

***1 Corinthians 6:9-18***

*"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.*

*All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body."*

**Marriage on the Rocks**

A man passing by a Little League baseball game asked one of the youngsters the score. "We're behind eighteen to nothing," the youngster replied enthusiastically. "Well," said the man, "You certainly don't sound discouraged." "Discouraged?" the boy said, "Why? We haven't been to bat yet!"

There are times when it appears that the status of marriage within our society has "dropped eighteen runs." The external pressures that have been brought to bear on marriage in the last couple of decades have so corroded society's view that its very essence is being redefined. With the recognition of common law marriages and the movement toward equal rights for same sex marriages, even our school systems are teaching a new definition of marriage and family.

As much as I am disturbed by the trend, I am not discouraged because the Lord God has provided His definition of marriage. This has stood the test of time. Ages ago God performed the first marriage by presenting Eve to Adam, then defined the marriage relationship: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and they will become one flesh." (Genesis 2:24 NIV).

Although much of modern society would mock this definition, it is God that will have the final bat. Whatever man's acceptance of the vices that destroy marriage; whether promiscuity before marriage, adultery in marriage, pornography, homosexuality, incest, or even sodomy, God's declaration that these are sins will be vindicated by his final judgment. God's holiness demands it, God's justice will ensure it, God's Word declares it: "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexual offenders, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." (I Corinthians 6:9 NIV).

I am not discouraged; not because of the judgment of God, but because of the love of God which can overcome these vices in the lives of people. The passage quoted goes on to say: "And that is what some of you were. 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." (I Corinthian 6:11 NIV).

The vices that destroy marriage have been around almost as long as marriage itself. There have always been people who recognize the destructiveness of these vices and turned to the Lord for forgiveness and newness of life. As with the Apostle Paul, my hope for marriages is in God: "being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:6 NIV). This good work of salvation includes the potential for victory over the power of these vices destroying marriage. Marriage may be down, but it is by no means out!

***What is my response:***

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