

# ***“The Deepening Darkness”***

**ROMANS 1:18-32**

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As we begin our study of God’s word this morning, I want you to know that the research actually started several weeks ago, and I was hoping to present this lesson last Sunday morning. However, the more I looked into it, the more complicated it became. The passage we are about to consider is incredibly straightforward, and yet it contains a lot of information, a lot of very deep information. About a week and a half ago, then, I decided to move the sermon on Nehemiah up a week (to last Sunday), so that I would have more time to delve into this particular passage. The passage contains one of the most comprehensive statements anywhere in the Bible on a rather difficult subject – a subject that I have not covered in depth in more than 20 years of preaching. Little did I know two weeks ago, that the subject would hit the national stage in a big way over the past week or so. This past Tuesday, of course, the state of North Carolina passed an amendment to their state constitution, and then on Wednesday, our president came out with a statement (an affirmation) that no president has ever yet had the audacity to make. It has been said that the Bible is more up to date than this morning’s newspaper, and that is certainly the case for our study today.

The passage, as many of you might have guessed by now, was written by Paul to the church in Rome and has been preserved for us in the second half of Romans 1 – Romans 1:18-32 (p. 1759). Despite nearly 2000 years of progress and technology, it is amazing how this passage directly addresses some of the most basic concerns that we still face today. I realize that in our modern society, most people believe that we are slowly evolving. In fact, our president this past week very clearly said that his understanding of this issue has “evolved” over a number of years. The evolutionary idea is that mankind started at some very low level and slowly progressed through the years to the advanced and enlightened stage where we are now. And yet as we look at Romans 1, I would humbly suggest that the opposite is actually true. And what I mean by that is this: Ever since the creation of the world, mankind has actually “devolved.” Through the years, humanity has gradually grown farther and farther away from God. And for that reason, I have titled this morning’s lesson as “The Deepening Darkness.” As society grows farther and farther away from God, we slide further and further into the deepening darkness. As Christians, then, we have a responsibility to try to hold back that darkness by reflecting God’s light into a very dark world. As was read for us in the Scripture reading this morning, we have been placed here in the city of Madison (and the surrounding area) as ***“...the light of the world,”*** as a ***“city set on a hill.”***

And that seems to be what Paul is saying in Romans 1. In verse 16, he speaks of how he is ***“not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.”*** In verse 17, he speaks of righteousness, he speaks of living by faith, and then we get to a solemn warning, starting in verse 18. If you will, then, please look with me at Romans 1:18-32,

***18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.***

***24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.***

***26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, 27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.***

***28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; 32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.***

With the understanding that some of us may have varying opinions on some of the discussions that have taken place in the news this past week, I would like for us to come to an understanding of what is right and wrong, not based on how we feel about something, but rather, based on what God has revealed to us in the Scriptures. As Christians, we believe that the Bible is God’s word, and so I would invite you to think with me about what this text actually says. For the purpose of our study this morning, I would like to divide this morning’s lesson into two basic thoughts: First of all, the realization (in verses 18-21) that there are many people in the world around us who are actively trying to suppress the truth. And then secondly (in the remainder of this chapter), I would like for us to notice the natural consequences of constantly trying to suppress what we know about God – What happens when society tries to keep a lid on God? And for those of you who are using the pew Bibles, please notice the heading at the top of p. 1759, “Unbelief and Its Consequences.” I just noticed that heading yesterday, so it’s kind of funny to me that after several weeks of study trying to nail down an outline, I have basically settled on that heading as an outline: 1.) Unbelief, and 2.) Its Consequences!

I. **But first of all, let us please notice (in verses 18-21) that there are MANY PEOPLE IN THE WORLD AROUND US WHO ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING TO SUPPRESS THE TRUTH OF GOD'S EXISTENCE.**

And what gets me here is that this has been happening for many thousands of years. In other words, let us take comfort in the fact that we are not alone. We may look around us and think it's bad, but we are certainly not unique in world history. After all, we are looking at a letter that was written by Paul from Corinth to the city of Rome in roughly 56 AD.

