

**“BUT YE ARE”**  
**YOU “WERE:...BUT YE ARE...”**  
**1COR.6:11**  
**Ed Dye**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Because of all the things that troubled the Corinthian church, and after reprimanding them for several of these things, Paul, in our text, pauses, as it were, before continuing to deal with them and their trouble, takes occasion to remind them of what they were prior to their conversion to Christ and what they are now after their conversion.
2. If we can be made to see just how immoral they had been and how degrading their lifestyle was prior to their conversion to Christ, perhaps we can learn a few important lessons from their case, among which are these:
  - a. That extremely wicked people can be won by the gospel, can turn from their wicked ways, cease the practice of any and all kinds of sin, and be converted to Christ.
  - b. That perhaps their degraded lifestyle from which they had come is one of the reasons why they had so many problems after their conversion.
  - c. That perhaps that made it somewhat easier for them to be swayed or “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive,” Eph.4:14; 2Cor.3,4,12-15.
  - d. That even though young in the faith and having come from such an unholy background, this was no excuse for their present sinful behavior.
3. It is to this we wish to focus our attention in this lesson. Thus our title: You “Were:...But Ye Are,” in which our text shall be discussed under three different headings:
  - a. The text in context.
  - b. The argument of the text.
  - c. The authority of the text.

**II. DISCUSSION**

**A. THE TEXT IN CONTEXT**

1. The Corinthian church was a troubled church.
  - a. There was division caused by the party spirit, Chps.1-4.
  - b. There was fornication among the members, Ch.5.
  - c. The brethren were suing one another in the courts to resolve their personal conflicts, Ch.6.
  - d. They were troubled with questions about marriage, Ch.7.

- e. They had disputes over the proper use of meats offered to idols, Ch.8.
  - f. They had some who questioned Paul's authority as an apostle of Christ and whether or not he should be supported financially by the church, Ch.9.
  - g. There were some who were visiting the pagan temples and participating in the events that went on there, Ch.10.
  - h. They had questions about the role and authority of women in the churches, Chs.11,14.
  - i. They were abusing the Lord's Supper, Ch.11.
  - j. There was controversy over the proper use of spiritual gifts, Chs.12-14.
  - k. Some were denying the resurrection of the dead, Ch.15.
2. The problem of the "party spirit" seemed to be the prevailing trouble and the contributing cause to their other problems.
- a. They exalted men above the word and therefore were ignorant of the truth, 1Cor.4:6; 3:1-4.
  - b. Their party loyalties allowed them to overlook sin in some while condemning it in others, 1Cor.5:2; 10:14-22.
  - c. They sought solutions to their conflicts before unbelievers, being unable to be impartial with one another, 1Cor.6:1ff.
  - d. Party loyalty set disciples in conflict with recognized and properly constituted authority in the church, 1Cor.9:1,2; 16:15,16.
  - e. These conflicts and abuses resulted in the disruption and corruption of the worship assemblies: in the matter of the Lord's Supper; the use and regulation of spiritual gifts; women speaking in the public assemblies, 1Cor.12-14.
  - f. Their loyalty to men rather than to the Lord and the truth allowed them to be swayed by false teachers with false teaching, 1Cor.15:11,33; 2Cor.11:13-15.
  - g. Their divisive spirit may have contributed to their tardiness in taking up the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem, 1Cor.16:1-3,10-14; 2Cor.8; 2Cor.9.

## **B. THE ARGUMENT OF THE TEXT**

1. "Such **were** some of you..."
  - a. The Corinthians in their pre-Christian lives had been engaged in the most immoral and degrading of lifestyles. They **were**:
    - (1) Fornicators.
      - (a) The original word translated fornicators in 1Cor.6:9:
        - (1) "Denotes a man who indulges in fornication," W.E. Vine, II, 125.

