

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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By Whose Rules?

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By whose rules are we playing? In the world today we are expected to be politically correct, meaning we'll have to make many compromises just to fit in, and, being who we are, I suppose we'll be expected to turn a blind eye to the current conditions that swirl around us just to be accepted by the world today, or at least that is what many people believe. The playing field in this old world isn't level, but the incline isn't too steep for us not to make a go of it. So, with the advent of alternate life styles and personal freedoms in our world, giving rise to the total disregard for any biblical truths, we wonder, with all these rule changes going on, what are we to do?

Think of the word, “church.” The word is correctly understood as *those who are chosen, or the called out*. This means that we live in the world, but are not like the world. It means we have been set apart, and it is so reflected by the lives we live, by the convictions we hold and by keeping ourselves Biblically focused on our thoughts and actions. It's like the hymn says; *this world is not our home, we are just passing through*.

Having established that, we need to consider what type of behavior that has become acceptable to most. Then, compare how this behavior squares with the Biblical truths we have been taught in our life times.

Behavior is defined as a manner of conducting oneself. If, as a Christian, we behave in a conservative and civil manner, we will be at odds with the larger share of the populace. There is a list of behaviors in 1 Corinthians 6: 9-10. Let us see where these behaviors fall in the norm of today's society. *Fornication*; we don't have to look any further than our televisions, and see this sin accepted and even glorified. Next, *idolaters*; Money, fame and power are forms of idolatry faced by today's Christians. Consider *adulterers*; with marriages ending in divorce at a rate of more than fifty percent, we must assume that they all can't be scripturally divorced. *Homosexuality*; look at the films of today, demanding we accept this as an alternate life-style. How about *thieves*. Think about the adversarial mindset toward the IRS, the ability to rationalize and overlook the misappropriation of a small item from work. *Covetous*; look no further

than all the ads from TV to magazines, asking us how bad do we want to keep up with the “Joneses.” Next *drunkards*; this has become an illness rather than sin. Drive down the Richmond strip in Houston on Friday and Saturday night to see that revelry is alive and doing quite well in our part of the country. Then consider the *reviling* speech which many are not ashamed to utter, such as lying about another or speaking against God.

Having looked into these behaviors, and seeing where they have all made inroads in our society today, and generally accepted as normal behavior, We, as Christians, need to urgently recall how the remainder of the tenth verse reads: that people who behave like this *will not inherit the kingdom of God*.

So, observing how the world acts around us, considering ourselves as the called out, and reflecting upon *1 Corinthians 6:9-10*, we ask, whose rules are you playing by? Are you playing by your rules or the Lord's rules? One day we will be judged for eternity by the Lord's rules (Jn. 12:48), so we need to live by them now.