

AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?

Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Carl Henry was one of the leading theologians of the last century. He died in 2003. On his last visit to Southern Seminary, his host, Russell Moore, recalls the conversation Dr. Henry had with a group of theologians.

Someone mentioned the impotence and shallowness of today's evangelical church, and asked Dr. Henry he had much hope for the future... He answered, "Of course, there is hope for future evangelicals. But the leaders of the next generation might not be coming from the current establishment. They're probably still pagans."

Who knew that **Saul of Tarsus** was to be the great apostle to the Gentiles? Who knew that God would raise up a **C.S. Lewis** - and a **Charles Colson**? They were unbelievers who, once saved by the grace of God, were mighty warriors for the

faith.” Carl Henry could’ve added himself to the list. Before he was converted to Christ he was a journalist working for a local newspaper in NYC.

In his blog, Russell Moore, reflects back on Carl Henry’s wisdom, “The next **Jonathan Edwards** might be the man driving in front of you with the Darwin Fish bumper decal... The next **Charles Wesley** might be a misogynist, profanity-spewing hip-hop artist right now...

The next **Billy Graham** might be passed out drunk in a fraternity house right now... The next **Charles Spurgeon** might be making posters for a Gay Pride March... The next **Mother Teresa** might be managing an abortion clinic right now...” Moore explains, “The Spirit of God can turn all that around. And He seems to delight to do so.” God loves to showcase His grace!

Moore ends his blog with a word to his readers, “(So) be kind to that atheist in front of you on the highway, the one who just shot you an obscene gesture. He might just be the person who evangelizes your grandchildren.”

It’s true, God gathers His saints from the most unexpected places. He starts with *heathen* and makes them *holy*... Think about it, “*At this moment, the next Billy Graham might be in a frat house hammered and hungover...*” **Christianity has and always will be propelled by the transforming power of the Gospel.**

Over the last few years I've read blogs, and posts, and articles bemoaning the future of the Church in America.

The Church is becoming more compromising and carnal... **The culture** is growing increasingly secular and hostile to Christianity... Persecution is on the horizon...

And people talk about these issues as if we've never faced them before... *As if it's never been worse...*

Do you realize how dark and pagan the world was when Christianity first took root? Ancient Rome didn't broadcast its immorality in HDTV, or 50 megabytes per second across the internet, but the moral climate of the first century AD was even more decadent than it is today.

History tells us that long before the Goths and Vandals rode their horses into Rome the city collapsed internally. Prosperous Romans had grown fat and lazy.

They became lawless out of sheer boredom. Rome's preoccupation was to search for new and crude ways to entertain itself. Historian, Tacitus, wrote of the city's attitude, *"the greater the infamy, the wilder the delight."*

Spears and swords are not what defeated Rome.

Rather than conquered from without, Rome fell from within. Roman society lost its nobility and morality. The inability to control selfish and sensual desires

became it's downfall. Rome was *defeated* by it's own *depravity*.

You've heard of *skid row* - welcome to *skid Rome*.

If you think we've hit rock bottom today, you should read Romans 1... The chapter is Paul's infamous description of the breakdown of Greco-Roman culture.

Rome's *ungodliness* led to its *unrighteousness*!

In Romans 1 Paul describes the empire's X-rated culture, filled with *unnatural lust, unbridled indulgence, calloused consciences, self-serving idolatry, perverted sexuality*. It takes a strong stomach to read Romans 1.

Three times in the chapter Paul tells us, "God gave them up!" or "gave them over!" to their own corruption.

And when Paul sat down to write Romans 1, *guess where he was?* The apostle was looking out his window at the city of Corinth. The Corinthian metroplex was his inspiration for this *portrait of Roman perversity*.

Corinth was the city that forgot how to blush!

Of all the cities across the empire, Corinth was the capitol of vice. It was Mardi Gras every night in Corinth.

This meant that the church in Corinth was a genuine miracle. The Gospel caught on in *the most unexpected of places* and among *the most unlikely of*

people.

When Paul got to town he didn't recruit some local Christians to help him plant his church. Prior to Paul only pagans lived in Corinth. There were no Christians.

