

1st Corinthians 6:

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v1-8: Concerning our brethren; right judgments among our brethren.

v9-11: Concerning our standing before God; as unbelievers (v9-10) & as believers (v11).

v12-20: Concerning our bodies; holding our bodies for the Lord (v12-14), as members of Christ (v15-17), as temple of the Holy Spirit (v18-20) & for the glory of God exclusively (v19-20).

NB. ***“know ye not” / “Do ye not know”*** 6x in ch6v2,3,9,15,16,19.

The apostle is emphasizing our tremendous present privileges & future destiny; hence the implications of such wrongdoing as going to law with a fellow believer and indulging the body in immoral practices.

v1-8: Concerning our brethren; right judgments among our brethren

Matters of dispute among brethren in the assembly at Corinth had resulted in 1 brother seeking to prosecute a lawsuit against their fellow brethren before unbelievers; v1 ***“go to law before the unjust”***, v6 ***“brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers”***.

These were disputes in relation to secular matters; ***“things that pertain to this life”*** (v3), ***“judgments (tribunals) of things pertaining to this life”*** (v4).

There is a strong apostolic rebuke ***“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?”*** (v1).

Paul calls upon us to consider our high calling as the saints of God, in relation to the coming kingdom of our Lord Jesus, when we are destined to ***“judge the world”*** (v2), when we reign with Christ.

Rev 20v4, John ***“saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them”***.

Not a judicial judgment, but an administrative judgment that we will participate in during the 1000 years. To the overcomer at Thyatira, ***“to him will I give power (authority) over the nations”*** (Rev 2v26).

To the overcomer at Laodicea, ***“will I grant to sit with Me in My throne”*** (Rev 3v21).

We are ***“joint-heirs with Christ”***, and we will be ***“glorified together”*** (Rom 8v17), as we ***“reign with Him”*** (2nd Tim 2v12).

In view of such a grand future administrative role in the coming glorious kingdom of our Lord Jesus, v2 ***“are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters (judgments, JND)?”***

Further ***“Know ye not that we shall judge angels?”*** (v3), also connected with the coming kingdom.

Angels, the highest of God’s created intelligences, will be executors of the righteous judgment of God, as directed by the saints of God. The holy Jerusalem, centre of millennial administration, will have ***“twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels”*** (Rev 21v12).

Angels will communicate the judgment to the earth; John 1v51 ***“Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man”***,

In view of such future judgment of angels, ***“how much more things that pertain to this life?”*** (v3). Why would be taking such matters of judgment before the unjust, those who will have no part whatsoever to play in that coming kingdom, for ***“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?”*** (2x v9-10).

In v4, “(do you) **set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church?**”, i.e. another rhetorical question, again referring to “**the unjust**” (v1), and “**the unbelievers**” (v6). Compared to the high calling of the saints of God, the most able of unregenerate human judges are of little esteem.

An earnest plea in v5-6; “**I speak to your shame ... there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge (decide) between his brethren?**” There were surely those among the believers of the assembly at Corinth capable of judging matters between the brethren.

It was to their shame that “**brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers**” (v6).

A further appeal in v7, “**Now therefore there is utterly a fault (defect) among you ...**”; we should be prepared to be wronged, suffer injustice & even to be defrauded.

It is only the flesh that demands present vindication & compensation.

In v8, a clear statement of their wrongdoing, “**Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren**”. Their behaviour was a shameful reflection on the testimony of the assembly at Corinth.

v9-10: Concerning our standing before God; the Corinthians standing in the past as unbelievers

“**Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?**” We are to remember the vast difference in destiny between ourselves & unbelievers.

Then a list of the kind of sins that characterise unbelievers that shall not inherit the kingdom, “**Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers ...**”. Unbelievers who hold high offices in the world are men of a corrupt & a sensual character, guilty of these kinds of gross sins.

Note that unbelievers are equally subject to the same divine laws & standard for marriage as believers. God holds unbelievers accountable for these kinds of sins (see Heb 13v4, Rev 21v8).

Fornication, when listed with adultery (v9, Mark 7v21) has the more specific meaning of pre-marital unchastity; adultery is unfaithfulness within the context of a marriage relationship.

v11: Concerning our standing before God; the Corinthians standing in the present as believers

“**And such were (past tense) some of you: but ... but ... but ...**”, i.e. before their salvation, but no longer, because there had been a conversion experience to Christ.

God’s salvation delivers sinners from not only the penalty of sins, but also from the habitual practice of their sins;

“**He shall save His people from their sins**” (Matt 1v21), “**go, and sin no more**” (John 8v11).

God’s salvation must be accompanied with a change in life & behaviour (see 1st Peter 1v14-15).

Believers are the objects of the comprehensive gracious & sovereign dealings of the Godhead:

- “**washed**”, cleansed fully from the past guilt & stain of their sins.

- “**sanctified**”, once & for all set apart to a holy God.

- “**justified**” once & for all acquitted of all guilt, cleared of every charge, declared right before God.

The aorist middle voice, ‘**ye have washed yourselves**’, indicates personal active washing of separation from past sinful defilement; Ananias said to Saul of Tarsus “**wash away thy sins**” (Acts 22v16).

This positional blessing is based upon the confession of His Lordship in the life of every believer, “**in the Name of the Lord Jesus**”, and it is by the divine agency & power of “**the Spirit of our God**”.