

# Today's Outline\*



## Christian Conduct in Handling Legal Issues 6:1-11

### The Content of I Corinthians 6:1-11

- a. The Corinthian Lawsuits Revealed Audacity 6:1
- b. The Lawsuits Betrayed Doctrinal Ignorance 6:2-4
- c. The Lawsuits Betrayed Spiritual Immaturity 6:5-6
  1. Evidence of the Immaturity
  2. When May a Believer Legitimately Become Involved in Civil Court?
- d. The Lawsuits Were Evidence of Spiritual Defeat 6:7-8
  1. The Fact Stated
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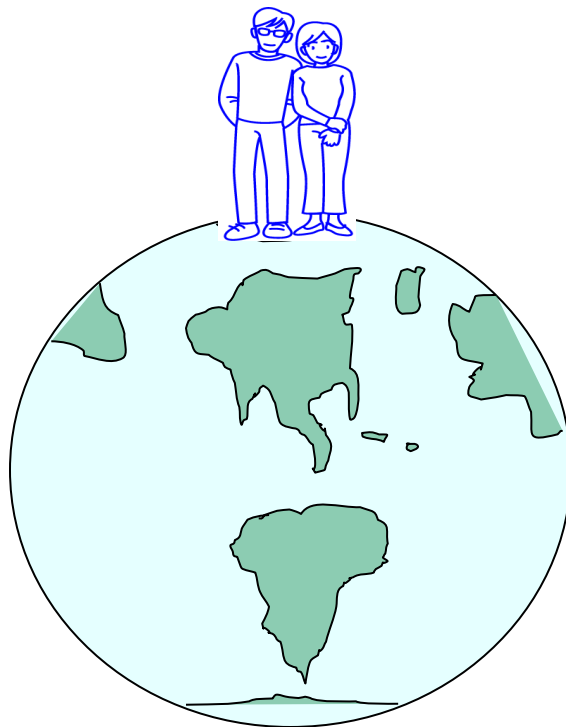
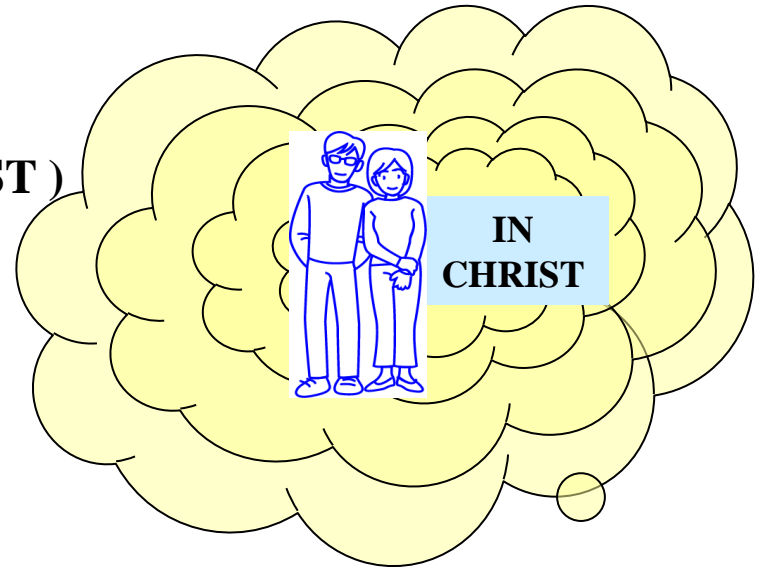
\* adapted from McCalley

# The believer new life in Christ Jesus

## Our POSITION

(WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST)

- Eternal
- Unchangeable



## Our CONDITION

( OUR MOMENT-BY-MOMENT WALK  
IN OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE )

- Temporal
- Changeable



<sup>1</sup> Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous and not before the saints?

Does any one of you when he has a case against his neighbor

**has** - *echo* –to have, to hold, i.e., to have and hold, implying continued possession (present tense);  
**having** (interlinear)

**a case against** - *pragma* - that which is being done, an affair or matter: in a forensic sense, “a lawsuit”

1 Thess 4:6a not overstepping the rights of and wronging his brother in the matter, because the Lord [is] the avenger of all these things,

**his neighbor** - brother



<sup>1</sup> Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous and not before the saints?

Complete Subject: Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor

Verb: **dare** - *tolmaō* - in the sense of bearing, enduring, bringing oneself to do a thing

Rom 5:7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

Direct Object: **to go to law** (law courts from v:2)

The words go to law translate a word that means “to judge”---. It refers to going to unbelievers for a judgment or opinion.

McCalley



<sup>1</sup> Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous and not before the saints?

before the unrighteous and not before the saints?

unrighteous - adikos - unjust, unrighteous, falling short of the righteousness required by divine laws

saints - hagios - a holy and set apart one; In the plural, as used of believers,

- These terms describe the standing that each has before God in terms of personal salvation.
- Paul does not mean that Roman courts were unrighteous in terms of seeking justice.
- Paul will now give his argument on why believers (saints) should be the judge of other believers in these matters.



<sup>2</sup> Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? If the world is judged by you, are you not competent *to constitute* the smallest law courts?

**Argument #1** - Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world (i.e. nations)

- The saints will have a part in judging unbelievers in the future, this may be (seen in) Dan 7:22b judgment was given to the saints of the Most High [God], and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.

Constable

If the world is judged by you (assumed to true)

- the world or nations will be judged by the saints
- based on this truth then the following should be true

<sup>2</sup> Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? If the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts?



are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts?

smallest law courts = smallest matters (Interlinear)

smallest matters - *elachistos* – the least in weight or importance

- to try the trivial cases (marginal reading in the NASB)

In the light of future eschatological judgment, any decisions that believers must make in church courts now are relatively trifling.