In Romans 1, along with Rome's perversion, Paul wrote, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes..." And he had proven its power in Corinth!

In a city gone wild, the Gospel had changed lives. It had transformed heathen into children of God. The church at Corinth was *exhibit A* for the power of Jesus.

And this is why the problems in this church were such a concern to Paul. Many of these Christians had tasted the life-altering transformation of the Gospel.

Yet rather than expect that reality to be lived out among each other, there were folks who claimed to be Christian, yet had no evidence of a changed life.

Members of this church were being divisive... Some had tolerated a man who was shacking up with his stepmom... Others even took fellow believers to court.

The Corinthians weren't living like transformed people. Their lives were no different than the pagans.

And Paul warns them that a lifestyle that evidences no change - that's marked by unrighteousness - *will not inherit the Kingdom of God*. Say what you want... claim what you will... but the proof is in the pudding!

A person who's truly experienced the power of the Christian Gospel will live a changed life! He or she will not continue in a lifestyle of perpetual rebellion to God.

Now, don't misunderstand, **no Christian is perfect.**

We live in fallen flesh that's susceptible to weakness and sin. We live in a fallen world that's permeated with temptation. There will be times when every Christian loses their bearings, or blurs the lines. We'll need to repent, turn back, learn a lesson, continue to grow.

It's part of being a Christian *this side of heaven.*

At times we'll **stray** - but you've got to walk the path most of the time to stray... At times we'll **fall** - but that implies we're trying to stand... Both *straying* and *falling* are an anomaly, not the norm. They're not the lifestyle.

Paul is concerned about sin as a way of life.

This is what was happening in the church at Corinth. Cocky Christians were living in brazen, continual sin.

In Corinth *repentance had fallen on hard times.*

Church-goers wanted God's blessings - but nobody wanted to turn from their sin and live a changed life.

The Corinthians winked at sin. It was no big deal.

Habitual sin was no barrier to fellowship and standing in the church. Folks lived unbiblical and immoral lives, yet still called themselves “*Christian.*”

This lax attitude was a denial of the Gospel - it was an affront to Jesus and the reasons for which He died.

This is why Paul says plainly in verse 9... He warns them, “**Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived...**”

Realize, all humans are twisted or contorted. We’re born out-of-shape. None of us are what God intended.

The Bible says the first man, Adam, was made in the image and likeness of God, yet sin marred that image.

Adam rebelled against God, and his sin tossed a wrench into the gears of creation. God’s masterpiece was no longer perfect. Man’s sin opened Pandora’s Box, and subjected creation to a host of hardships.

After Adam’s blunder randomness invaded God’s orderly universe... Before the fall of man, weather patterns were calm and serene. Afterwards, winds pushed moisture, fronts collided, storms erupted...

Without sin, the lamb lied down with the wolf. Since sin, wolves and lambs are

now natural enemies.

In a world without sin all God's creation stayed alive, and vibrant, and healthy. Colors didn't fade. Materials didn't rot. Skin never sagged. Eyes never dimmed. Bodies never got sick. It was the man's sin that brought disease, and decay, and deterioration into the world.

Before Adam's sin, genetics worked like clockwork. But after, damaged genes caused birth defects. We're now born with deformities that make life more difficult.

Prior to sin, Adam lived with God and lived forever. The Bible says he walked with God. He enjoyed a right relationship *with God*, and *with himself*, and *with other people*... You can sum it up in one word, **righteous**.

But sin shook up our perfect world. It upset the apple cart. Sin ushered in death and decay. Not only did that mean the human body would eventually die, it meant Adam was immediately separated from God, and from his fellow man. In a word, he was now **unrighteous**.

And everyone of us has been effected by Adam's actions. The theologians call it "**Original Sin**." Simply stated, "**because one man sinned, now all are sinners**."

But it's not just theologians who believe in this idea.

Recently I was reading where a critic of Christianity questioned, "**Isn't the**

doctrine of Original Sin only believed by dead people like Augustine and Calvin?”

The person asked, answered “No,” and he then quoted shock-jock Howard Stern of all people. **“You’re warped. I am warped. We are all warped.”** That’s “*Original Sin*” in a nutshell. We’re all born *warped*.

