

4/29/12

Christians And Worldly Courts

1Cor. 6:1-11

Paul has just finished rebuking the Corinthians for their arrogant pride, for believing they were spiritual, when in reality they were carnal, unable as well as unwilling to declare judgment over the young man who was sleeping with his step-mother.

Paul then reminded them of having written to them about not keeping company with sexually immoral people who were Christian, but God would judge the unbeliever.

Paul now moved on to address the failure of the Corinthians to judge various matters of life between themselves, but instead were taking each other to the pagan courts.

The failure of the Corinthians to litigate against each other before the pagan courts is characterized by three things: 1Cor. 6:1-11

- I. The confrontation regarding their lawsuits. vs. 1-3
- II. The repudiation regarding their lawsuits. vs. 4-8
- III. The caution regarding their lawsuits. vs. 9-11

I. The confrontation regarding their lawsuits. vs. 1-3

A. The apostle Paul pronounced the indictment against the Corinthians as a prosecuting attorney. vs. 1

1. Paul proclaimed his amazement at the Corinthians over their lack of hesitation and indifference to go to court against one another.

* “Dare any of you.”

a. The word dare “telmao” means to not dread or shun through fear.

- 1) This was their normal practice.
- 2) The word is used for the Pharisees not daring to ask Jesus any more questions. Matt. 22:46

b. The Corinthians were filled with pride thinking they were spiritual.

- 1) The idea is that they were bold in their arrogance.
- 2) They had no fear, conviction nor shame about their dealings with each other.

2. Paul indicated the particular charge against the Corinthians. vs. 1b-c
* “having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous,”

a. The dilemma is stated, “having a matter against another.”

- 1) The word matter “pragma”, mean what is done or being done.
 - 2) The action being taken was the taking of another believer to the law court.
 - 3) The word having is in the present active, it was in affect going on.
- b.** The problem is also stated, “go to law before the unrighteous.”
- 1) The reference to the unrighteous is the pagan judges.
 - 2) These judges were not born again and would not be judging their cases according to God’s standards and righteousness.
- 3.** Paul indicated the proper solution to the Corinthians. vs. 1d
 * “and not before the saints?”
- a.** The saints comprised the community of God’s redeemed.
 - b.** The saints were those who understood forgiveness, mercy and God’s love.
 - c.** The saints were to be arbitrators, rather than pagan courts. on things pertaining to life. vs. 4a
 - 1) They should of settle their issued within the church.
 - 2) They should of never gone to the pagan courts.

- d.** The entire indictment is in the form of an interrogative question demanding the affirmative as a response.
 - 1) Much like a rhetorical question that has an obvious answer!
 - 2) Yes, you a right we should go to the saints for our arbitration.
- B.** The apostle Paul delivered the incriminating argument. vs. 2-3
- 1.** Paul pointed out their future privilege to judge in the world to come. vs. 2a
 * “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?”
 - a.** The phrase “do you not know” is a strong rebuke to what they did know and should of acted on.
 - 1) Appears about 7 times in the letter!
 - 2) The word know “eido”, means intuitively being Christian.
 - b.** The question is a rhetorical one, having only one answer, yes!
 - c.** The believers will reign with Christ in the Millennium.
 * Ps. 49:14, Dan. 7:22, Matt. 19:28, 2Tim. 2:2, Rev. 22:5
 - 2.** Paul points out their fault and failure to their responsibility to the saints. vs. 2b-c
 * “And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?”

- a. The lesson is from the greater to the lesser.
 - 1) The world to come will deal with the matters of the Kingdom Age.
 - 2) The present world encompasses the presence of the Kingdom of God in part, but yet to come in its complete fulfillment.
- b. The question again is rhetorical, having only one answer.
 - 1) The answer is no!
 - 2) They were not unworthy “anaxios”, meaning unfit to judge the smallest of matters “elachistos”, the least important things between them.
- 3. Paul pointed out their future privilege to judge angels. vs. 3a
 - * “Do you not know that we shall judge angels?”
 - a. The phrase “do you not know”, again is a strong rebuke to what they did know and should of acted on.
 - * The word know “eido”, again means intuitively being Christian.
 - b. The lesson is from the greater to the lesser again.
 - 1) Angels are spirit being.
 - 2) Angels are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation.

