

1 Corinthians Chapter 6

1 Corinthians 6:1 "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?"

This is speaking of a problem between two Christians. "Dare": Suing another believer in a secular law court is a daring act of disobedience because of its implications related to all sin, the displeasure of God.

"Having a matter against another": The phrase in Greek was commonly used of a lawsuit ("go to law").

"Unjust": not meaning their moral character, but to their unsaved spiritual condition.

The worldly court is no place to settle a dispute between two Christians. It is a sad situation that they had a dispute serious enough to have to be decided by someone else other than the two of them. It is unthinkable to turn it over to a world court. Believers are to settle all issues between themselves within the church. The fear of the Lord would not be part of the decision in a world court.

1 Corinthians 6:2 "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"

"Judge the world": Because Christians will assist Christ to judge the world in the millennial kingdom (Rev 2:26-27; 3:21; Dan. 7:22), they are more than qualified with the truth, the Spirit, the gifts, and the resources they presently have in Him to settle small matters that come up among themselves in this present life.

Jesus will be like what we think of the Supreme Court today, and we Christians will be like the lower court under His jurisdiction. We must learn to get along with our brothers and sisters in Christ. If there is something that seemingly is difficult to decide, then other impartial Christians should decide the matter with the Bible as the basis of the verdict. The Bible says that we will reign with Jesus. Those ruling have to judge. You can also see how a brother or sister in Christ, who is familiar with God's teaching, would be better able to come to a satisfactory Biblical verdict.

1 Corinthians 6:3 "Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?"

"Judge angels": The Greek word can mean "rule or govern." Since the Lord Himself will judge fallen angels (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6), it is likely this means we will have some rule in eternity over holy angels.

Since angels are "ministering spirits" to serve the saints (Heb. 1:14), it seems reasonable that they will serve us in glory.

1 Corinthians 6:4 "If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church."

This is a difficult verse to translate, as suggested by the widely varying English renderings. But the basic meaning is clear: when Christians have earthly quarrels and disputes among themselves, it is inconceivable that they would turn to those least qualified (unbelievers), to resolve the matter.

The most legally untrained believers (least esteemed), who know the Word of God and are obedient to the Spirit, are far more competent to settle disagreements between believers than the most experienced unbeliever, void of God's truth and Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:5 "I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?"

Now Paul is saying; can't you see how silly this is? What he is trying to make them realize, is that Christians should sit down together and talk it out, with a third party if necessary. Pray together and let God decide the outcome.

1 Corinthians 6:6 "But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers."

Paul is saying that to go before a civil court to settle an argument between two Christians, gives Christianity a black eye. If Jesus Christ is King of Peace, why is there this problem too difficult to settle?

Such conduct as suing a fellow believer is not only a sinful shame, but a complete failure to act obediently and righteously.

Christians who take fellow Christians to court, suffer moral defeat and spiritual loss even before the case is heard. And they become subject to divine chastening.

Hebrews 12:3 "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

1 Corinthians 6:7 "Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather [suffer yourselves to] be defrauded?"

“Why ... not ... take wrong”: The implied answer is because of the shameful sin (verse 5), and the moral defeat (verse 8), that result from selfishness. A willingness to discredit God, His wisdom, power, and sovereign purpose, and to harm the church and the testimony of Christ's gospel.

“Defrauded”: Christians have no right to insist on legal recourse in a public court. It is far better to trust God's sovereign purposes in trouble and lose financially, than to be disobedient and suffer spiritually.

Jesus taught if someone sued you for your coat; give them your cloak also. He also said to turn the other cheek, if someone slapped you on one cheek. He taught give to him that asks of you. Where have they sidetracked His teaching "forgive him that asks of you"? We know that Jesus taught that vengeance was His. We are to return good for the evil done unto us. These things are what make us a Christian. We are to kill them with kindness. What if you are the loser? It will just store up forgiveness for you in heaven, if you forgive the wrong he has done unto you.

1 Corinthians 6:8 "Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that [your] brethren."

Paul is shaming them here. It is bad to do wrong to someone of the world, but it is terrible to do wrong to a brother in Christ.

He is referring to those who sue their brothers in Christ being as guilty of the same misconduct they are suing to rectify.

Verses 9-10: In these next two verses, this catalog of sins, though not exhaustive, represent the major types of moral sin that characterize the unsaved.