When we look at the text itself, we find that the existence of God is obvious. Simply by looking at the world around us, there is not a single person on the face of this earth who can say, "I know nothing about God; therefore, consider me excused from judgment." But rather (as Paul said in verse 20), ***"...since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse."*** Or, as King David wrote in Psalm 19, ***"The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands."*** In other words, just by looking at the world around us, the existence of God is obvious. And yet, even though this is true, please notice that many people will either ignore or deny the evidence. And so they refuse to honor God as God. They refuse to give thanks. Several years ago, we spent some time far away in the home of some good friends. And what struck me about being at their house for a week or two was that as soon as the food hit the table, they just dug in. And I know when we are with friends who are not Christians, we have the understanding in our family that we will just silently thank God on our own. But meal after meal for a week or so, it actually reminded me of a couple of dogs. As you might know, we've had a couple of beagles through the years, and if you know beagles, then you know that food is pretty much the only thing they understand! As soon as you start thinking about food, they can sense it, and they just go nuts! And it escalates until the grand climax as the bowl hits the floor – there is no thought involved, there is no giving of thanks, but the food actually seems to be inhaled, and within a few seconds, the meal is gone, and there is no thought concerning where that meal actually came from. Paul is saying: People in the world are like that – in spite of the overwhelming evidence, they refuse to acknowledge God or give Him thanks.

But please notice: For many people, simply ignoring God does not go nearly far enough. But instead (as Paul said in verse 18), there are some who make every effort to ***"suppress the truth in unrighteousness."*** In other words, it's not enough that they don't follow God's law, but they don't want anybody else to follow it either. It is not acceptable to them to simply ignore the truth. They can't just be tolerant of the truth. And so they will do everything possible to hold back the evidence that God exists. And that's why I've put this picture on the wall back here. I think all of us have had the experience of playing with a water hose, and when we were kids, maybe we tried to stop the flow with our thumb. And maybe we put everything we have into it, but as you know, the water has a way of squirting out. And that is how I picture those who try to suppress the evidence of God's existence. They try, they do everything they can to suppress it, but God keeps on coming through – there is no suppressing the evidence. God is revealing Himself through the amazing design that we see in the world around us. Through the creation, God is saying: Here I am! And these people, not content with that, have to stand up and say, "No He isn't!" They will do everything in their power to suppress the truth, but the truth keeps on coming out.

We could say the same thing not only about the evidence from nature, but also about the word of God itself. It is not enough for them to ignore the Bible, but there are forces in the world around us who are upset that anybody has access to God's word. In fact, it is almost as if the Bible is a dangerous book. Those of you who attend on Wednesday evenings know of something that happened when I worked as an election official at my daughter's elementary school several months ago. The election was held in the library, and it is truly a

beautiful facility. As you know, my mom recently retired as the director of the children's department at the public library down in Crystal Lake, Illinois, so we have a soft spot in our hearts for pretty much any library. My wife has coordinated fundraisers for this library right here. In a time of tight budgets and cutbacks, we have personally donated our own money so that this library will have the supplies that are needed. And yet as I looked around at the 20,000 books in one of the most well-equipped libraries I have ever seen, I discovered that there is one book that was missing. And I bet you can guess which book it is! It is the best-selling book of all time, it is the first book ever printed (back in the 1450's), it is the one book used across the world more than all others combined. There is a large poster of Abraham Lincoln on one wall in here – it is the book Mr. Lincoln used when learning to read as he grew up in Kentucky and Indiana. We love our school librarian – she does some amazing work with the limited resources she has at her disposal – and so I do not blame this on her at all. But when I couldn't find a Bible anywhere in this room, I waited until the students were out of the room, and I asked her whether maybe I had just overlooked it somewhere, and her answer was: No. To include a copy of God's word would not be "fair" to all of the other world religions. I offered to purchase and donate a copy of the Koran and the Torah to go along with a copy of the Bible – the answer was: No. The next excuse was that to include a copy of God's word would involve including a book that could not be understood by children so young. I offered to purchase and donate a high-quality children's Bible adapted specifically to the ages at the school, and the answer once again was: No. Our founding fathers would weep to think that the first textbook ever used in this nation is no longer allowed in our public schools. Brothers and sisters, this is what our children are dealing with.