- 3) Angels can not be redeemed like man, who is created in the image and likeness of God.
- c. The question again is rhetorical, having only one answer.
 - * The answer is yes!
- d. The believer will judge the bad, rebellious angels, not the good angels.
 - * Some are chained in Tartarus, to be cast into the Lake of Fire. 2Pet. 2:4, Rev. 19:19-20, 20:10
- 2. Paul points out their fault and failure to their responsibility to the saints of the church again. vs. 3b-c
 - * “How much more, things that pertain to this life?”
 - 1) They were more than able to judge matters of the saint in the church.
 - 2) The phrase, things pertaining to life “biotikos”, means any of the issues arising between the saints.

Illustration

The case in point is a good example of the humanistic pagan courts to make appropriate judgment for Christians when a judge order a girl who was being home schooled to attend public school because she need to know all the other religious and philosophical belief to choose properly, “The original order issued in July 2009, Judge Lucinda V. Sadler reasoned that the girl’s

“vigorous defense of her religious beliefs to [her] counselor suggests strongly that she has not had the opportunity to seriously consider any other point of view.” Lifsiteneews.com

Application

1. Does this mean that Christians are never to go or are permitted to go to secular courts in litigation?
 - a. No, there are critical legal matters of property, inheritance, business matters, theft, assault and murder that require the courts.
 - b. Christians at times deal with a believer unwilling to arbitrate, leaving no other recourse.
 - c. A believer may have to take an unbeliever to court, if they have failed to honor a contract or other legal transactions.
 - d. Paul himself appealed to Caesar. Acts 25:11
 * “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” 1Tim. 2:1-4
2. The Scriptures are clear that God established law and governments.

- a. For the command is that we as Christians are to obey the laws of the land and be subject to those in authority, be they king or governors, established by God for punishing evildoers! Rom. 13:1-7, 1Pet. 2:13-14
- b. Only when government commands the Christian to disobey the word of God, do we have the right to not submit. Acts 5:29
3. The judgments of the courts in the world have a different standard than the Christian.
 - a. There are many things that are legal by the law, but not moral or ethical, like abortion.
 - b. There are humanistic rulings against Christian parents because they do not except biblical authority of parents over their children.
 * “But the **natural man** does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1Cor. 2:14

The confrontation regarding their lawsuits revealed their carnality!

II. The repudiation regarding their lawsuits. vs. 4-8

- A. The apostle Paul reprimands them for being unwise in going to secular courts. vs. 4-6

1. Paul's argument is from the logical conclusion that they are better equipped to judge the matters of the saints, in view of their future privilege of judging the world and angels. vs. 4
 - * "If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?"
 - a. Paul returns to the their present condition, "If you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life."
 - 1) The word judgments "kriterion", means things to be decided on.
 - 2) Pertaining to this life "bitikos", the affairs of every day life.
 - b. Paul in his next statement will progress the argument.
 - * This is one of the few passages a bit difficult and the interpretation could go one of two ways.
 - 1) Some believe the text is in the imperative command, being sarcastic, like the KJV, "set them to judge who are the least esteemed in the church", indicating they should not!
 - * Point being they would do a better job than the pagans!

