

Subject: Sermon Recap - Christians Dealing With Christian Disputes

Dear Church Family,

The truth Paul delivers to the Corinthians is not comfortable, but it is exactly the kind of truth that shapes us into the people God has called us to be. A variety of discipleship materials related to this teaching can be found [\[HERE\]](#)

Summary: The sermon explored Paul's instruction in 1 Corinthians 6:1-11 regarding how Christians are to handle disputes with one another. Rather than turning to secular courts to resolve conflicts between believers, Paul calls the church to recognize its identity in Christ, its God-given wisdom through the Holy Spirit, and its responsibility to reflect that identity in every area of life, including how we pursue or surrender our rights. The passage challenges us to ask whether our pursuit of justice in disputes is driven by a heart for Christ and His church, or by pride and self-interest. It also reminds us of the dramatic transformation God has worked in our lives and calls us to live in a manner worthy of that transformation.

Takeaways:

1. Who we are in Christ must shape how we handle conflict. Paul reminds the Corinthians that believers will one day judge the world and angels. If that is true, we are more than equipped, through God's Word and the Holy Spirit, to resolve disputes among ourselves without deferring to worldly standards of justice.
2. Demanding our rights at the expense of the church's witness is a failure. Paul does not mince words in calling it an outright defeat when Christians drag one another into secular courts over matters the church should handle. The words of Jesus in Matthew 5:38-42 reinforce the same principle: a heart surrendered to Christ will prioritize His kingdom over personal gain, even when that means absorbing a wrong rather than retaliating.
3. Remember what God has saved you from and live accordingly. Paul holds up the mirror in verses 8 through 11, reminding the Corinthians of who they were before the gospel reached them and who they now are through justification, sanctification, and the work of the Holy Spirit. That remembrance is both a warning against returning to old patterns and a powerful invitation to walk fully in the freedom Christ has purchased for us.

As you go through your week, I encourage you to reflect honestly on how you handle conflict with other believers. Are your responses shaped more by a desire to protect your rights or by a desire to honor Christ and preserve the witness of His church? Paul's

words press us toward a higher standard, not to burden us, but because God has already equipped us to meet it.

In His grace,

Pastor Jim

1 Corinthians 6:1-11

Christians Dealing With Christian Disputes

I. Introduction: Right Handling of Christian Disputes Matters

II. 1 Corinthians 6:1-6: Remember Who You Are

- Do our demands for justice tarnish Christ, His church, the brethren, and our testimony to the watching world?

III. 1 Corinthians 6:7: Judging According to the World is Failure

- We too often have a higher view of ourselves than other Christians, the church, and, sshhh, of Jesus (and His word).
- Better we suffer for Jesus' kingdom's sake than to elevate our rights for our gain at the expense of Christ, His Church, and His will.

Additional Scripture References: Mt 5:38-42; Phil 3:10-11; Mt 16:24-25; Lk 9:23-24; Mt 20:16; Mk 9:33-35; Mt 23:11-12

IV. 1 Corinthians 6:8-11: Remember What Has Been Given to You

- All too often, the saint harms ourselves and His church under the banner of justice in Jesus name
- We are to call sin exactly what it is – sin. But we are to do so out of care and concern and not condemnation. In grace, we are to call others into the freedom from sin only Christ offers.

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Christians Dealing With Christian Disputes

1 Corinthians 6:1-11

I. Introduction: Right Handling of Christian Disputes Matters

1. As I was preparing this sermon, God brought to mind Dan. Dan was a wonderful guy with a bad temper and little patience. He had taken a risk in starting a business dealing with hi-tech, medical grade molded plastics. His team loved him...until the challenges commonly facing a small, fast growing business flashed into view. Then, some complained, but stayed because that was Dan, while others quit.

I met Dan through our church in Ft. Lauderdale. He and his wife were incredibly sacrificial and caring. God was blessing Dan in business...so much so that the daily struggles were mounting as he had neither the skills nor the temperament to navigate through the various people and process challenges he was facing. Our personalities, my background, and his needs led him to ask for help in charting a course forward.

