does to the person whose life appears in Paul’s list.

This truth removes both pride and despair. Pride cannot say, “I never became one of those people, therefore God must accept me.” Despair cannot say, “I became one of those people, therefore Christ cannot receive me.” Both people require the same miracle of grace and the same righteousness of Christ.

INTERPRETIVE RULE Read every specific sin beneath Paul’s opening category of unrighteousness and every sinner beneath Scripture’s universal declaration that all have sinned.

4. “Be Not Deceived”

Self-Deception Is Part of the Danger

Paul inserts the command “Be not deceived” before the list. The warning assumes that people can become persuaded that unrighteousness no longer matters. We can rename conduct, compare ourselves with someone worse, appeal to changing social approval or separate a profession of faith from any willingness to submit to Christ. None of these strategies changes God’s judgment.

The command also warns the church against selective deception. A congregation may speak forcefully about sexual sins while treating greed, verbal abuse, drunkenness or dishonest gain as minor personality problems. Another congregation may emphasize welcome so strongly that repentance disappears. Paul’s list presses against both distortions.

Truth Spoken for Rescue

The purpose of naming sin is not humiliation. It is rescue. A physician does not help a sick patient by changing the diagnosis to something more flattering. Neither does a pastor help a soul by calling righteous what God calls unrighteous. Yet diagnosis is not the final goal. The physician names the disease in order to direct the patient toward treatment. Scripture exposes sin in order to direct sinners toward Christ.

WARNING PRINCIPLE God’s warning must not be removed because it is uncomfortable. Its discomfort may be the mercy that awakens a person to the need for salvation.

5. Read the Whole Vice List

The List Reaches More Places Than Expected

The sins named in 1 Corinthians 6 reach into worship, sexuality, marriage, property, appetite, speech and power. Fornicators and adulterers violate God’s sexual order. Idolaters give the place belonging to God to something else. Thieves take what belongs to others. The covetous are ruled by the desire for more. Drunkards are characterized by intoxication. Revilers injure with abusive speech. Extortioners or swindlers exploit people for gain.

The list therefore enters bedrooms, businesses, bank accounts, conversations, families and churches. It includes conduct society condemns and conduct society rewards. Greed may wear respectable clothing. Reviling may be disguised as blunt honesty. Exploitation may hide behind a contract. Idolatry may be directed toward a career, reputation or desire rather than a carved image.

A Mirror Rather Than a Weapon

When the passage is aimed mainly at a disliked group, the reader can avoid its purpose. Paul's first concern is not to provide ammunition for a cultural argument. It is to expose unrighteous patterns and remind the church what salvation has done. The correct response is not, "I am glad Paul named them." It is, "Apart from Christ, I also need cleansing and righteousness."

No single list in Scripture names every possible sin. Galatians 5:19–21, Ephesians 5:5 and Revelation 21:8 overlap with this passage but are not identical to it. The lists provide representative patterns that expose the flesh and warn against false assurance. Their force should not be limited to the exact nouns we find easiest to condemn.

CONTEXT PRINCIPLE The passage does not permit us to isolate one controversial sin while quietly excusing other forms of unrighteousness named in the same sentence.

6. What It Means Not to Inherit the Kingdom

A Real and Final Warning

The public question uses the word Heaven. Paul uses the richer expression "inherit the kingdom of God." Biblical kingdom language includes God's saving rule and the believer's final participation in the life God has promised. The wording should not be reduced to the loss of optional rewards while an unrighteous person nevertheless enters God's kingdom apart from Christ. Paul intends a serious warning about final exclusion.

The future expression "shall not inherit" points beyond present inconvenience. Sin is not merely an unhealthy habit with temporary effects. Unrighteousness places a person under divine judgment. The warning explains why a Savior is necessary and why repentance cannot be replaced with general admiration for Jesus.

The List Is Not a Roll of Unforgivable Sins

A real warning does not mean every named sin is unforgivable. Verse 11 makes that interpretation impossible. Some Corinthians had formerly lived in the categories Paul had just named. If the nouns described people Christ could never save, Paul could not have followed them with washed, sanctified and justified.

DOCTRINAL BOUNDARY The warning concerns exclusion apart from Christ. It does not teach that one act listed in the passage places a repentant sinner forever beyond Christ.

