

1 CORINTHIANS

6:1-11 | STUDY GUIDE

Division

1 CORINTHIANS 6:1, "When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints?" (ESV)

- Justice in Corinth
 - Significantly favored the wealthy
 - You could only bring legal charges against a social equal or someone of lesser status
 - Judges & juries frequently bought
 - Nothing was off-limits; character defamation was excessive and brutal
 - Politicians frequently employed the courts to defame their opponents
 - Corinth wasn't always so corrupt
 - Chrysostom & Favorinus
 - Pre-Roman Corinth
 - Because of the nature of the justice system, people's reputations were destroyed and it was causing serious rifts in the community
 - This was not the only form of legal proceeding; it was unnecessary to preserve order

1 CORINTHIANS 6:2, "Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases?" (ESV)

- Paul is appalled that they consider themselves so wise, yet don't settle their disagreements civilly

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- Secular courts were not the only way to legally settle a matter
- They had highly educated and well-spoken members of the church who could have easily acted as an arbiter
- This is the least of your responsibility
- Basically: do better
 - "Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!" (1 Corinthians 6:3, ESV)
 - This is nothing compared to what your real assignment is
- We have authority in heavenly realms

1 CORINTHIANS 6:4, "So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church?" (ESV)

- "Such cases"
 - Civil vs Criminal

1 CORINTHIANS 6:5, I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers, but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers?" (ESV)

- Paterfamilias
 - "Brother" is strong
 - The Corinthians are not treating each other as family
 - Loyalty to family is paramount in Roman society



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1 CORINTHIANS 6:7, "To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?" (ESV)

- You lost even if you "won" because you went against your own family
 - Furthermore, by bringing the matter before "outsiders" you brought shame on the family

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10, "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." (ESV)

- Paul is addressing specific issues in the community
- Notice that Paul does not exempt any or suggest in any way that some sins rank higher than others

1 CORINTHIANS 6:11, "And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." (ESV)

- There is still hope in Christ

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*, Timothy Brookins, *Corinthian Wisdom, Stoic Philosophy, and the Ancient Economy*, Craig Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, N.T. Wright, *The New Testament in Its World*