

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11

WHAT WE CANNOT DO, GOD CAN DO

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”¹

“**S**uch were some of you.” These are assuredly dark words that could easily condemn many of God’s beloved saints. However, note that these words are written in the past tense, indicating that the condition no longer holds true. Therefore, what appears dark and despairing is transformed into that which is comforting and joyous. The transforming power is the Lord Jesus Christ, working in the life of His saint by the Spirit of God. There is no need for anyone to labour under the sentence of death when life is offered to all in Christ the Lord. Certainly, there is no reason that any of God’s people should ever fall into despair, believing that they are doomed in the sight of the Living God.

If salvation depended upon living a sinless life, none of us would have a hope of reaching heaven. No Christian can claim to merit God’s mercy or grace. No saved individual can state that God was compelled to grant her life because of her goodness. We are saved precisely because we were lost. We have sinned—wilfully and wantonly—against the Infinite God. Thus, our sin is not a trifling thing; it is monstrous, horrendous, offensive beyond comprehension. Yet, if we have life in the Beloved Son, we can say with confidence that God has forgiven our sin, cleansed us of unrighteousness and brought us into His Family as His dear child.

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, THE CHARACTERISATION — “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?” Generally, people imagine that unrighteousness, or wickedness, is defined by certain acts that are disapproved by God or that dishonour God. However, unrighteousness is not defined by specific acts; it is a general condition affecting all mankind. “I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members” [ROMANS 7:21-23]. An unrighteous person is one who has no standing before the Living God.

Many people, perhaps even many who profess faith in the Son of God, live by a code that allows them to believe that because they avoid certain activities they are pleasing to God. I got into serious trouble with a congregation that adhered to such a philosophy on one occasion. I noted that they were proud of their “pure lives” that was best summarised by an old couplet:

We don’t smoke, and we don’t chew;
We don’t go with girls who do.

I continued by pointing out that they were vicious toward fellow Christians, inconsiderate, and intolerant. Those dear folk were enraged, which only substantiated the point I was making.

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One of the great doctrines of the Faith that is woefully neglected in this day is total depravity. The term can be misleading; however, it does not mean that individuals are as mean as they can be, or that people indulge in every sin they can imagine, or even that people never try to do what is right. It does mean that every aspect of our being has been contaminated as result of sin. Our lives are fully corrupted by sin, and there is nothing that we can do that will make us acceptable to God. Thus, we are incapable of holding pure motives for any spiritual action and unable to please God through our own efforts.

The situation is not that some parts of our being are sinful and others are pure; every part of our being has been affected by sin—intellect, emotions, desire, goals, motives and even our physical being. Indeed, the Apostle has identified our situation in darkest terms when he writes, “I know that nothing good dwells in me” [**ROMANS 7:18**]. Had our first parents never sinned, you and I wouldn’t struggle with ageing. In fact, there would be no “old age,” or “middle age,” if Adam and Eve had obeyed God. We wouldn’t need bifocals or hearing aids; we wouldn’t need joint replacement surgery. Moreover, these signs of ageing are evidence of our fallen condition which points to death—the separation of the soul from the body; and death is the result of sin. We are taught that “Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned” [**ROMANS 5:12**].

As bad as it is to know that our bodies are corrupted by sin, the graver consequence is that we are spiritually dead. This means that apart from God, we can do nothing, which is precisely what Jesus taught His disciples when He said, “Apart from Me you can do nothing” [**JOHN 15:5**]. Again, the Word of God teaches that “to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled” [**TITUS 1:15**]. Any action generated by the flesh is incapable of pleasing God or ensuring a relationship with Christ!

The biblical statement of this condition is provided in **ROMANS 3:10-12**.

“None is righteous, no, not one;
no one understands;
no one seeks for God.
All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;
no one does good,
not even one.”

I believe you would agree with me that these are strong statements that the Apostle has made. Perhaps you are prone to dismiss what he has written as hyperbole. You would be in error if you did so. He is making a statement concerning our inability to please God, or even to pursue God. No Christian sought God—He sought us when we were lost sinners.

Notice that Paul says, “None is righteous.” Then, to make the statement stronger still, he adds, “No, not one.” If it is true that none is righteous, then it must be that we are inherently unrighteous. On one occasion, when a rich young man approached Jesus, he used flattery to gain an audience with the Master. Perhaps we need to recall the Lord’s response to his approach. “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone” [**LUKE 18:19**]. Take note of that statement, for it is an indictment of the race. We are not righteous; we are not good.