- (2) Means “a man who prostitutes his body to another’s lust for hire, a male prostitute; univ., a man who indulges in unlawful sexual intercourse, a fornicator”
  - (b) Corinth was in a particular manner noted for fornication, insomuch that a Corinthian woman was a proverbial phrase for a strumpet...to play the Corinthian, is to play the whore, or indulge whorish inclinations, Matthew Henry.
  - (c) The temple of Venus alone had 1,000 prostitutes dedicated to her “worship,” Unger’s Bible Dictionary.
- (2) Idolaters.
  - (a) “Worshippers of idols,” The Analytical Greek Lexicon
  - (b) “A worshipper of false gods,” Thayer, 174.
  - (c) The temples of Apollo, Venus, Neptune and Athena were located in this city. The Isthmian games were played here in honor of Neptune at a stadium dedicated to him. The entertainments included drunkenness, all forms of wagering and “religious” prostitution.
- (3) Adulterers.
  - (a) “One who has unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another,” W.E. Vine, I, 32.
  - (b) These debauched practices were engaged in by those that were married.
  - (c) Furthermore, the problem of anti-scriptural divorce and remarriage was rampant among both the Jews (Jno.4:18) and the Gentiles (Mk.6:18).
- (4) Effeminate
  - (a) Berry’s Literal translation, “nor abusers of themselves as women.”
  - (b) “An instrument of unnatural lust,” The Analytical Greek Lexicon.
  - (c) Thayer, 387, “A catamite, a male who submits his body to unnatural lewdness”
  - (d) W.E.Vine, II,19, “Not simply of a male who practices forms of lewdness, but persons in general, who are guilty of addiction to sins of the flesh, voluptuous (“tending to, occupied with, sensuous or sensual pleasure,” Webster).”
- (5) Abusers of themselves with mankind
  - (a) “One who lies with a male, a sodomite,” 1Cor.6:9; 1Tim.1:10,” The Analytical Greek Lexicon.

- (b) Thayer, 75, “One who lies with a male as with a female, a sodomite,” 1Cor.6:9; 1Tim.1:10.
- (c) Thus (4) and (5) are very much the same and they are speaking of homosexuals of all sorts.
- (d) Homosexuality was prevalent among the Gentiles, Rom.1:26,27; Jude 7; Gen.19.
- (e) The Roman Empire was known for its practice.
- (6) Thieves
  - (a) “An embezzler, pilferer,” Thayer, 348.
- (7) Covetous
  - (a) “Avaricious person, one who defrauds for the sake of gain,” The Analytical Greek Lexicon
  - (b) “Greedy of gain,” Thayer, 516.
  - (c) “Eager to have what belongs to others,” W.E. Vine,I,253.
  - (d) Gambling was a widespread and acceptable practice in Corinth according to ISBE. The practice of which violated the Christian’s work ethic, Eph.4:28; 2Th.3:10; and principles enjoining contentment, Heb.13:5; 1Tim.6:6-9.
- (8) Drunkards
  - (a) “Drunken, intoxicated,” Thayer, 396.
  - (b) William Barclay quoting the Greek poet Aelian, tells us that if ever a Corinthian was shown upon the stage in a Greek play he was shown drunk.
- (9) Revilers
  - (a) “Railer,” Thayer, 382; Vine, III, 294.
  - (b) Or blasphemers. The unbelieving Jews had been guilty of this sin when they rejected the gospel (Ac.18:6). The unbelieving Gentiles were guilty as well (1Cor.1:21-25).
- (10) Extortioners
  - (a) “Rapacious, given to extortion and robbery, an extortioner,” The Analytical Greek Lexicon
  - (b) “A robber, an extortioner,” Thayer, 75.
  - (c) Extortioners are those who snatch away from others what is not lawfully theirs through strife and oppression, 1Cor.5:10,11; 6:10.
    - (1) This is the very thing the Corinthian saints were doing in their lawsuits, 1Cor.6:8
  - (d) “Rapacious” – “greedy, predatory, preying (victimize, go after, exploit use, take advantage of),” Webster.