Constable

<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life?



## Argument #2 - Do you not know that we will judge angels

- “Do you not know” is used six times in Chp 6.
- know (*oida*) is in the perfect tense
- you (Corinthians) have known this in the past and continue to know up into the present
- will judge – lit: to sit in judgment upon - Wuest
- First, angels are the highest order of beings under God.
- Second, angels are supernatural beings.
- In spite of this, saints have a position (in Christ), an honor, higher than angels—we will judge them. McCalley
- Angels desire to look into the things of salvation. 1 Pet 1:12



<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life?



How much more matters of this life?

matters of this life - *biōtikos* - pertaining to this life

<sup>4</sup> So if you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church?

So if you have law courts dealing with matters of this life

- A Roman judge presides over a minor court compared to the jurisdiction that saints enjoy. McCalley
- Verse 4a --- refer to the disputes and judicial procedures the Christians should have used with one another rather than to the heathen law courts. Constable

4 So if you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church?



do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church

How could you appoint as judges such ones being little esteemed by the church.

Interlinear

how could you appoint as judges - to cause to sit, to set, as judges (1 Cor. 6:4).

being little esteemed - to despise, treat with scorn

- a believer has a high calling since he's now "in Christ"
- the judges of this world have a high position in the world system but not in the church

# Today's verses



- <sup>5</sup> I say *this* to your shame. *Is it so, that* there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren,
- <sup>6</sup> but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?
- <sup>7</sup> Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded?
- <sup>8</sup> On the contrary, you yourselves wrong and defraud. You do this even to your brethren.



<sup>5</sup> I say *this* to your shame. *Is it so, that* there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren,

*I say **this** to your shame*

**shame** - *entropē* - shame from a sense of one's wrong action; the withdrawal which is the result of exposure of wrongdoing

1 Cor 15:34 Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

- Paul's motive - with a view to arousing your sense of shame.\*
- 1 Cor 4:14 I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. (v:5 – a stronger rebuke)

\* Wuest



<sup>5</sup> I say *this* to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren,

*Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man*

thus is there not among you not even one wise man

Interlinear

*not even one* - *oudeís* - means no one, no man, no person

*wise man* - *sophos* - believers endowed with spiritual and practical wisdom

James 3:13 Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.



<sup>5</sup> I say *this* to your shame. *Is it so, that* there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren,

**subject:** who – the wise man

**verb:** will be able - *dynamai* - to be able, to have power

Eph 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.

2 Cor 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed.

**direct object:** to decide – *diakrinō* - to decide a dispute,  
to give judgment

between his brethren

6 but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?



but brother goes to law with brother

but brother with brother is judged

Interlinear

is judged – *krínō* - to have a lawsuit, go to law,  
meaning with someone

same word as in v:1 --- dare to go to law (to judge)

and that before unbelievers?

- The believer is to be a witness to the world for Christ.
- This witness can either be Christ's life or Adam's life.

# When May a Believer Legitimately Become Involved in Civil Court? \*



## 1. We All Have Civil Obligations

- If required to answer a charge or to testify, a Christian must respond. Peter & Paul did in the book of Acts.
- A Christian lives under the law of the land just as much as others. Luke 20:25 -- render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.

## 2. We May Need Clarification of Agreements

- Insurance claims, contractual stipulations, real estate transactions, and such may require legal interpretation that can only be provided by a court.

\* adapted from McCalley



# When May a Believer Legitimately Become Involved in Civil Court? \*



## 3. We May Need Action in A Criminal Matter

- A believer should have no hesitation to sign a complaint against one who has broken the law. In fact, failure to do so would be to condone lawlessness.

## 4. We May Need To Go to Court As a Last Resort

- Negotiation is better than litigation but is not always possible.
- Negotiation assumes cooperation, and many times that is not possible because of the disposition of the other party.
- Paul appealed to Caesar in his case in Acts 25.

\* adapted from McCalley



<sup>7</sup> Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded?

**complete subject:** you have lawsuits with one another

**verb:** it is (already)

**already** - *hólōs* - wholly, altogether, in every part or sense

**direct object:** a defeat (for you)

**defeat** - *hēttēma* - meaning to be brought into a worse state, diminution, degradation, hence failure

- Paul reminded them that they had already lost before the judge gave his verdict. Constable
- The shame of people who professed to love one another and put the welfare of others before their own suing each other was a defeat in itself. Constable

7 Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded?



**A. Why not rather be wronged?**

**rather** - permit yourselves rather (Wuest)

**be wronged** – *adikeō* - to take or suffer wrong, to suffer  
(oneself) to be wronged - passive voice

- Christ was wronged but did not utter a word

**B. Why not rather be defrauded?**

**rather** - permit yourselves rather (Wuest)

**be defrauded** - *apostereō* - to allow oneself to be  
defrauded or cheated - passive voice

7 Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded?



Paul says why not permit yourselves to be wronged or cheated.

The premise is this:\*

- It is better to be wronged than to wrong.
- Better to be robbed than to rob.
- Neither is desirable.
- But if one is inevitable – why not take being wronged or cheated for Christ's sake.

\* adapted from McCalley

<sup>8</sup> On the contrary, you yourselves wrong and defraud. You do this even to your brethren.



on the contrary - but instead (Amplified Bible)

you yourselves (do) wrong and defraud – present tense

you are committing wrong, and you are defrauding

(Wuest)

Col 3:25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.

You do this even to your brethren.

- rather than allowing yourselves to be wronged and defrauded, you wrong and defraud your brother in Christ

# Final Thoughts



Christians should be willing to give to one another rather than trying to get from one another. In other words, there should be no going to court with one another at all. Nevertheless, if the Corinthians insisted on going to court, it should be a court of believers in the church, not unbelievers outside the church.

Constable