There are forces in this world that seek to suppress the truth of God's existence. I have a theory concerning why this is the case. In a multi-cultural all-tolerant society, why would the Bible be excluded? The answer, I believe, is alluded to at the end of verse 21, where Paul says that, "**...their foolish heart was darkened.**" The psalmist described the word of God as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. If I shine God's word on my life, there might be some things there that need changing, and I think people in the world know this. If the word of God is allowed to shine, people all around us would need to give up sin. They would need to make a clear choice. But as it is, they would much rather not even consider it. They would much rather just try to make the choice go away. I would point out that even Christians might sometimes want the choice to just go away. Sometimes we might be tempted to suppress the truth on some issue. But that is the basic idea here. People all around us are struggling to keep that thumb on the hose as they do everything possible to suppress the truth of God's word.

**II. As you can imagine, THIS SUPPRESSION OF GOD LEADS TO SOME HORRIBLE CONSEQUENCES – not just individually, but also to society at large.**

What happens when an entire culture exchanges the truth of God for a lie? The answer is: Once they have stubbornly given up on God, God allows that culture to get exactly what it wants. Notice in this paragraph: Paul says that God "**gave them over**" to what they wanted – three times. We might refer to this as allowing a society to reap what it has sown, almost like just allowing a boat to drift downstream. God certainly tries to turn people around, but there is a time when God gives up. I'm thinking about what happens when a building gets abandoned. It really doesn't stay empty; but instead, all kinds of critters find their way in, the roof starts leaking, everything falls apart, and the building slowly drifts into a state of disrepair. One of our members has the job of going in and securing homes and buildings after fires or other disasters, and there is a great need for that service. When a building is not being used or lived in, the natural state is chaos, and there is a need for someone to bring order into that chaos. The same goes for my garden. If I go in there and roto-till in the spring and then give up on it, the soil doesn't stay all nice and fluffy, but the weeds come in, and it gets overrun very quickly. The same thing happens to a society that suppresses the truth. God allows them to go their own way.

I have tried to picture this on the wall as a downward spiral – things just keep on getting worse and worse. If someone suppresses God and makes a conscious decision to do what is wrong, God allows that choice to be made. And I know there's a lot in the rest of this chapter, but I would like to divide it into three categories:

**A. First of all, when a society chooses to reject God, they will replace the worship of God with the worship of something else – sometimes we refer to this as the sin of idolatry.**

Notice in verse 22, ***“Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.”*** And then in verse 25, ***“...they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.”*** I believe that human beings were created with a need to worship something. And if we stubbornly refuse to worship God, then we will find something else to worship. One philosopher has explained that we were born with a “God-shaped hole in our hearts,” and we will go for a lifetime trying to find something to fill that void. If it's not God, then it's an idol, or another person, or a career, or even our children. We will find something to pour all of our resources and our attention into. And what really gets me here is that this worship of anything but God is headed up by those who are ***“professing to be wise.”*** Those who profess! It starts with the professors! It starts with the academic elite. It starts with the most educated among us. Those people who think they are smart are actually the first ones to do some of the most stupid things! I am reminded of Isaiah's picture of idolatry in Isaiah 44. He points out how foolish it is for a man to chop down a tree, to cut that tree in half, to use half of that tree to make an idol, and then to use the other half as firewood to cook his dinner over – how ridiculous! And yet at the time, I am sure that all of the polls and focus groups at that time were suggesting that idol worship was the way to go. So, first of all, when a society stops worshiping God, God will allow them to worship something else, as ridiculous as that might be.

