



WWJS: WHO WOULD JESUS SUE?

OPENING COMMENT

The Corinthian church had lost sight of their responsibility as ambassadors of Christ and were bringing disrepute to the name of Jesus by capitulating to the cultural litigious norms. Paul opposes this position in Corinth because he values unity over disunity, it brings disrepute to Christ, and it exposes a misunderstanding of the gospel itself. We also live in a society bent on litigating for justice. When someone has been wronged the default is to seek justice at any cost, even if it means damaging family bonds.

READ THE TEXT: 1 Corinthians 6:1-8

When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints? 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? ³ Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! ⁴ So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church? 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, ⁶ but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers? 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? ⁸ But you yourselves wrong and defraud—even your own brothers!



UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

1. What is the main problem Paul is addressing in this passage? (vs. 1, 4)
2. What reason does Paul give for his disappointment? (vs. 2, 3)
3. What do you think Paul means by “trivial cases” in this context? (vs. 2)
4. Paul implies the excuses the church uses to bring their disputes to unbelievers, what is it? (vs. 5)
5. What is the greater disappointment for Paul? (vs. 7, 8) How does this fit into the theme of 1 Corinthians so far?

APPLYING THE TEXT

1. Why do we default to presenting our case before unbelievers without even considering gathering wisdom and direction from those within the church? Particularly in disputes with fellow Christians.
2. How might a clear understanding of what our future as Christ followers holds (judging the world, judging angels) change our perspective on the disagreements we face today?
3. How do we reconcile the exhortation Paul has here for the Corinthians with his teaching in Romans 13:1-7 on the authority of the state?
4. Paul’s rhetorical questions in verse 7 about suffering wrong instead of seeking justice are supported in the following verses (9-11). His reminder is about the rebellion forgiven by God in Christ. How should this change our perspective on wrongs done towards us? Why doesn’t it?
5. How might a church willing to practice what Paul is teaching here be a witness to the world around it?

BIBLICAL THREAD

1. Daniel 7:15-28 (particularly vs.22) - The Saints are given Judgment when the Ancient of Days comes.
2. Matthew 18:15-20 - Jesus outlines how we should approach biblical discipline when someone has sinned against us.
3. Romans 13:1-7 - Paul discusses the God-ordained role of the state in criminal cases.
4. Philippians 2:1-8 - Our attitude should be the same as Christ.



CONCLUSION

Paul understands that those who are saved are empowered by the Holy Spirit and lack no spiritual gift (1:6). This means that there are individuals within the body of Christ who have been given gifts of wisdom and discernment that can be utilized to help bring clarity to difficult situations. More importantly, Paul is concerned that these disputes expose a lack of clarity around the gospel, which results in Christ's name being sullied because of it. His exhortation is not to quash righteous and just consequence for sin, but to reprioritize the churches position in these matters. The church should be full of repenting wrongdoers (because our sin is ultimately against God) and forgiving victims (because we have been forgiven of much). We should be a people bent on reconciliation and restoration, which in turn brings glory and honour to our Lord Jesus.

SHARE & PRAY

LIFE GROUP VISION:

The goal to meeting together around the word of God is three fold. First, we want to more clearly understand what God is saying to us through his Word and apply it to our own hearts and minds. Secondly, we want to build a loving community with each other to disciple one another toward maturity in Christ. Thirdly, we desire each of us, as ambassadors of Christ, to look outwards to our community and ask how we can bring the truth of the gospel to bear on those whom God has placed in our lives.