This means you can say you were born a specific way... a *homosexual*, or an *alcoholic*, or *violent*, or *prone to this or that*. And though I might disagree, I don’t even need to argue the point. Understand, **what we were born is not necessarily a good thing!**

We’re all born a sinner, and that’s a very bad thing. The results of sin are always negative, not positive.

We were created for right relationships *with God, with ourselves, with others* - but sin has warped us and those relationships. We should still pursue right relationships, but sin has made them more difficult.

And until we come to Jesus we’re **unrighteous**.

God doesn’t want you to be deceived. Verse 9, ***“The unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God.”***

This means when people go to Hell they don’t end up there because they committed adultery, or practiced homosexuality, or stole, or drunk themselves into a stupor. It wasn’t *the symptom* that sent them to Hell.

All the inhabitants of Hell are there because they're *unrighteous* - which means, they're not in a **right** relationship with God through faith in His Son Jesus!

Paul will list some behaviors that if you do them perpetually and habitually is evidence that you're not in a right relationship with Jesus, but it's not the deed that throws the switch, it's the underlying cause... you haven't turned from your sin, and trusted in the Savior.

When you do, Jesus begins to *untwist* you!

He unravels you little by little until your life begins to straighten out. It takes time, but it's God's desire for all of us to live straight - not twisted up, or tangled up.

Life is easier when we get straightened out.

Once, a family was staying in a Nigerian hotel. They heard a knock on the door. The dad opened the door and found a man standing there smiling. The African gentleman said he was ready to clean up their room.

Well, the family was embarrassed. They'd just arrived. Bags, and clothes, and wet towels were scattered everywhere. The dad began to apologize.

That's when the young Nigerian told him, "**No problem, sir. For this reason I have come, to put your things in order.**" And this is the reason Jesus came! To untwist our confusion, and put our lives in proper order.

Again, don't think God expects you to clean up your own mess, and get everything in order before He saves you. That's not how Christianity works! We open our hearts to Jesus - He takes us "as is" - and then He does the rearranging, the untangling, the straightening.

Sometimes we think, *"Oh, my life is so confused? So tangled up! There's no way I can be the type of person God desires."* Trust Jesus. Let Him figure it out.

Listen to Jesus. Do what He says. He'll untangle the knot. Here's the big question, *has the process begun?*

If so, there'll be progress. Changes occur. You won't be the same. When Jesus rules He sets a life in order.

But if life for you is the same - if there's no evidence of change - if you're stuck in habitual sins, and find yourself justifying your lifestyle, don't be deceived, *"the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God."*

And here's what unrighteousness looks like. Paul compiles a list, **"Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners..."** These are all forms of twisted-ness and tangle-ness Jesus straightens out when He's in charge

First, he says **“fornicators”** will not inherit the kingdom of God. The Greek word is familiar. It’s **“ pornos ”** - from which we get our term *pornography*.

This was a broad word for all forms of illicit sex...

Prostitution, adultery, sex before marriage, casual sex, friends with benefits, group sex, massage parlors, pornography, online sex, phone sex, incest, pedophilia, etc. This included everything from seeing a pretty girl and thinking a lustful thought to grotesque bestiality.

And sadly, today’s internet has made both available at the click of a mouse. Paul is warning us that if we keep clicking that mouse - if we continually indulge in these perversions it’ll rot out our soul. We’ll get trapped in a rut - in a lifestyle - that we’ll either hide or justify.

Again, Paul isn’t saying a person who’s tempted with lust, and falls in a moment of weakness can’t inherit the kingdom of God. That’s not compatible with other Scriptures. God is gracious. There is forgiveness.

But if you are truly in a right relationship with Jesus you’ll know His love - you’ll realize your life is not just about you and gratifying your own selfish cravings.

You’ll start to see other people as God sees them. Rather than treat a beautiful girl as an object, you’ll see her as a sister in Christ. She has a soul. You’ll seek to please God her Father, and want the best for her.

If Jesus reigns in your heart, a life of lust will slowly unravel. **“Fornication”** will

no longer be your lifestyle.