**B. There is a second consequence of rejecting God, and it involves the sin of homosexuality.**

Starting in verse 26, please notice how this sin is described: 1.) It involves ***“degrading passions”*** (or ***“shameful lust”*** as some translations put it), 2.) It involves substituting that which is ***“natural”*** for that which is ***“unnatural”*** (from the end of verse 26 through the middle of verse 27), 3.) It involves performing ***“indecent acts”*** (second part of verse 27), and 4.) It is also the result of having a ***“depraved mind”*** (verse 28). In other words, homosexuality is not the beautiful alternative lifestyle that is being portrayed in Hollywood and taught in our public schools. But instead, it is a lifestyle that takes over at some point along the downward spiral as society rejects and suppresses the truth of God's word. Homosexuality is a substitute for the love that takes place between a man and a woman, just as idolatry serves as a substitute for the worship of the one true God.

Notice, please, that Paul says that those who commit these ***“indecent acts”*** will ***“receive in their own persons the due penalty of their error.”*** Personally, I do not know exactly what Paul is talking about here. It could be some kind of spiritual consequence, or it could be some kind of physical consequence – I don't know. I do know, however, that there can be some gruesome consequences for treating the human body in a way that it was not designed to be treated. If you want a place to start, I would encourage you to start looking into the rates of alcoholism, and suicide, and depression, and breast cancer, and drug abuse, and domestic violence among those who are gay as opposed to those who are straight. I would suggest that most of us would be shocked by the results.

Of course, some would like for us to think that people have no choice in this matter, that we are simply born this way or that way. I have prepared a massive handout on this subject. I hope everyone can get one on the

way out this morning. But based on what I have read over the past several weeks, the idea of there being a “gay gene” is far from having been proven conclusively. I will let the scientists handle that one. You can read more about it on your own. But let’s just take something else as an example. Let us just assume that someone has a genetic predisposition to be an alcoholic. At the very least, it tends to run in families – we know this from experience. Does that “predisposition” remove all accountability? Does that “predisposition” remove the need to control oneself? Absolutely not! Some people may face more of a challenge in certain areas than others, but there are challenges we need to face, whether we may be genetically predisposed or not.

Of course, we look around us, and we find that many churches, in fact, will claim that we have misunderstood this passage. As I was doing the research for this lesson, I discovered some who claimed that for those who are gay, it would actually be unnatural for them to be with the opposite gender. And so for them, they have twisted this passage completely around, to try to make it say the exact opposite of what it actually says. By their way of reasoning, it would be sin for a homosexual to try to change his or her behavior. Other churches have tried to say that none of this applies to a long-term, loving relationship. They want us to think that Paul’s only problem was with wild parties, and so if gays could only get married, that would solve this problem. Other churches have said, “Jesus never said anything about this issue; therefore, we have freedom in this area.” They fail to realize that the Lord did address this topic. In Matthew 19, the Lord defined marriage as being between a man and a woman. They also fail to realize that the Lord never directly addressed kidnapping, or incest, or domestic violence – as if that means that the Bible has nothing to say on these issues. By the way, I would point out that the Lord Himself never spoke the word “grace” either. Which, of course, in no way diminishes all that the Bible teaches on grace. But those who try to suppress the truth will try to twist things.

And so for these reasons, we have a number of churches in our society that warmly and proudly welcome gays and lesbians not only as members, but also as ministers and leaders. Several years ago, I was looking for information on a church of Christ in another town, I was using Google, and when I made the search, a sponsored ad popped up. The ad said, “Looking for a gay-friendly church?” The rest of the ad said, “Choose a spiritual path that embraces the freedom to marry,” and then it had a link to that particular denomination, of which there are several right here in Madison. I went to their local website, and they have a statement on there about marriage and the “spiritual unions” they are more than willing to perform. The section started with this, “For as long as men and women have walked on the earth, there have been some human beings who have shared their deepest expression of love with a person of the same gender. Our faith tradition has grown to recognize the validity and beauty of this special way of loving.” So, we have gone from what is shameful (according to the apostle Paul) to a “special way of loving.” And as I studied, I thought: How interesting! It is now so easy to find a church that believes whatever you want them to believe! What was once thought by Paul to be a shameful, unnatural, indecent, depraved act, is now being used to advertise a particular religious group.