- 2) Others believe it is the indicative, as a rhetorical question, as in the NKJV, "do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?" the answer is no!
- 3) The imperative is preferred, but either way, the point is that the "least esteem", meaning the least wise individuals, would not be appointed by them to bring judgments concerning things pertaining to life, it would be unwise, as much as the pagan judges.
 - * Some believe the "least esteem" refer to the unrighteous judges in verse one, but Paul never referred to secular judges in that manner.
2. Paul verifies the point of his argument by his sharp rebuke. vs. 5
 - * "I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren?"
 - a. The first part of verse five is a commentary on what he just stated in verse four, declaring the way they have handle matters as shameful "entropé", to their embarrassment and humiliation. vs. 5a

- * The word appears only one other time for the Corinthians shameful life-styles. 1Cor. 15:34
- b.** Paul in disgust asked them, “Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one?” vs. 5b-c
- 1) The Corinthians were boasting in their wisdom, but proving to be unwise in their lives.
 - 2) The Corinthians were trusting in worldly wisdom, rather than the wisdom of God. 1Cor. 1:19-22, 2:1-6
 - 3) The Corinthians were proud and arrogant, so Paul addresses them with sarcasm, “You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us-- and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you!” 1Cor. 4:8
- c.** Paul then stated the clear purpose, “who will be able to judge between his brethren?” vs. 5d
- 1) To judge “diakrino” adjudicate, the matter of their lives, not “krino” to pass judgment.
 - 2) You do not put unwise people to solve the problems of believers.
 - 3) You put the wisest men to judge the matters pertaining to the life of

- the saints, to bring Scriptural resolutions.
- 3.** Paul closes his repudiating argument to the Corinthians by the reality of their unwise decision. vs. 6
- * “But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!”
- a.** Paul points out this was a sharp contrast to what they should do by the word “but”.
 - b.** Paul used the singular masculine, one individual against another.
 - c.** Paul indicated the process a present reality, the present indicative passive.
 - d.** Paul exposed their lack of wisdom by seeking to get a verdict from a pagan judge.
- B.** The apostle Paul rebuked the Corinthians for their bad witness. vs. 7-8
1. Paul said they had failed to give a true example of a Christian, revealing they were no different than the pagans. vs. 7a
- * “Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another.”
- a.** He told them this took place by the very decision to go to the secular courts.
- * The word already “ede” is an adverb and is at the beginning of the

- sentence in the Greek, making it emphatic, pointing to the process that precedes the court action.
- b. They having spent much time trying to settle the problem and failing, decided to go to the secular courts, which was a failure from the onset.
 - * The phrase utter failure “holos hettema”, means an altogether failure and loss.
2. Paul gave them biblical advice in view of their litigations. vs. 7b-c
 - a. The innocent person could accept the injustice being done to him, “Why do you not rather accept wrong?” vs. 7b
 - b. The innocent person could suffer the financial robbery, “Why do you not rather *let yourselves* be cheated?” vs. 7c
 - 1) In other words, the loss at times is better than the bad spiritual example. Matt. 5:38-40
 - 2) In other words, for the sake of Christ, rather than shaming Christ, don’t contest it.
 2. Paul exposed their true heart of greed by their action in their litigation. vs. 8
 - * “No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and *you do* these things *to your* brethren!”

- a. They were actively being unjust in their present litigation against the other brothers. vs. 8a
 - 1) The word wrong “adikeo”, means to act unjustly or wickedly.
 - 2) The same word used in his advice. vs. 7b
- b. They were actively robbing their brother by their present litigation. vs. 8a
 - 1) The word cheat “apostereo”, means to rob or defraud.
 - 2) The same word used for his advice. vs. 7c
- c. They were doing it to another Christian, “and *you do* these things *to your* brethren!” vs. 8d
 - 1) Paul exposed their evil heart.
 - 2) Their hate, jealousy, envy, greed and injustice.

Illustration

You don’t just hire a Christian contractor without sitting down and discussing the work in detail, agree on a price, set a time line for both the work and payments. And you do it with a legal contract!