If you think our culture is sex-obsessed it's nothing compared to Corinth. Above the city sat the Temple of Aphrodite. Each night temple priestesses came off the mountain, and prostituted themselves in the streets.

Illicit sex wasn't just tolerated in Corinth, it was embedded in the local religion. Sex was worshipped.

This is why the second group on Paul's list were **"idolaters."** When you rebel against God's standards, you need another god to sanction your choices.

The Corinthians still wanted a god - they just didn't like the true God's picky rules, especially about sex. So rather than change their conduct, they changed gods.

It reminds me of the packed airplane, all boarded, taxiing to the runway. The pilot came on the intercom, "Ladies and Gentlemen, the warning light is flashing a problem with the thermal expander valve on our #2 engine. I will not fly until it's replaced. Pardon the inconvenience, but we'll be returning to our gate."

Surprisingly, they were only at the gate for maybe 10 minutes, before they were ready to fly. One passenger asked the flight attendant, "Wow, that was quick. How did you get a new thermal expander valve so fast?"

The attendant replied, *“Oh, there’s not an expander valve for a thousand miles. They just got a new pilot.”*

Don’t like the pilot’s rules, so you get a new pilot! This is how people treat God. They ditch God, or they customize a faith and god that accommodates their sin.

I read of a pastor who liked to take his church’s freshmen for coffee on their first trip back from college.

He’d catch up; then asked about their spiritual life...

Often a student would hem and haw. They’d finally confess they were having some doubts - that a little philosophy, or some science had rattled their faith.

Whenever the pastor got that answer, he’d look the student square in the eye, and ask, *“So, who have you been sleeping with?”* Usually, after getting over the shock, the student would reply, *“How did you know?”*

The pastor knew that most of the time the reason a student questions their faith isn’t the strength of an opposing argument - *it’s their guilty conscience.*

If they entertain a little doubt about God, then it allows them to question His wisdom, and justify their compromise. It’s not an intellectual, but a moral crisis.

This is why idolatry and sexual sin go hand in hand.

Third on Paul's list are **“adulterers.”** Again, it's possible for a Christian to yield in a moment of weakness and temptation, even sleep with another person's spouse, and repent afterwards. God forgives.

Never forget the woman taken in the very act. Jesus told her, **“Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.”** Not all adulterers are headed to Hell.

But it's the serial adulterer that lives under a question mark. Not the person who **“went and sinned no more,”** but the person who violates their vow again and again.

How can you know Jesus and the fidelity He shows His bride, without reciprocating that to your spouse?

If you're committed to Jesus, and Him to you, how can you not treat your other commitments seriously?

It's the 35 million Americans who opened accounts on the Ashley Madison website that are in danger of ***not inheriting the kingdom of God.*** *To be deliberate - to log on to a website - to set up a profile - to scan for opportunity - this isn't a one-time chink in the armor...*

How can you say you're in a right relationship with Jesus - when you're so determined to violate the next most important relationship in life - the one that actually symbolizes your fellowship with Him? *How can you?*

Next Paul lists “homosexuals” and “sodomites.” A literal translation reads, “nor effeminate, nor abusers.”

The language here refers to the passive and active participants in a same-sex encounter. Ever notice when a relationship forms between two lesbians or two homosexuals one assumes the male role and the other the female? Even same-sex relationships can't ignore the God-inspired roles of a husband and a wife.

Realize, Paul wasn't writing *in* or *to* a homophobic society. Homosexuality was accepted in ancient Rome.

In fact, fourteen of the first fifteen emperors were so indulged and bored they toyed with homosexuality...

I'm sure Christians in Corinth had friends and family in town who were homosexuals. Yet, in the church this kind of lifestyle wasn't to be condoned or tolerated.

Again, this didn't mean that a man or woman who struggles with same-sex attraction is going to Hell.

We all struggle with sin of some sort. Jesus calls us to trust Him. He'll help us overcome our temptation.

I understand there are homosexuals who don't ever remember not feeling the way they feel. Our identity as male and female form very early in life. Sometimes childhood events beyond our control twist our psyche.