And speaking of twisting things, think for just a moment about what our president said a few days ago. One thing that I truly respect about our current president is his family. We pray for them often. We can hardly imagine the stress involved in holding that position. He and Michelle have been married for 20 years – that is truly rare these days. And yet in his statement early this week, He affirmed that he has evolved to the point where he now thinks that, “same sex couples should be able to get married.” But think about how he got to that point. In his own words, he based that decision on “Christ sacrificing Himself on our behalf” and also on “the Golden Rule.” And I am not picking on him in particular (that’s just the lead news story this week), but the president (like many of our friends and neighbors) is twisting God’s word to make it say the opposite of what it actually says. According to them, it’s almost as if Jesus and Paul forgot to get together on things! So we have

the sacrifice of Jesus and the Golden Rule somehow proving that men ought to be able to marry men and that women ought to be able to marry women.

How do we treat gays and lesbians? I would suggest we treat them the same way we treat our neighbors who worship idols. We have neighbors who worship idols. We treat them with love and respect. They have been here to worship with us. We swap gifts at the holidays. We swap food from time to time. We watch each other's homes when we're out of town. We certainly do not go around holding up signs about how much God hates these people. I don't know about you, but I have seen nothing like that in Paul's words this morning. And yet at the same time, we also should not welcome them into the church without steps being taken to change that behavior (the Bible calls this repentance – a change of heart resulting in a change of lifestyle).

Earlier this morning, I received an interesting email message concerning some recent research released by a well-known pollster. They asked Americans aged 16-29 what word or phrase they associated most with Christianity. 91% said the word "anti-homosexual" was the first word that came to mind – not "Bible," not "love," not even "Jesus." Nine out of every ten people in that age group associate Christians as being "anti-homosexual." How does that happen? I have a theory, and that is, whenever this issue comes up in the media, they go looking for the extremes. They have one side, but when they go looking for what our side teaches, they go the wackos from Kansas who are always protesting at soldiers' funerals, those guys holding the posters, "Thank God for dead soldiers," and so on. And yet, that is not us! But we are portrayed as being ignorant, hateful, and intolerant. So, that is a problem, when 91% of the next generation view us in that way.

What do we do about that? I don't know how you handle this in your own families, but we sit down and talk with our own kids on a regular basis, and we make it incredibly clear: You are not to be picking on or making fun of anyone for this or any other reason. We are not the bullies. We may disagree, but we have absolutely no right to abuse another child for this reason or any other. We can disagree without being disagreeable, and we are to treat everyone around us with the utmost of love and respect.

**C. Before we leave this downward spiral, I would just point out that Paul continues by listing just about every other kind of evil we could possibly imagine (verses 29-32).**

***"Unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil, envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice."*** These people are, ***"gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, [and] unmerciful."*** Just a few notes here: ***"Insolent"*** refers to being violent. ***"Unloving"*** refers to the absence of love for our families, the absence of the normal and natural love and affection for our offspring – certainly a term that would apply in many cases to the abortion debate (but that is an entirely different lesson). And then also notice, ***"inventors of evil."*** As if these things were not bad enough, people in the downward spiral will make up evil as they go. They get creative as they spiral out of control. One thing I noticed here: These things are listed right along with idolatry and homosexuality. In other words, the Bible never puts homosexuality in a category of its own – it is never portrayed as the "supreme evil"; but rather (as far as I can tell), it is always included in a list. That right there should tell us something. Maybe we don't struggle there, but have we ever been greedy? If so, then we are in the same category! Have we ever spoken a word of gossip? If so, then we are just as displeasing to God as someone involved in some other sin. And I would add: There is a whole lot more heterosexual sin in the world than there is on the other side. And sure, we as a church may not recognize gay marriage, but we don't recognize every heterosexual marriage either.