Application

1. There are Christians in the church just like the Corinthian, no different than the unbeliever.

- a. They make their decisions about financial matter just like they did before Christ and the culture of their day.
- b. They live a moral and ethical standard according to the culture and not after Christ, though they go to church.
- c. They live just like they did before, looking out for self, without concern for others.
* “This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.” Eph. 4:17-24

2. The believer has to make the personal decision on the matter of litigation.

- a. Searching the Scriptures that God would direct him or her.
 - b. Prayerfully that God would speak to him or her.
 - c. Humbly being open to accept the injustice and suffer the loss, if God so leads him or her.
* “My little children, let us not love in **word** or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.”
1Jn. 3:18
3. The ultimate goal of every believer is his or her witness to Christ, then for Christ.
- a. Seeking the will of God.
 - b. Wanting to honor Jesus.
 - c. Yielding to the love of God to be my motive.
 - d. Asking for the wisdom of God to guide me.
 - e. Desiring that Jesus get all the glory.
* “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be **witnesses** to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8

The repudiation regarding their lawsuits revealed their lack of wisdom!

III. The caution regarding their lawsuits. vs. 9-11

- A.** The apostle Paul warned the Corinthians about living contrary to what they knew about the Kingdom of God. vs. 9
- 1.** Paul reminded them of what they already knew. vs. 9a-b
 - * “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.”
 - a.** This is the third time Paul says, “Do you not know”.
 - 1)** “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?” vs. 2a
 - 2)** Do you not know that we shall judge angels?” vs. 3a
 - 3)** The word know “eido”, for the third time means intuitively being Christian.
 - b.** The rhetorical question has an obvious answer, yes,” “the unrighteous person will not inherit the kingdom of God.”
 - 1)** Those not born again.
 - 2)** The person who would go back and live contrary to Christ.
 - 3)** The Kingdom of God, is the reign of God in the heart of men and women through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.
 - 4)** The Kingdom of God is present and yet to come, in its complete

- establishment at the Second Coming.
- 2.** Paul reminded them of the greatest deception, self-deception.
 - * “Do not be deceived.”
 - a.** The warning is now applied to every Corinthian.
 - 1)** The word deceived “planao”, means to cause to stray, to go aside from the right way, wonder, roam or go astray.
 - 2)** The word “planao” gives us our word for planets, wondering of course.
 - 3)** Literally, stop deceiving yourselves!
 - b.** The word is used often to warn believers.
 - 1)** “Brethren, if anyone among you wanders “planao” from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.” Ja. 5:19-20
 - 2)** “Little children, let no one deceive “planao” you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.” 1Jn. 3:7

- B.** The apostle Paul enumerated a list of the sins that were going on, the last was the sin they were guilty of committing. vs. 9c-10f
1. The sexual sins came first. vs. 9c-g
 - a. No fornicators “ pornos”, a person prostituting his body with another, having illicit sexual intercourse. vs. 9c
 - 1) Usually being single, but the word is very broad, dealing with every sort of sexual activity.
 - 2) We get the word pornography
 - 3) The 5th commandment, honor father and mother.
 - b. No idolaters “eidolotates” the worship of false gods, often through idols. vs. 9d
 - 1) Idolatry and fornication are always tied together, the one leads to the other!
 - 2) Violating the 1st and 2nd commandments, no other gods and images.
 - c. No adulterers “moichos”, means sex with one who is not your wife or husband. vs. 9e
 - 1) The only biblical grounds for divorce!
 - 2) The 7th commandment.
 - d. No homosexuals “malakos”, relates to men and boys who allow

themselves to be misused homosexually. vs. 9f

* The word denotes a passive and submissive role as the feminine partner, at times translated “effeminate”.