“But,” you may protest, “It is wrong when it says that ‘no one does good,’ I know that even pagans do good occasionally.” Throughout the world are people who perform heroic deeds, they make sacrifices that benefit others; they are industrious, prudent and honest. Even some of us are scrupulous in obeying the speed limit! Surely this counts as good?

However, the way in which we use the concept of “good” is relative. In common usage “good” is used to compare people and their actions. When we say someone is “good,” we mean that they are good in comparison to other people. So we are using a standard that is restricted to human activity; and that standard cannot survive this life. However, we are not judged by the standard of how others live—God does not grade on the curve. Each of us is judged by God according to the standard of His holiness and the perfection of His own being. God is the ultimate standard for goodness. Therefore, we are judged by His standard; and none of us are able to measure up to that standard.

R. C. Sproul addresses this issue concerning man’s goodness when he writes, “In biblical categories a good deed is measured in two parts. The first is in its outward conformity to the law of God. This means that, if God prohibits stealing, then it is good not to steal. It is good to tell the truth. It is good to pay our bills on time. It is good to assist people in need. Outwardly these virtues are performed every day. When we see them we quickly conclude that men do in fact do good things.

“It is the second part of the measuring that gets us in trouble. Before God pronounces a deed ‘good’ he considers not only the outward or external conformity to his law, but also the motivation. We look only at outward appearances; God reads the heart. For a work to be considered good it must not only conform outwardly to the law of God, but it must be motivated inwardly by a sincere love for God.

“We remember the Great Commandment to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, all our strength, and all our minds... and love our neighbours as much as we love ourselves. Every deed that we do should proceed from a heart that loves God totally.

”From this perspective it is easy to see that no one does good. Our best works are tainted by our less than pure motives. No one among us has ever loved God with all of his heart or with all of his mind. There is a pound of flesh mixed in with all of our deeds, rendering them less than perfect.”²

Though goodness is not precisely the same as righteousness, the concepts are related in that one who is righteous is good according to God’s standard. Precision in use of the terms is helpful, then, whenever we speak of being good. Though we are usually comparing individuals when we speak of goodness, we ultimately discover that we can go no farther because we must defer to the goodness of God. In light of this knowledge, we are compelled to admit that God alone is righteous, and thus only God is good. Similarly, we must confess that we are not righteous, nor are we good. If any of us are to be righteous in the sight of God, righteousness must be imputed from someone who is righteous—and this requirement excludes mere mortals.

In a similar fashion, we are now driven to the conclusion that all mankind is unrighteous. Considering this very issue, Solomon wrote, “Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins” [ECCLESIASTES 7:20]. He also confessed before the LORD as he prayed, “There is no one who does not sin” [1 KINGS 8:46]. The Word of God is quite consistent in stressing this point of man’s inherent unrighteousness. Listen, one more time, to Solomon as he makes this point in the Proverbs.

“Who can say, ‘I have made my heart pure;
I am clean from my sin?’”

[PROVERBS 20:9]

² R. C. Sproul, **Chosen by God** (Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, IL 1986), Logos Electronic Edition

Throughout the New Testament are numerous clear statements of this same truth. For instance, Paul bluntly stated, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” [ROMANS 3:23]. John made the same point when he cautioned, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” [1 JOHN 1:8]. He shortly follows up on that affirmation when he writes, “If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” [1 JOHN 1:10].

The sum of this study of the Word is that unrighteousness describes the general condition of mankind. Though we are prone to focus on individual acts, declaring one unrighteous or perhaps thinking that a particular act is righteous, God sees our unrighteousness as a universal condition of mankind. We are contaminated by sin, and every facet of our being is affected by that sin. Thus, we are incapable of pleasing God through our own efforts. It cannot be stated strongly enough: no one can please God through his or her effort. It is impossible to do enough “good” deeds to gain God’s favour or forgiveness.

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, THE CONSEQUENCES — “Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.” In the Word of God, we are warned, “The wages of sin is death” [ROMANS 6:23]. Ultimately, we die because of the presence of sin. However, as I have already said, the greater calamity is that we are spiritually dead. One evidence of this dreadful spiritual condition is that we die physically, but an even greater evidence of our spiritual condition is that we justify acts of unrighteousness. Even redeemed people sin and attempt to justify unrighteous acts.