7. Six Words Change the Entire Passage

"And Such Were Some of You"

The KJV supplies six words that turn the passage from a list of condemnation to a testimony of redemption: "And such were some of you." Paul does not deny the Corinthians' past. He changes

the tense. Their guilt was real, their histories were not erased and the earthly consequences of their actions may have remained. Yet their former sins no longer defined their standing before God.

The word some also matters. Paul does not claim that every Corinthian practiced every sin. Real people came from different histories. What united them was not identical experience but a common Savior. Some had been sexually immoral, some greedy, some drunkards, some revilers and some involved in other patterns. The church was a family of people whom Christ had rescued from many directions.

The Tense Must Not Be Overstated

The word were supports genuine transformation, but it should not be turned into a doctrine of immediate sinless perfection. The Corinthian church still required extensive correction. Paul could describe a decisive change in identity and standing while addressing conduct that remained inconsistent with that change. Salvation begins a new life, but sanctification continues throughout the believer's earthly walk.

Neither should we be weakened until it means nothing. Grace does not merely attach a new label while leaving allegiance untouched. Christ claims the person He saves. The believer may struggle, fall, resist correction for a time and suffer consequences, but the Holy Spirit does not make permanent peace with rebellion.

GOSPEL TURN Paul's list tells us what these believers had been. Verse 11 tells us what the Lord Jesus and the Spirit of God had done.

8. Washed, Sanctified and Justified

Washed: Cleansed from Guilt and Defilement

Sin leaves guilt that no human effort can wash away. Apologies, restitution and repaired conduct may be necessary fruits of repentance, but they cannot cleanse the conscience before God. First John 1:7 says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." The word all is not permission to sin. It is assurance that the cleansing power of Christ is not exhausted by the kind of sin a repentant person brings to Him.

Sanctified: Set Apart as God's Own

To be sanctified is to be set apart for God. The Corinthians had belonged to the old order of sin. Now they belonged to God. This decisive setting apart begins a continuing work of growth, conviction, discipline and change. The existence of that process does not deny salvation; it displays the Lord's refusal to abandon His people to what once ruled them.

Justified: Declared Righteous in Christ

Justification answers the question of standing. God does not declare guilty people righteous by pretending they never sinned or by deciding righteousness no longer matters. Jesus Christ bore their sin and supplies the righteousness they could never produce. Second Corinthians 5:21 says that Christ was made sin for us, though He knew no sin, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

The three declarations direct attention away from human achievement. "Ye are washed." "Ye are sanctified." "Ye are justified." Salvation is God's work in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the

Spirit of our God. The Corinthians were not saved because their sins were small. They were saved because their Savior is great.

SALVATION TRUTH The sinner does not cleanse, set apart and justify himself so that Christ may receive him. He comes to Christ, and Christ does what the sinner cannot do.

9. Repentance and Faith

Come as a Sinner, Not as a Defender of Sin

Acts 20:21 joins “repentance toward God” with “faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Repentance is not a price paid for grace. It is a turning toward God that abandons self-justification. The sinner stops demanding that God approve of what He has called sin, admits that he cannot save himself and places his confidence in Jesus Christ.

This means we do not wait to achieve moral victory before coming. If a person could wash away his own guilt, establish his own holiness and create his own righteousness, he would not need a Savior. The sick do not cure themselves before visiting the physician. Jesus came to call sinners to repentance.

Repentance Is Not Self-Reformation

A frightened person may believe he must first repair every relationship, conquer every addiction, repay every loss and prove years of good conduct. Those actions may later become important responsibilities, but they cannot purchase salvation. The thief beside Jesus had no time to rebuild his life. He could only turn to the King and say, “Lord, remember me.” Christ received him.

Faith rests upon who Jesus is and what He accomplished: the Son of God died for our sins, was buried and rose again. It is not faith in the sincerity of our prayer, the intensity of our sorrow or the strength of our future performance. The object of saving faith is Jesus Christ.

RESPONSE PRINCIPLE We do not change ourselves so Christ will agree to save us. We turn toward God in repentance, trust Christ alone and receive the new life only He can give.

10. The Believer’s Continuing Struggle

Not Sinless Perfection

First John 1:8 says, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Christians still face temptation and sometimes commit serious sins. They require confession, correction, restoration and continuing sanctification. A single failure is not proof that Christ has abandoned one of His sheep or that salvation must be gained again after every fall.

First John 1:9 promises forgiveness and cleansing when believers confess. That promise does not make sin unimportant. It gives the contrite believer a path back into honest fellowship. The Christian life is not a life in which no one falls. It is a life in which Christ does not leave His child comfortably where he fell.