Some folks believe they were born homosexual. But as I said earlier, just being born a certain way doesn't make it preferable. An alcoholic has a physical propensity toward alcoholism... Some psychologists suggest there's a gene that triggers violent behavior...

Even if both are true, it doesn't justify alcoholism and violence. We'd still help both to overcome their sin.

Today, homosexual activists want to make it criminal to help a person change their sexual orientation.

I'm afraid they're fighting against Jesus! For Jesus wants to unravel and untangle all our twisted identities.

Gender is God-given. He wants men to be masculine, and women to be feminine... And **sex is God-arranged.** He limits it to heterosexual marriage.

Again, if you're a Christian who struggles - if you've even stumbled into homosexual sin - it doesn't mean God is through with you. You are accepted in Christ.

Jesus is merciful. He can work changes in your life! In every life God seeks to

untangle our twisted-ness.

But if you're in a right relationship with God, you won't be wrong about this issue. Jesus is the groom and we are His bride. God speaks of His relationship with His people through a heterosexual paradigm.

That's why if you've given up the fight, and claim that a homosexual lifestyle is God's will for you - you're defiling and blurring the picture God uses to illustrate His righteousness. That's *unrighteous*. Don't call good evil and evil good - then expect to inherit His Kingdom.

Then Paul writes, "**nor thieves.**" If Jesus is alive in you He puts in your heart a love for God and for others.

And if you love people, how can you rip them off?

The same is true for the "**covetous.**" Stealing is the act. Coveting or envy is the attitude. And both fly in the face of love. They betray a right relationship with God.

Paul also mentions "**drunkards.**" How can you drink your life away, if you've truly been born again? Where Jesus is in charge, alcohol won't be. God wants His Holy Spirit to rule in our lives, not distilled spirits.

Is alcoholism *a sin* or *a disease*? I believe it's both.

There is a physical component to addiction. Our bodies can become dependent

on a drug or alcohol.

This is why once you become a pickle you can never be a cucumber. If you're an alcoholic you can't drink sociably. You're always one drink from a drunk. That's the disease - the second, third, and subsequent drinks.

But once you know that, then it's up to you not to return and take that first drink. At this point you're responsible. That's why if you drink that one, it's a sin.

I know the Bible doesn't prohibit alcohol. If you can drink and not stumble yourself or others, then you have the liberty. But I've seen so many genuine Christians fight this battle. Alcohol gets such a grip over their life.

I know people who've struggle for years. They've had victories, but they've been checkered with defeats.

Is the little bit of buzz worth such a deadly risk?

This is why Paul writes to the Ephesians (5:18), "Do not be drunk with wine... but be filled with the Spirit."

Paul lists two more unrighteous lifestyles - **revilers** and **extortioners** will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Revilers and *extortioners* use violence to intimidate and manipulate other people. **Revilers** use abusive words - **extortioners** abusive tactics. Both are

bullies.

I'm sure there're times when we all say things we shouldn't, and act toward others in manipulative ways.

But if a person engages for years in uninterrupted, unrepentant patterns of abusive behavior, something is amiss in their relationship with God. It's very possible the faith they claim to possess, is not true, saving faith.

You can say you're a Christian, but Paul is saying if the evidence proves otherwise, then don't be a fool.

There are people within the sound of my voice who need to stop pretending, and get serious with Jesus!

This morning I'm being very redundant. I don't want to be misunderstood... 1 John 1:8 is written to Christians, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Nowhere does the Bible say a Christian has to be perfect. We're not.

All Christians will sin at times - we'll stumble and covet our neighbor's stuff - we'll use harsh words - we'll drink too much - sometimes it's a sexual sin.

But if you're a Christian you won't do it perpetually! You'll repent, get back up, and learn to trust Him more.

Yet in 1 John 3:8, the same author who wrote, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,” also writes, “Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.” The idea is that a believer who’s born of God, cannot continue in sin.

We can stray, but the Holy Spirit acts like a GPS. He’ll recalibrate our course, and get us back on track.

The NT teaches that when a believer sins, it will be considered “*out of character.*” Whereas, if a person’s sin is *second nature*; how can they be born of God?