- e. No sodomites “aresnokoitai”, represents men who initiate homosexual practices the one playing the aggressive and masculine role. vs. 9g
2. The sins of material possession, physical and verbal abuse. vs. 10
 - a. No thieves “kleptes”, embezzler or pilferer, we get our word kleptomaniac from it. vs. 10a
 - b. No covetous “pleonektes”, one eager to have more of what belongs to others. vs. 10b
 - c. No drunkards “methusos”, means one who is intoxicated with alcohol. vs. 10c
 - d. No revilers “laidoros”, means one who is abusive through angry insults. vs. 10d
 - e. No extortioners “harpax”, means a robber. vs. 10e
 - 1) This was their charge by Paul by their litigations. vs. 8
 - 2) The 10th commandment.

- f. The list is sandwiched by the declarative statement, for emphasis, “will not inherit the kingdom of God”. vs. 9a, 10f

C. The apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians that God had saved them out of this kind of sinful life. vs. 11

* “And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

1. Paul declared that some of them came from this list, in their past life before Christ. vs. 11a-d
 - a. Paul pointed out, “Such were some of you”. vs. 11a
 - b. Paul pointed out that they in fact had been washed. vs. 11b
 - * Washed “apolouo”, means purified from their sins, not by water baptism but blood.
 - c. Paul pointed out they had been sanctified. vs. 11c
 - * Sanctified “hagiazoo”, to be set apart, consecrated to God.
 - d. Paul pointed out they had been justified. vs. 11d
 - * Justified “dikaioo”, means to be rendered righteous by imputing God’s righteousness to them.

2. Paul included a common similarity to every one of the declarations.
 - a. All are in the aorist not the perfect.
 - 1) The perfect would indicate an action in the past, continuing in the present and unchanged.
 - 2) The aorist leaves you the question as to the present still, fully agreeing with what took place in the past!
 - b. All are preceded by the word but “alla”, nevertheless or notwithstanding.
3. Paul indicated how their salvation came about through the Trinity. vs. 11d
 - a. In the name of the Lord Jesus.
 - 1) Lord “kurios”, is a title for master and owner.
 - 2) Jesus “Iesous”, means Yahweh is salvation, indicating the humanity of their Savior, who died for them.
 - b. By the Spirit.
 - 1) The Spirit “peuma”, with the article refers to the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) The One who illuminated, convicted and regenerated them.
 - c. Of our God.
 - * God “Theos”, refers to the Father.

Illustration

Human courts and judges fail in various degrees, depending on their system of law, but the court and judge of heaven will make no mistake, but judge in righteousness and truth.

Application

1. All the warning in the New Testament about deception is to the believer, not the non-believer.
 - a. The non-believer is lost, dead in trespasses and sins and must be regenerated.
 - b. The non-believer **is deceived** by Satan, held captive to do his will.
 - c. The believer is not to go to the left or the right, be deceived, not to return to the world, etc.
 - * “And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight-- if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.”
Col. 1:21-23
2. Many of the epistles are polemic in nature, warning against spiritual deception.
 - a. If there is no possibility of a believer to be deceived, why write the epistle?

- b. Paul could of just said, “Oh no, they can not be deceived, but he did not, in fact he warned them.
- c. We are not speaking about committing sins, we all do, we confess them and we are forgiven. 1Jn. 2:1
- d. We are not talking about backsliding and people repenting.
- e. We are talking about falling into sin, going through backsliding and going back to the world and not returning to Christ by repenting.
 - * “For when they speak great swelling *words* of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, **the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.** While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. **For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.**” 2Pet. 2:18-20
3. Anyone who goes back to live, as a habit of life in any of the sin that Paul name, as well as other sin will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

- a. “For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away (**Having fallen away**), to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.” Heb. 6:4-6
- b. “For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. And again, “**The LORD will judge His people.**” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Heb. 10:26-31

Conclusion

The failure of the Corinthians to litigate against each other before the pagan courts is characterized by:

- I. The confrontation regarding their lawsuits revealed their carnality!
- II. The repudiation regarding their lawsuits revealed their lack of wisdom!
- III. The caution regarding their lawsuits revealed their need of repentance!

The caution regarding their lawsuits revealed their need of repentance!