Not Comfortable Rebellion

The opposite error turns grace into permission. A person cannot coherently claim Christ as Savior while permanently rejecting His authority and insisting that God must bless what He calls

sin. We cannot observe a person's outward life and pronounce his eternal destiny with certainty, but the church must not offer assurance where Scripture gives warning.

The issue is not whether a believer ever fails. The issue is the allegiance and direction of the heart. A genuine believer may resist conviction for a season and may require painful discipline. Yet God deals with His children. Grace forgives, corrects and transforms; it does not establish a treaty with rebellion.

PASTORAL DISTINCTION Comfort the contrite believer who has fallen. Warn the person who uses a profession of faith to protect deliberate rebellion. Do not confuse either person with the other.

11. Forgiveness Does Not Erase Every Consequence

David: Mercy with Painful Consequences

David's adultery with Bathsheba was followed by deception and the arranged death of Uriah. God did not minimize the evil, and the consequences within David's family were severe. When confronted, David confessed, "I have sinned against the Lord." Psalm 51 records his plea, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." David illustrates forgiveness without pretending that earthly damage disappears.

The Thief: Grace Without Compensating Works

The thief on the cross could not return stolen property, rebuild his reputation or perform a long record of service. His remaining life was measured in hours. He acknowledged Jesus as King and asked to be remembered. Jesus promised, "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The account does not make restitution unimportant when possible. It proves that restitution is not the price of salvation.

Fruit Follows Grace

A person who has defrauded others may need to make restitution. An adulterer may need to accept consequences, rebuild trust patiently and honor boundaries established by those harmed. A person controlled by alcohol may need medical care, counseling, accountability and treatment. These steps matter, but they are not a second cross. They are responses to grace and means through which God may continue His transforming work.

PASTORAL LIMIT Forgiveness changes the sinner's standing before God. It does not obligate injured people to deny the harm, remove wise boundaries or pretend every earthly consequence has vanished.

12. Homosexual Conduct in Its Proper Place

Included, but Not Isolated

The KJV uses the expressions "effeminate" and "abusers of themselves with mankind." These render the Greek terms *malakoi* and *arsenokoitai*. Modern translations handle the pair in different ways, but major translations understand them in relation to male homosexual conduct. A full lexical discussion belongs in RTS-006, "Is It a Sin to Be Gay?" RTS-011 has a different purpose.

Here the essential point is that homosexual conduct must not be removed from God's moral warning. Scripture, not social approval, determines the church's doctrine. Yet the person who has practiced homosexuality must not be removed from God's invitation. Verse 11 follows this part of the list too. Some Corinthians had come from the very histories Paul named.

The Same Warning and the Same Savior

A person who has practiced homosexuality is no further beyond Christ than the adulterer, thief, drunkard, covetous person, reviler or extortioner. Neither is he in less need of repentance. The church fails if it erases the sin to appear loving. The church also fails if it treats the sinner as though Christ's blood has a boundary Paul never states.

This is why the sermon discusses the entire vice list before returning briefly to homosexual conduct. The order protects the passage from becoming a weapon aimed at one group. Every person comes to the cross as a sinner. Every person who is saved is washed, sanctified and justified in the same name of the Lord Jesus.

MINISTRY POSTURE Never remove a sin from God's warning because the warning is unpopular. Never remove a sinner from God's invitation because the sinner's past is uncomfortable.

13. One Way Open to Every Kind of Sinner

Exclusive Concerning the Way

Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Christianity does not offer several entrances to God. Church membership, baptism, family heritage, charitable works, public respectability and personal sincerity cannot replace Christ. Apart from Him, all remain unrighteous.

Open Concerning the Sinner Who Comes

The one way is open to every kind of sinner. Jesus said in John 6:37, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The adulterer may come. The thief may come. The drunkard may come. The person who practiced homosexuality may come. The respected religious sinner may come. The person whose shame is public and the person whose guilt is known only to God may come.

Second Peter 3:9 says that the Lord is not willing that any should perish, "but that all should come to repentance." God is not assembling categories of people He enjoys excluding. He warns because judgment is real and calls because mercy is available in Christ.

GOSPEL SUMMARY There is only one Savior, but there is no kind of repentant sinner whom that Savior is unwilling or unable to receive.