Well, finally, we reach verse 11. And there are not six more hopeful words in all the Bible! These words are grace-soaked and blood-bought. Read them with faith!

Paul writes, “**And such were some of you...**”

Apparently, the Corinthian church was quite a group! Full of people beautifully transformed by Jesus Christ.

They were once lustful people who’d learned to love.

Ex-adulterers who’d started tending the home fires.

Former idolaters who now let God be God.

Gender confused people who were untwisting their tangled identity, and letting

God reorder their feelings.

Repentant thieves who were now giving not taking.

Drunks who'd switched from spirits to the Holy Spirit.

And revilers and extortionists who stopped trying to push people around, and had started lifting people up.

The Corinthian Christians didn't come from moral upbringings. These weren't former Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. They didn't take oaths and sell cookies for fun.

The Corinthians had been a wild, rowdy bunch. But notice the operative word, **“were.”** *And such were some of you...* That's all in their past now!

As are your sins, whatever they *were!* Come to Christ and He'll forgive you - then He'll work in you to untangle your twisted-ness - whatever it might be.

In Christ these people had become a **"new creation."**

Later Paul will write to these same believers, **“Old things are passed away, behold all things have become new.”** That's the transforming Gospel of Jesus.

He turns *scum of the earth* into *heirs of heaven*.

Listen to Paul, **“And such were some of you, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the**

Spirit of our God.” This is really good news!

Kathy and I have been watching our grandkids this weekend, and this morning I was screaming like a crazy preacher, “*You’ve been washed... you’ve been sanctified... you’ve been justified...*” They just giggles.

If you say it right it sounds so cool... but I’m praying that one day they realize just how cool it truly is!

You were *filthy*, now you’re “*washed...*”

You were *worthless*, now you’re “*sanctified...*”

You were *guilty*, now you’re “*justified...*”

This past week I went to the dentist for to get my teeth cleaned. Kathy trapped me. She knows I hate going to the dentist. She made the appointment for me, and went with me to make sure I followed through.

Of course, I brushed my teeth before I left, and the whole time I was thinking *what a waste*. I’m cleaning my teeth, why do I need to pay someone else to do it?

But when that lady went to work on me, she redefined the term “wash.” She scraped, etched, dug, scrubbed, polished... My teeth were now *deep clean*.

And this is what Jesus does. He *washes* us to the root. His work is effectual. It’s actual. It changes me.

The transformation isn't just theoretical. I become a new person - a better person. Jesus does this in us.

He washes us *actually*, but then He *sanctifies* us *socially*. He pulls us out of the rank-and-file - out of the masses of the unnamed - and makes us His own.

To be "*sanctified*" is to become "*special*."

Isn't this what the Corinthians had wanted all their life long? What do you think people are after with sex?

A few moments of intimacy, though impersonal and empty, provides a taste of what their soul is missing - to be loved, to be treated as special by someone else.

But in Christ we are special. We're His purchased possession. We belong to Him and He belongs to us.

This is *THE right* relationship with God.

And the Corinthian Christians were "*justified*." Before they came to Jesus they had spent all their time foolishly justifying and rationalizing their sinful stuff.

But now Jesus is the one who is justifying them!

Right now, in the court of heaven. Jesus is justifying me. The devil shouts, "*Remember what Sandy Adams did! His perverse thoughts! His unloving acts!*"

His selfishness and pride! I've got proof. Video tapes..."

That's when my Lord holds up His nail-scarred hands, and shows the hole in His side. "Father, I did this for Sandy! I want Him and I've justified My choice with My blood." *Imagine, we're now justified by Jesus!*

The case is over. All the devil's evidence has been ruled inadmissible. We're forgiven *fully, freely, forever.*

This is why I say, nothing is more powerful - more transforming - more life-altering - than the Gospel of Jesus Christ! He alone straightens out twisted people!

No matter how dark and immoral and nihilistic this world becomes... No matter how hopeless the future seems... *there is a power in this world...* It cannot be caroled or contained, only received by faith. "*And such were some of you...*" It is the power of the Gospel!