In the text, Paul provides a list of outward expressions of inward rebellion that mark fallen people. The list is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather it is suggestive in that it focuses attention on several egregious expressions of our unrighteous condition. He listed ten specific sins that were resident and tolerated in that ancient society in which he lived. Tragically, these same sins are present and tolerated with contemporary society. This is a demonstration of the universality and timeless nature of mankind’s fallen nature. First, let’s look at the specific sins the Apostle listed, and then let’s think briefly about the impact of the unrighteousness that lies behind these specific sins, and behind many other sins.

Before I address these issues, there is one final piece of information that will prove helpful to remind you what sin is. The word most often translated “sin,” is the Greek word *hamartía*, which in classical Greek meant “missing the mark,” or “failing to attain the goal.”³ The word spoke of an archer who missed the target. Specifically, as used in the New Testament, the word pointed both to the action as well as the result of every departure from the way of righteousness.⁴ Whereas we are prone to speak of specific sins, the fact that we have departed from the way of righteousness—and are thus unrighteous, as already demonstrated—reminds us that our very lives are an offence before the True and Living God. Ask yourself a simple question to clarify this matter. Are you a sinner because you sin? Or, do you sin because you are a sinner? Obviously, what you are is ultimately expressed through what you do. Therefore, before God, you are a sinner, and thus you sin, even when you had no intention of sinning!

³ John F. Walvoord, “Thirty-Three Words for Sin in the New Testament: Part 1,” *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 100, pg 167

⁴ William Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, **A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature: A Translation and Adaptation of the Fourth Revised and Augmented Edition of Walter Bauer’s Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch Zu Den Schrift En Des Neuen Testaments Und Der Ubrigen Urchristlichen Litteratur** (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL 1979) 43

Now, we should take a look at the specific sins that Paul says mark the unrighteous. Paul's catalogue of sins is an expansion of **1 CORINTHIANS 5:10, 11**, where Paul debar the congregation from permitting membership within the church of people identified as sexually immoral, greedy, idolatrous, revilers, drunkards and swindlers. In the text, the Apostle lists ten specific sins,⁵ each of which marks the perpetrator as rebellious and unrighteous.

First, he speaks of "*the sexually immoral*," using the term *pórnos*, a broad term that spoke of *any* sexual activity outside of the marriage relationship. It would include, though not be restricted to, adulterous affairs and promiscuity, but it would also expose such sins as harbouring lustful thoughts and using pornography as a means of sexual gratification. In short, the Apostle takes the position that sex in marriage is a gift from God; all other means of sexual gratification are an exaltation of personal desire over the will of God.

In one of his earliest letters, Paul taught the Thessalonian Christians of the will of God. He wrote, "This is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honour, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you" [**1 THESSALONIANS 4:3-8**].

The Word of God is quite clear that God honours marriage and that He gave us sex as a gift to be used within the marriage relationship. We are taught, "Let marriage be held in honour among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous" [**HEBREWS 13:4**]. In that context, we are taught, "If [the unmarried and widows] cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion" [**1 CORINTHIANS 7:9**]. Within the marriage relationship, we are warned, "Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control" [**1 CORINTHIANS 7:5**].

The next unrighteous expression identified is *idolatry*. Idolaters are those who exalt anything, or anyone, above the Living God. Let's be very clear that those who esteem the accolades of this dying world over obedience to Christ are guilty of idolatry. Likewise, if we exalt our family above service to the Saviour, we are moving into a dangerous realm. The love of money, seeking the paltry plaudits of dying men, pursuing power or pleasure, can all qualify as idolatry. What is tragic is that often churches exalt idolaters above those who obey Christ.

It is not uncommon in churches that godless men are elevated to positions as elders and/or deacons among the congregations of the Saviour. Those who are promoted to those positions are often men, and women, whose lives are distinguished by a mad pursuit of power or possessions or even pleasure. However, because they appear successful as the world defines success, the unthinking imagine that they can "run the church." Let me say that such actions dishonour Christ and promote great harm to the cause of Christ.

Paul then points to *adulterers* as those who are living unrighteously. We should not have great difficulty identifying adultery; the word speaks of anyone who sexually violates the marriage vow. Candidly, many married church members are guilty of flirting, justifying their actions as harmless. Call it what it is—adultery!

⁵ "Men who practice homosexuality" describes both the active and the passive partner in homosexual acts (*oúte malakòu oúte arsevoikoútai*).