14. Conclusion: The Warning Is Not the End

Are there people groups banned from Heaven? Apart from Christ, the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. That includes every one of us in our natural condition. In Christ, no category named in Paul's list is declared beyond redemption. The same passage that warns of exclusion records that former fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, revilers,

extortioners and people from other sinful histories had been received into the church as washed, sanctified and justified.

The final question is therefore not whether our sin looks better than someone else's. It is whether we have come to Jesus Christ. No one enters because his past was clean enough. No one is excluded because his past was too dirty for the blood of Christ. We enter only through the righteousness of Jesus, received by repentance and faith.

If the passage describes your past, do not stop at verse 10. Read verse 11. If it describes your present life, do not use verse 11 as permission to remain where you are. Hear the warning, receive the invitation and come to Christ. You may still face consequences, repair relationships, resist temptation and grow through a long process of sanctification. None of those realities means that Jesus cannot save you now.

ENDURING COUNSEL Let the warning awaken you, let verse 11 give you hope and let neither your pride nor your shame keep you from Jesus Christ.

A Personal Invitation to Receive Jesus Christ

Whether you are sitting with us in person, watching or listening online or reading this commentary wherever you may be, these words are for you. You do not have to wait until the end of a service, be inside a church building or have a pastor standing beside you to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior. You can come to Him right now, wherever you are.

First, admit to God that you are a sinner and cannot save yourself. Believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that He died on the cross for your sins, that He was buried and that He rose again. Turn toward God in repentance and place your faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

Romans 10:9 says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Romans 10:13 gives this wonderful promise: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

You may speak to God in your own words. No particular arrangement of words saves you. A prayer is not a magic formula. Jesus Christ saves you when you come to Him with genuine repentance and faith. If you are unsure what to say, you may pray something like this:

A PRAYER OF FAITH Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner. I know that I cannot save myself. I believe that You are the Son of God. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins, that You were buried and that You rose again. I turn from trusting in myself and place my faith in You alone. Please forgive me, save me and make me a new creature. I receive You as my personal Savior. Thank You for receiving me and giving me eternal life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The prayer itself is not what saves you. Your salvation rests upon Jesus Christ and what He accomplished through His death, burial and resurrection. You do not have to hide your past from Him. He already knows it. You do not have to minimize your guilt. He already paid for it. You do not have to make yourself worthy. You must trust in the One who is worthy.

If you are with us in person and have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, please speak with me after the service. I would consider it a privilege to pray with you and help you connect with a

church family and other believers who can encourage you, help you understand God's Word and walk beside you as you begin your new life in Christ.

If you are watching or listening online or reading this commentary through our website or social media, please let us know if you have trusted Christ as your Savior. Contact us through www.ReasonTogether.Church or email me directly at Pastor@ReasonTogether.Church. We would love to hear from you, pray with you and help you connect with a faithful, Bible-believing church where you can grow in your new life with Christ.

A Closing Prayer

Our Heavenly Father, thank You for warning us that the unrighteous shall not inherit Your kingdom. Keep us from deceiving ourselves about sin. Thank You also that the warning is not the end of the passage. Thank You for those six wonderful words, "And such were some of you." Thank You that sinners may be washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus. Help the fearful hear Christ's promise, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Help the defiant hear Your call to repentance. Keep those of us who have trusted Christ humble, and never allow us to look down upon another sinner as though we saved ourselves. Help every reader place complete faith in Jesus Christ alone. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Selected Sources

Primary Scripture

First Corinthians 5–6, especially 1 Corinthians 6:9–11; John 3:1–7; John 6:37; John 14:6; Acts 20:21; Romans 3:10, 23; Romans 5:8; Romans 10:9, 13; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 21; Galatians 5:19–21; Ephesians 5:5; 1 John 1:7–9; 2 Peter 3:9; Revelation 21:8. Scripture quotations are from the King James Version.

Language and Translation Resources

The Greek New Testament text of 1 Corinthians 6:9–11, consulted for *adikoi*, *klēronomēsousin*, *malakoi*, *arsenokoitai*, *kai tauta tines ēte*, *apelousasthe*, *hēgiasthēte* and *edikaiōthēte*. The King James Version remains the primary ministry text. Contemporary English translations were consulted only to clarify older English expressions and the range of translation used for the two disputed Greek terms.

Pastoral Note

This commentary preserves the full warning of 1 Corinthians 6:9–10 and the full gospel testimony of verse 11. Its purpose is not to determine the eternal destiny of named individuals from outward observation. It is to call every reader away from self-deception, self-righteousness and despair and toward repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.