



DESERT VIEW BIBLE CHURCH

FOLLOWING CHRIST THROUGH CHAOS •

LAWSUITS AMONG BELIEVERS • 1 CORINTHIANS 6:1-8 • 6.19.22

MAIN POINT

When we live for Christ, we don't worry about being wronged. Instead, we seek to live in a way that glorifies God and builds up the church.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Thinking about your schedule or calendar, what would you say are the biggest commitments in your life right now?

What do those things require for you to truly be committed to them?

Why is it difficult for us to keep commitments in life? What tends to get in the way most often?

Commitments can be difficult to keep, but above all earthly commitments, we are called to be fully committed to the cause of Christ. Today we'll see how this commitment affects our rights and reputations.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

In 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, Paul drove home the church's responsibility to be fully committed to the greater cause of Christ by addressing the matter of lawsuits among believers. Paul argued that Christians—because of the presence of God in their midst and the mercy He bestows—were more competent than secular courts to settle disputes between church members.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 6:1-8.

Why do you think Paul made such a big deal about these lawsuits?

What did it say about their view of their money or pride that the Corinthians would be willing to sue other believers?

**Why would suing other believers bring shame on the church at Corinth?
How might such lawsuits bring shame on our church?**

Some Corinthian believers were bringing charges against fellow members before secular judges rather than summoning them before competent arbitrators within the church (v. 5). Paul called the church to an awareness of their own authority as a judicial body. He argued their competency to judge cases by drawing from two greater-to-lessor analogies: (1) being qualified to judge the world (i.e., nonbelievers)

at the end of the age qualified them to judge church members in this age; and (2) being qualified to judge angels at the end of the age qualified them to judge “cases pertaining to this life” (v. 4).

According to this passage, how should conflicts among believers be resolved?

How should Christians handle being wronged and cheated?

How does this contrast with what the world says to do?

The theological grounds for the church’s involvement lay in their future responsibility as Christians to judge the world. If Christ’s followers are competent to judge others in the last days, surely there were Christians in Corinth who could judge the smallest cases. The Corinthians were bringing shame on themselves. Conversely, to appoint a Christian to arbitrate between his brothers would be a reflection of love and mutual regard among believers.

How is Paul’s point relevant today?

What is the takeaway for us regarding our own pride, being right, or the importance of our personal back account?

Our witness is far more important than our bank account or being right. It’s important to remember that we are not ultimately cheated or wronged. As believers, we look forward to the reward of heaven which is far greater than any earthly loss.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How might reflecting on the gospel help you gain a greater commitment to the cause of Christ? How might it change your perspective?

What characteristics of your life consistently show others that you are focused on the cause of Christ above your personal desires?

What does it mean to be “enslaved” or “mastered” (verse 12)? Is there anything in your life that masters you? If so, how might your relationship with that thing need to change?

PRAYER

Thank God for His Word and the reminder of the importance of His kingdom and glory. Thank Him that we are truly changed through Christ. Pray each person in your group will be so committed to Christ that they abhor anything (financial conflict or lack of moral purity) that would detract from their walk with Christ or the advancement of the gospel.

COMMENTARY

1 CORINTHIANS 6:1-8

6:1. Some Corinthian believers were bringing charges against fellow members before secular judges rather than summoning them before competent arbitrators within the

church (v. 5). The phrase “dare go to court before the unrighteous” refers to bringing a legal complaint before unbelieving Roman judges at Corinth.

The Greek verb “krino” means to judge and always involves the process of thinking through a situation and coming to a conclusion. The term could be used in a narrowly judicial sense but it also has several nuances related to judging in a more general sense. In nonjudicial contexts, “krino” can mean to select, prefer, decide, consider. In the New Testament, “krino” most often refers to judging something or someone in general. However, “krino” does occur in specific judicial settings several times, and the court can be human (Mt 5:40; Jn 7:51; 18:31; Ac 23:3; 24:21; 25:9-10,20; 26:6; 1Co 6:1,6) or divine (Jn 5:22,30; 12:48; Ac 17:31; Rm 2:16; 3:4-7; 2Tim 4:1; 1Pe 4:5; Rev 20:12-13). In two passages, “krino” is used with the meaning to rule. Jesus said that the twelve apostles would judge the twelve tribes of Israel “in the Messianic Age” (Mt 19:28), and here “krino” likely means to rule, as the verse’s reference to sitting on thrones would imply. Similarly, Paul’s statement that the saints would judge the world and angels (1Co 6:2-3) probably means that believers will rule over them both in the future kingdom (cp. Rev 2:26-27).

6:2-3. Paul called the church to an awareness of their own authority as a judicial body. He argued their competency to judge cases by drawing from two greater-to-lesser analogies: (1) being qualified to judge the world (i.e., nonbelievers) at the end of the age qualified them to judge church members in this age; and (2) being qualified to judge angels at the end of the age qualified them to judge “cases pertaining to this life” (v. 4).

6:4. Paul put forward the issue of legal jurisdiction. The lesser judges (i.e., the unrighteous judges of this age) are unqualified to sit in judgment among those who judge the world. Lesser judges have not been justified, washed, or sanctified (v. 11).

6:7-8. Better to be the victim of wrongdoing (put up with injustice) than be the cause of it (act unjustly and cheat) and bring legal disputes against one another, which is a moral failure. Once again we see the theme of 3:3—believers “living like unbelievers.”