Under the phrase “*men who practise homosexuality*,” Paul includes two separate terms, referring to homosexuals. In Roman culture, same-sex sexual acts between two men of equal standing would be shameful.⁶ However, a male could have sex, penetrating a woman or a social inferior in age, gender or status, because of his superior position. In fact, it was common that free males would keep a boy specifically for sexual gratification, calling the boy his *malakós*. On the other hand, for a free male to be penetrated was always shameful and thus condemned by society. The Word of God, however, condemns all such acts as unrighteous. Whether pederasty, or as a passive partner in homosexual acts, or as the active partner, homosexual acts are condemned as unrighteous. Let me emphasise that the language employed is graphic, condemning homoerotic acts and not sexual orientation.

“This sin [of homosexuality] had swept like a cancer through Greek life and from Greece, invaded Rome. We can scarcely realize how riddled the ancient world was with it. Even so great a man as Socrates practised it; Plato’s dialogue *The Symposium* is always said to be one of the greatest works on love in the world, but its subject is not natural but unnatural love. Fourteen out of the first fifteen Roman Emperors practised unnatural vice. At this very time Nero was emperor. He had taken a boy called Sporus and had him castrated. He then married him with a full marriage ceremony and took him home in procession to his palace and lived with him as wife. With an incredible viciousness, Nero had himself married a man called Pythagoras and called him his husband. When Nero was eliminated and Otho came to the throne one of the first things he did was to take possession of Sporus. Much later, the Emperor Hadrian’s name was associated with a Bithynian youth called Antinous. He lived with him inseparably, and, when he died, he deified him and covered the world with his statues and immortalised his sin by calling a star after him. In this particular vice, in the time of the Early Church, the world was lost to shame; and there can be little doubt that this was one of the main causes of its degeneracy and the final collapse of its civilization.”⁷

The ancient world was cursed with *thieves*. Houses were not very secure; they were easy to break into, and thus easily robbed. Thieves haunted the public baths and the public gymnasias where they stole clothes of patrons as they were bathing or as they exercised themselves.⁸ Tragically, thievery has again become common in our world; it is even ignored among the churches so long as “petty pilfering.” Though we may imagine that we would never be guilty of such sin, if we cheat on our taxes, if we fail to show generosity toward the work of the Saviour, if we are dishonest with our time as employees, we stand condemned of the same petty thievery and pilfering that Paul here condemns as a mark of unrighteousness.

The Apostle also lists *greed* as a distinguishing characteristic of unrighteousness. Though such genteel sin is no longer considered to be heinous within modern Christendom, God has not rescinded His view of greed as something dreadful and dishonourable.

We will do well to remember the apostolic injunction delivered to the Church of Colossae. “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and *covetousness, which is idolatry*. On account of these the wrath of God is coming” [COLOSSIANS 3:5, 6].

⁶ David E. Garland, **1 Corinthians, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament** (Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI 2003) 217

⁷ William Barclay, **The Letters to the Corinthians, Daily study Bible series**, rev. ed. (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, PA 1975) 51; See also David E. Malick, “The Condemnation of Homosexuality in 1 Corinthians 6:9,” *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 150, pp. 479-492

⁸ Barclay, *ibid.*

Again, the Apostle has commanded, “Sexual immorality and all impurity or *covetousness* must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience” [EPHESIANS 3:3-6].

Likewise, *drunkards* are condemned. Today, language has been revised and that there are no drunkards left—they have been metamorphosed into alcoholics. Now, such people are sick rather than being sinful. It does not require a stretch of the imagination to realise that Paul would have included those who abuse drugs, becoming addicted to their use under this rubric.

The Apostle then adds *revilers* and *swindlers*. We could just as easily use the terms “slanderers” and “robbers,” to convey the Apostle’s meaning. Slander is a terrible sin, and no Christian should ever fall into the habit of slandering another; slander is the devil’s work and the devil’s method. Swindling connotes robbers or brigands rather than those guilty of white-collar crimes as implied by our English word. The word Paul employed spoke of one who carried off the possessions of another by force. The word was used of wolves that are rapacious, and was also applied to violent robbers.

Let me make one final observation on this list of sins. Each of these sins must be described as self-indulgent and self-serving. From a spiritual perspective, to say nothing of a human perspective, each is self-destructive. This self-indulgent character lies at the heart of rebellion against the True and Living God; it is the exaltation of the self over His rule.