- b. However, upon obeying the gospel of Christ the Corinthians were no longer guilty or enslaved to the practice of their former debased lifestyle. This was what they **were**, but not what they **are**.
- (1) The Bible clearly teaches that man upon conversion must not remain in sin, 1Cor.5:7-11; 15:34; Rom.6:1,2,16-18; 1Pet.4:1-4; Pet.1:14-16; 1Jno.2:1; 1Jno.3:3; 1Jno.3:7; Jas.1:12; 1Cor.10:13.
  - (2) He is not enslaved to an inborn fallen and, therefore, sinful nature.
  - (3) Neither is he driven by a natural constitution that demands he succumb to that which God has condemned as sinful.
    - (a) How does a man stop worshiping idols? He believes the gospel and repents, 1Th.1:6-10.
    - (b) How does a man quit being a sorcerer? He believes the gospel and repents, Ac.19:18-20.
    - (c) How does one quit being a thief? He believes the gospel and repents, Lk.23:40-43; Eph.4:28.
    - (d) How does one quit living his life to the lust of the flesh? He believes the gospel and repents, 1Pet.4:1-4.
    - (e) He quits drinking, fornicating, murdering, stealing and sodomizing the same way.
    - (f) It makes as much sense to argue that one is born a drunkard or a homosexual as it does to argue that one is born an idolater or a thief. It's a matter of **will, not genetics**.
  - (4) Conversion to Christ transformed the Corinthians into "new creatures," 2Cor.5:17.
2. "But ye **are**..."
- a. Paul's design here is to remind the Corinthians of what they had been in order to impress upon them their obligation to live better lives by the grace of God than they had formerly lived in bondage to sin.
  - b. Paul accomplishes his objective by reminding them of their present relation to Jesus Christ based upon their having obeyed the gospel, Ac.18:8; 1Cor.4:15; 15:1-3.
    - (1) "Ye are washed"
      - (a) Literally, "ye washed yourselves clean...indicates that the converts at Corinth, by their obedience to the faith, voluntarily gave testimony to the complete spiritual change Divinely wrought in them," W.E.Vine, IV,199
      - (b) "To wash off or away...whosoever obtains remission of sins has his sins put, so to speak, out of God's sight, --- is

cleansed from them in the sight of God. Remission is (represented as) obtained by undergoing baptism; hence those who have gone down into the baptismal bath (cf. Tit.3:5; Eph.5:26) are said to have washed themselves, or to have washed away their sins, i.e. to have been cleansed from their sins.” – Thayer, 65.

- (c) The Corinthians washed themselves clean when they were baptized into Christ, Ac.18:8.
  - (1) Paul was washed of his sins when he was baptized calling on the name of the Lord, Ac.22:16.
  - (2) The Cretans were washed clean “by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit,” when they were baptized, Tit.3:4,5.
  - (3) The Hebrew Christians were washed clean when they were baptized, Heb.10:22.
- (2) “Ye are sanctified”
  - (a) Hagiazō (hag-ee-ad’-zo)
    - (1) “To separate, consecrate; cleanse, purify,” The Analytical Greek Lexicon.
    - (2) “To purify by expiation, free from the guilt of sin,” Thayer,6.
    - (3) “To make holy, i.e.(ceremonially) purify or consecrate; from hagios (an awful thing), meaning something sacred...consecrated,” Strong’s
  - (b) Hagiasmos
    - (1) “Sanctification, is used of separation to God (1Cor.1:30; 2Th.2:13; 1Pet.1:2); is that relationship with God into which men enter by faith in Christ (Ac.26:18; 1Cor.6:11), and to which their sole title is the death of Christ (Eph.5:25,26; Col.1:21,22; Heb.10:10,29; 13:12). Vine, III, 317.
  - (c) The process of God’s grace by which the believer is separated from sin and becomes dedicated to God’s righteousness (Rom.6:18-22). Accomplished by the word of God (Jno.17:17) and the Holy Spirit (1Pet.1:2; 2Th.2:13,14), sanctification results in holiness, or purification from the guilt and power of sin (Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary).
  - (d) The Corinthians were sanctified when by faith they were baptized into Christ, Ac.18:8; 1Cor.12:13.