But, Dan didn't know me well enough to trust me, so he wanted to ink a legal contract protecting him and his business. Then the cost of a lawyer hit home and he wanted to find a different way. I suggested we do a letter agreement and ask two of the pastors at CCFL to witness and mediate any disagreements that might arise. We did.

While we never needed to ask for mediation help, I believe the process of putting this agreement in place cemented our relationship in glorifying Christ. We had many hard, even confrontational conversations, but we worked through them because we trusted each other's motives and that we would both end up in shared place of honoring and pleasing God.

I have been blessed in having a number of instances where business or performance-based relationships were made with

Christ truly at the center. His presence served as a steady hand and steady reminder of what was at stake...were we more interested in serving Him for His glory or getting what we could for our own self-congratulatory gain?!

2. Under the header of context matters, let's back up a moment in being reminded:
 - A. First, that Paul is in possession of a report from either (I think probably) Chloe's people (1 Cor 1:11) or Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (1 Cor 16:17) indicating the many difficulties happening in the Corinthian church. In response, he is crafting this letter to address the specifics while REbuilding a foundation of Christian character in this first-generation church;
 - B. Second, that Rome, much like America today, was a litigious society. They and we were-or-are quick to be offended and quicker to demand justice and restitution according to our notions of fairness. Rather than bringing our grievances to a brother or sister, we may ignore them, *confront them with accusations and demands*, abandon them, *or as I have experienced numerous times, recruit others (including the pastor if possible) to fight for the offended parties 'rights'*. If we have been especially offended, we will bring the offender to the government court of law;
 - C. Third, that while Paul will be addressing a specific case, this is written to and for the benefit of the church broadly;
 - D. Fourth, as we travel these verses we see two great urgencies for Paul including the church's self-understanding and obedience as God's people now and for all eternity (eschatologically) and in their witness to the world.¹ In this, we must resist the ease of interpreting the Bible from the lens of the current age in which we live even as we seek to understand

¹ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), 238.

and apply biblical precepts and wisdom in living our lives for Christ; and finally,

3. We enter our passage with a simple premise: The way the Christian handles disputes testifies as to who or what reigns in our lives to other Christians along with unbelievers as well.

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II. 1 Corinthians 6:1-6: Remember Who You Are

1. With 7 questions in these verses, along with 3 more in the following verses, Paul is using the power of questions to frame up his major precepts.
2. In v1, Paul is remaining forcefully on the theme of judgment that was evident in chapter 5. With the word for 'dare' offering the sense of being bold, venturous, and courageous, we see Paul presenting a great contrast. We must be careful though as Paul is not making this contrast to condemn the Corinthian's court system. Rather, his focus is on the Christian and the body of Christ...really, we can rightly say that His focus is on Christ from the position of the saints individually and as the body.
 - A. It's as if Paul is asking, would you rather be judged by those living in Christ destined for heaven or those not living in Christ destined for hell? Would you rather be judged by those judging by worldly standards or judged by those with God's righteousness, holiness, mercifulness, and love?
 - B. It's as if Paul is pointing to the absurdity of God's children, complete with God's word and the Holy Spirit, deferring to man-wisdom.
3. In vs 2-3, Paul uses questions to remind the Corinthians of their place in Christ. Having established every (discerning-type) judgment should be on a foundation of righteousness, Paul also stakes out the raw reality that Christ-followers will judge the world and angels. I say raw because neither the Corinthians nor most in the modern day church seem to live their/our lives with these

promises from God in mind. Yet, here Paul has us looking squarely in the physical and spiritual realms as saints judging both the things of this world and the spiritual realm.

A. Some have suggested that it was when Satan came to understand in God's ordered universe he would serve mankind that, in his pride and jealousy, he snapped and led a great rebellion of now-fallen angels against God.