1 Corinthians 6:9 "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,"

“Not inherit the kingdom”: The kingdom is the spiritual sphere of salvation where God rules as king over all who belong to Him by faith. All believers are in that spiritual kingdom, yet are waiting to enter the full inheritance of it in the age to come. People who are characterized by these iniquities are not saved.

While believers can and do commit these sins, they do not characterize them as an unbroken life pattern. When they do, it demonstrates that the person is not in God’s kingdom. True believers who do sin, resent that sin and seek to gain the victory over it (see Romans 7:14-25).

Fornicators are all who indulge in sexual immorality, but particularly unmarried persons.

Idolaters are those who worship any false god or follow any false religious system.

Adulterers are married persons who indulge in sexual acts outside their marriage.

Effeminate ... nor abusers of themselves are homosexuals or sodomites, terms referring to those who exchange and corrupt normal male-female sexual roles and relations. Transvestism, sex changes, and other gender perversions are included.

Genesis 1:27 "So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

Deut. 22:5 “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.”

Sodomites are so called because the sin of male-male sex dominated the city of Sodom. This sinful perversion is condemned always, in any form, by Scripture. (Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Tim 1:10)

Paul is saying here; you are wrong if you think that just being baptized into Jesus will save you. You cannot go back into sin, and commit the sins the world is guilty of, and not be judged. He is saying, if you were really saved, you would not have the desire in your heart to commit these sins that the world is guilty of. Paul speaks of the unrighteous as a whole; he does not separate out those who are pretending to be Christians for special privileges. I am sure these types of sins are mentioned here, because of the worship of Aphrodite in this area, and also because most of the false worship was of a sensual nature.

In the book of James, it says faith without works is dead. We also see (in Hebrews chapter 6:5-6), the consequences of getting back into these sins after you have made a commitment to God.

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

One thing we must note here is that the sins mentioned (in verse 9), were sins of the body and seemed to be classed together. The sins (in verse 10), are also bad sins, but sins that happen outside the body. They are not sex sins. These are still sins, but do not include the Holy Spirit (which dwells inside of us), in their act of sin.

“Thieves ... covetous” are both guilty of the same basic sin of greed. Those who are covetous desire what belongs to others, thieves take it.

Revilers are people who try to destroy others with words.

Extortioners are swindlers and embezzlers who steal indirectly, taking unfair advantage of others for their own financial gain.

1 Corinthians 6:11 "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

Though not all Christians have been guilty of all those particular sins, every Christian is equally an ex-sinner, since Christ came to save sinners. Some who used to have those patterns of sinful life were falling into those old signs again, and needed reminding that if they went all the way back to live as they used to, they were not going to inherit eternal salvation, because it would indicate that they were never saved.

“Washed” refers to new life through spiritual cleansing and regeneration.

“Sanctified” (set apart), is what results in new behavior, which a transformed life always produces. Sin’s total domination is broken and replaced by a new pattern of obedience and holiness. Though not perfection, this is a new direction.

“Justified” refers to a new standing before God, in which the Christian is clothed in Christ’s righteousness. In His death, the believer’s sins were put to His account and He suffered for them, so that His righteousness might be put to an account, so that we might be blessed for it.

“By the Spirit”: The Holy Spirit is the agent of salvation’s transformation.

Everyone who ever lived has sinned and come short of the glory of God. Praise God, if we repent, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sin and wash us in His precious blood. We are saved by the grace of God. We are washed in his blood and set aside for his purpose. We are justified (just as if we had never sinned). The Christians standing around God's throne in heaven are clothed in white robes, washed in the blood of the Lamb. When He saves us, we become a new creature in Christ.

1 Corinthians Chapter 6 Questions

1. Who should Christians go before to settle a matter?
2. Do ye know that the saints shall judge the _____?
3. If we are to be a judge for Jesus, what will He be like?
4. What should be the basis for the verdict of a dispute between Christians?
5. In verse 3, it says the Christians will judge whom?
6. What does the word angel mean in this verse?
7. When will this judgment happen?
8. Who was to judge in verse 4?
9. Who are the brothers arguing their case before in verse 6?
10. What is a better solution to the problem?
11. If someone wants your coat, what are you to give him, also?
12. The unrighteous shall not inherit the _____.
13. What is a fornicator?

14. Faith without _____ is dead?
15. What does idolater mean?
16. Who are effeminate?
17. Who was the object of worship in this area?
18. What is the separation in the sins in verses 9 and 10?
19. In verse 11, they had these sins before, but why do they not have them now?
20. What are the Christians in heaven dressed in?