- (1) Saints are made when Christ cleanses us from sin by the washing of water through the word, Eph.5:25,26
  - (2) Men are washed with water through the word when they believe the gospel and are baptized, Mk.16:15,16.
  - (3) Sanctification is accomplished when we by faith are baptized for the remission of sins, because that puts us into the death of Christ; it is his blood that sanctifies, Heb.13:12; Rom.6:3-4.
- (3) “Ye are justified”
- (a) “To make or render right or just...to hold as guiltless, to accept as righteous, to justify; to be held as acquitted, to be cleared; to stand approved, to stand accepted,” The Analytical Greek Lexicon.
  - (b) “...denotes the act of pronouncing righteous, justification, acquittal; its precise meaning...signifying the establishment of a person as just by acquittal from guilt; justification being the legal and formal acquittal from guilt by God as Judge (see Rom.3:24-26; 4:25; 5:1; 8:33; Gal.2:16),” Vine, II, 284,285.
  - (c) The Corinthians were justified when they by faith were baptized into Jesus Christ in obedience to the gospel of Christ, Ac.18:8; 1Cor.15:1,2; 1Cor.1:12-18,30.
    - (1) Justification is the result of faith and baptism, Tit.3:4-7; Rom.6:3-6,16-18.
    - (2) Justification by faith requires the obedience of water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, Ac.2:36-41; 26:18; Gal.2:16; Gal.3:24-27.

### **C. THE AUTHORITY OF THE TEXT**

- 1. “In the name of the Lord Jesus”
  - a. “Name” “Is used for all the name implies, of authority, character, rank, majesty, power, excellence, etc, of everything the name covers...of the name of Christ...in the name of Christ...representing the authority of (sometimes combined with the thought of relying or resting on)his name,” Vine,III,100.
  - b. Thayer,448, name “is used in various senses:
    - (1) “By the command and authority of Christ”
    - (2) “In acknowledging, embracing, professing, the name of Christ,” Ac.4:12; 1Cor.6:11.

- (3) “Relying or resting on the name of Christ, rooted (so to speak) in his name, i.e., mindful of Christ, Col.3:17; Eph.5:20”
- (4) See Ac.3:6; 4:7-10; 26:9.
- c. In other words, all of this had been accomplished through the Lord Jesus, by his authority and appointment.
- d. In his name, repentance and remission of sins had been proclaimed to them (Lk.24:47), and by him all these favors had been conferred on them (1Cor.1:30).
- e. The Corinthians had been baptized “in the name of Christ (1Cor.1:13). Their faith was in him (1:23,24) and they were baptized at his appointment, Ac.18:8; Mk.16:15,16.
- 2. “And by the Spirit of our God”
  - a. All of this had been accomplished through the Lord Jesus and by the agency of the Holy Spirit through the word of God, the gospel of Christ, Rom.15:16; 1Cor.6:11; 2Th.2:13,14; 1Pet.1:2.
  - b. It was by the agency of the Spirit of God that the gospel, God’s power to save the believer, was revealed to Paul and the apostles, 1Cor.2:9-13; Jno.16:13-15; Gal.1:11,12; Eph.3:1-4; Ac.1:8; 2:1-4.
  - c. By this gospel they were “begotten” or born again, 1Cor.4:15; 1Pet.1:22-25; 1Cor.15:1,2; Cf. Jno.3:3-5; Ac.2:36-38.
  - d. When the Corinthians by faith obeyed the gospel in baptism, Jesus by the Holy Spirit added them to the one body, the church of Christ, Ac.2:47; 1Cor.12:13; 1:1,2..

### III. CONCLUSION

- 1. Question: What **were** you?
  - a. Our souls **were** no more pure than the Corinthians. Perhaps not guilty of the same sins, but nevertheless sinned!
  - b. Rom.3:23; 1Jno.1:10.
- 2. Question: What **are** you?
  - a. Like the Corinthians we should reflect upon what we have been and what the grace of God has done for us through our faith in Jesus Christ.
  - b. Having done this we should renew our commitment to the new life in Christ.
  - c. If anything is amiss in our life, we need to repent as the Corinthians were called upon to do and make things right with God!
- 3. Question: Will you do it **now**? (Credit to Jeff Asher)