I also said that we would consider the consequences of sin, and they are indeed dire. Unrighteous individuals will not inherit the Kingdom of God! This is a sober warning that the unrighteous have no part in the Kingdom of God. Though an individual may be a church member, perhaps even a leader within the congregation, an unsaved individual will never be accepted into God’s Heaven. This is the startling warning offered near the conclusion of the Apocalypse. “Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood” [REVELATION 22:14, 15]. In another place, John stresses this same truth when he writes, “As for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death” [REVELATION 21:8].

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, THE CURE — “And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” To this point, the message has been focused on the evil that men do. It is a dark subject, but the brightest jewels reveal their beauty and their perfection when displayed against a dark backdrop. So it is that the beauty of Christ’s work is displayed against the blackness of sin.

Though it is not taught with the frequency it deserves, the child of God is saved. Moreover, the Christian’s salvation is eternal. This is the clear teaching of the Word of God. However, it is apparent from reading Paul’s warnings to the Corinthians that some among them were pretenders to grace. Similarly, many church members are unsaved in this day, if the conduct of their lives is any indication of salvation. The life reflects the heart, and you may be assured that one who lives an unrighteous, self-indulgent, self-serving life is not saved.

This truth is clearly enunciated in John's first letter when he writes, "By this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked" [1 JOHN 2:3-6]. Obedience to the Master reflects the transformed heart. Rebellion is revealed through a life that is self-indulgent, self-serving and self-centred.

Whatever some of the people may have once been—and that included individuals who had been immersed in the prevailing culture of sexual immorality, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, theft, greed, drunkenness, slander and violence—they were now transformed. Undoubtedly, among the redeemed saints in Corinth were some who would have said that their orientation was toward these sinful acts, but they no longer engaged in these rebellious acts.

The Apostle reminds them that they were washed, sanctified and justified. The first verb is in middle voice, so the Apostle would be understood to say, "You have permitted yourselves to be washed." The next two verbs are passive, meaning that an outside agency has worked on their lives. In other words, they embraced the message of life and had been born from above. Thus, there was a transformation what was apparent in their lives.

Paul speaks of this transformation, comparing what once marked believers' lives with their present condition, in his letter to Titus when he writes, "We ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life" [TITUS 3:3-7].

The reference to the redeemed washing themselves is not a reference to baptism as salvific, but it is an acknowledgement that when, having believed, they obeyed Christ by receiving baptism they drew a clear line of demarcation between what once was and what now is. They were declaring that they were no longer under the power of the sin that previously held them in thralldom. They were henceforth declaring themselves citizens of the Kingdom of God!

Having been purified through "the washing of water with the word" [EPHESIANS 5:26], the saved are set aside as special to God and for His purposes (sanctified) and given a right standing before Him (justified). This is the situation for each Christian now. This is not the situation for every church member, but only for those who have received Christ by faith.

Each believer now stands holy in the presence of the Living God. Regarding this truth, we are taught, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved" [EPHESIANS 1:3-6]. Christians are set apart for God's purpose, which is to glorify His Name.

Christians are also declared right with God, or justified. We have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and on that account accepted as righteous in the sight of God. Believers, have been "justified by [God's] grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" [ROMANS 3:24]. When a believer stands before the LORD God, he no longer stands in his unrighteousness, but rather, he stands in the righteousness of Christ the Lord.

The proof of Christianity lies in its power; it can take the dregs of humanity and transform such individuals into trophies of God's grace. I daresay that any of us could struggle with events and actions from our past that would cause us shame if they were generally known. However, for each of us who have been born from above, we are no longer what we once were. We rejoice in the knowledge that we were washed, we were sanctified, we were justified.

To any who now stand outside the grace of God, living in rebellion to the will of the Master, He now offers forgiveness of all sin and adoption into His Family. What you cannot do, God can do. The Word of God declares that He gave His own life as a sacrifice because of your sin; there is no longer a debt that remains unpaid if only you will receive the gift of life. God offers life and the forgiveness of sin to all who will receive it. He now promises each individual, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.'" For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" [**ROMANS 10:9-13**].

Will you believe? Will you be saved? Our prayer is that you will receive the gift of life, receive the grace of God through confessing that Jesus died because of your sin and be set apart for His purpose and declared to be in a right standing with the Father. Do it now. May God bless you as you receive this gracious gift. Amen.