

1 Corinthians 6:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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,

Analysis

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

Paul pivots from litigation to broader vice with his trademark ἐ οὐκ οἴδατε (ἢ οὐκ οἴδατε, 'or don't you know?'). **Adikoi** (ἀδικοι, 'unrighteous')—the same term for pagan judges (v. 1)—now describes those excluded from **the kingdom of God** (basileian theou, βασιλείαν θεοῦ). Inheritance language evokes Israel's covenant (Deuteronomy 4:20-21) but now applies to new creation citizenship.

Be not deceived (μὴ πλανασθε, μὴ πλανᾶσθε): the Corinthians' false assurance needed rebuke. The vice catalog that follows—**fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind**—uses specific Greek terms. **Pornoi** (πόρνοι, 'fornicators') encompasses all sexual immorality outside marriage; **eidōlolatrai** (εἰδωλολάτραι, 'idolaters') recalls Corinth's temple culture; **moichoi** (μοιχοί, 'adulterers') specifies married infidelity; **malakoi** (μαλακοί, 'soft, effeminate') likely means passive partners in homosexual acts; **arsenokoitai** (ἀρσενοκοῖται, 'men who bed males') refers to active partners. Paul condemns all same-sex practice.

Historical Context

Corinth was infamous for sexual vice—the temple of Aphrodite allegedly employed 1,000 cult prostitutes. Whether myth or reality, the city's reputation as sexually licentious was widespread ('to Corinthianize' meant to practice immorality). Converts came from this background (v. 11), and some evidently thought grace permitted ongoing sin (6:12). Paul insists: justified sinners are called to holiness, not license.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What sins are you tolerating because you've been deceived into thinking grace covers ongoing, unrepentant practice?
2. How does Paul's vice list challenge contemporary claims that any sexual expression is permissible for Christians?
3. Why does inheriting God's kingdom require a transformed life, not just intellectual assent to gospel truths?

Interlinear Text

ὴ οὐ οἴδατε ὅτι ἄδικοι βασιλείαν θεοῦ οὐ
G2228 not Know ye that the unrighteous the kingdom of God not
G3756 G1492 G3754 G94 G932 G2316 G3756

κληρονομήσουσιν; μὴ πλανᾶσθε· οὐτε πόρνοι οὐτε
inherit not Be neither fornicators neither
G2816 G3361 G4105 G3777 G4205 G3777

εἰδωλολάτραι οὐτε μοιχοὶ οὐτε μαλακοὶ οὐτε
idolaters neither adulterers neither effeminate neither
G1496 G3777 G3432 G3777 G3120 G3777

ἀρσενοκοῖται
abusers of themselves with mankind
G733

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 20:13 (Parallel theme): If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

Leviticus 18:22 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

1 Corinthians 6:10 (Kingdom): Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

Revelation 22:15 (Parallel theme): For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Revelation 21:8 (Parallel theme): But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

1 Corinthians 6:19 (References God): What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

1 Corinthians 5:10 (Parallel theme): Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

Hebrews 13:4 (References God): Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Deuteronomy 22:5 (References God): The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

Romans 1:18 (Righteousness): For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

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