But then notice what comes next: Those who do all of these things (even though they know better), they **“give hearty approval to those who practice”** these things. And so, not only do they sin personally, but they love it when others join them in their sin. They revel in that. Think about what happened when the president spoke in Hollywood the other night. I listened to parts of that speech. I read the transcript online. He went through various points of his agenda (and that’s fine – that’s what politicians do), but then he referred to doing well “no matter who you love[d].” And at that point, the room just broke out in raucous applause. That’s Hollywood – that’s the **“hearty approval”** that Paul was talking about in verse 32. Think about this – think about the progression: We are seeing things today that should shock us as Christians, but we’ve seen so much of it on TV and in the movies and all around us, nothing shocks us anymore. This past Wednesday evening, I enjoyed the time we spent together at Culver’s with our Christian family, and I really enjoyed listening to some of you talk about people you have voted for in the past – some great stories – those of you who voted for Kennedy, or Nixon, or Carter, or Reagan, or Clinton. And yet, can we imagine the outcry in 1960 if Mr. Kennedy had come out in support of gay marriage? We cannot even fathom that, and yet the world around us has changed to the point where we really aren’t shocked by it. We are not shocked, because the behavior has been normalized. Many of our children grow up thinking it’s okay.

Several months ago, I told the Wednesday night crowd about a book that the teacher chose to read in our daughter’s 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade class at school. I couldn’t believe it, so I went and checked it out myself – a well-illustrated book by an award-winning author. But the book is about a little girl who grows up in a family with two mothers. And the tension in the story comes with the fact that some people don’t approve of having two mothers, and the climax comes as one of the mean, un-loving neighbors comes up and condemns the two mothers. The child wonders what’s wrong, and the mothers explain that some people are just afraid, that some people just don’t understand the amazing, loving relationship that they have. According to the book, there is no love in that woman’s heart. What message do you think a room full of 9 and 10 year olds got from this book being read in the classroom? They learned that anyone who opposes the sin of homosexuality is mean, and unloving, and ignorant – that poor woman, she just doesn’t understand. Not long after that, a theater troupe from West High School came and gave a presentation to a much wider audience at the school – with a huge focus on gay marriage and how it is so awesome when child has the great privilege of having two mothers. You can look up a speech given by the leader of that theater troupe where she says, “I am especially proud of the gay kids...who come out in [class].” She says, “The last couple [of] kids who did it got cheers and applause” [from the rest of the class]. Our schools are giving the **“hearty approval”** of verse 32.

### **Conclusion:**

As we close our thoughts on this passage and as we look back over the sins that are listed here, I would suggest the point of the last half of this chapter is simply a lesson about the danger of sin. Whether the sin is homosexuality or being disobedient to our parents, one sin is enough to break our relationship with God. As Paul will go on to say in Romans 3:23, **“all have sinned”** and have **“fall[en] short of the glory of God.”** That’s the bad news that makes the good news good! The good news comes in Romans 5:8, **“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”** And then, as Paul would go on to say in 6:23, **“...the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** We accept the love and grace of God by turning away from sin and by allowing ourselves to be washed in the blood of Christ.

As we close, I would invite you to turn with me to one more passage – 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (p. 1788) – speaking of good news, please consider the words of Paul to the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 6:9-11),



***Or 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 effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.***

The sin of homosexuality can be forgiven (along with every other sin), ***“Such were some of you.”*** There is a change involved, and then we allow ourselves to be washed in the blood of Christ. If you are ready to be buried with Christ in baptism right now, you can let us know as we sing this next song. Let’s stand and sing..

*\*\*Thanks to Ray Stedman for contributing the title to this lesson\*\**

To comment on this lesson: [fourlakeschurch@gmail.com](mailto:fourlakeschurch@gmail.com)