4. In vs 4-6, Paul addresses the Corinthians whole framework of thinking regarding disputes among Christians. They have diminished Christ and Christ followers by their actions indicating that secular judges have more wisdom than those filled by the Spirit of God. Their actions toward this end tell each other and the world that they have more faith and trust in the secular than in Jesus, His word, and His church.

A. Perhaps this is because the Corinthian saint did not understand, were foolish, or maybe it's because they/we think we are more likely to get results to our liking from a secular judge. Whatever the reason, the result is a terrible testimony to one another and the world around them.

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III. 1 Corinthians 6:7: Judging According to the World is Failure

1. This verse is transitional as it both belongs and colors that which Paul wrote before and after. As we have become used to, Paul pulls no punches in noting their absolute failure in (1) bringing unnecessary action against each other and (2) in bringing this action in secular courts.
2. Again, we note that Paul is not saying secular courts have no role in society. Indeed, several NT passages state their role is given by God and we see examples such as Paul appealing to Caesar's tribunal (e.g., Ro 13:1-7; 1 Pe 2:13-14; Acts 25:10-11) when he is facing death at the hands of lower Roman authorities. Paul is actually making the case that only those things the State requires be handled by the State be brought to them. This means all other

matters, including the trivial lawsuits one Christian brings upon another, should be resolved by individual Christians accepting wrong and moving on OR, if needed, by the wise within the church.

A. As I pondered this, I wondered: *What is it about our human nature that causes us* - like the Corinthians and so many Christians throughout history – *to wound ourselves and Christ's Church in the very name of justice, somehow believing we are doing so for Jesus' sake?* The crusades, medieval inquisitions, and even here in America with Roger Williams banished from MA with quakers hanged in Boston are but a few of the large scale examples we can point to.

- i. The only answer I came up with was uncomfortable for me and it may be for you. *Too often, the human condition is filled with pride.* We often have a higher view of ourselves than other Christians, the church, and, truth be told even of Jesus (and His word). *We tend to our wants and needs as priorities with the impact on others or meeting their needs as secondary or even unimportant;* as we don't see ourselves and our behaviors in the context obedience-to-Christ NOR of their impact on other believers or the unbelievers that are watching us.

B. In great hypocrisy, many of us often demand justice when we believe our rights have been somehow attacked and desire mercy when we have done wrong ourselves.

- 3. Turn with me to Mt 5:38-42...it's here in Jesus' words that I think we find the root of what Paul is speaking to the Corinthians about.

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"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'³⁹ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.⁴⁰ If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.⁴¹ And whoever compels you to go one mile,

go with him two. ⁴² Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. – Matthew 5:38-42

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A. Yes, this is a different context than Paul's 1st letter to the Corinthians, but it carries with it the same principle. **The principle of letting your heart for Christ, His church, and His people take priority over your rights.** Better that you or I should suffer for His kingdom's sake than we should elevate our rights above God's will for our gain.

B. What's more, the bible is filled with passages speaking of this same precept. **Share in His sufferings** (Phil 3:10-11). **Deny yourself** (Mt 16:24-25; Lk 9:23-24). **The first must be last** (Mt 20:16; Mk 9:33-35); **The greatest are servants** (Mt 23:11-12). What remains is whether we will live this out in our lives?!

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IV. **1 Corinthians 6:8-11: Remember What has Been Given to You**

1. Starting with echoes of 'Remember Who You Are', Paul uses v8 to hold up the mirror of reality to the Corinthians before he brought them the gospel. **You wronged others.** You cheated. **Do you want the same justice you are now demanding on others?** Far better for you to turn the other cheek and not retaliate.

A. In a moment of self-reflection and examination, we are confronted with how often we justify ourselves with thoughts and words that 'my' demands for justice (often cloaked in the term 'fairness') weren't that bad as it didn't affect those around me or carry some other false sentiment suggesting sin's fruit doesn't spread to others.

2. In v9, Paul's arms are getting tired in holding up the mirror. **His hard words continue with the mirror-of-remembrance in encouraging them regarding who they are in Christ...righteous.**

But this encouragement is a two-sided coin also holding a great warning. **Using Paul's approach of questions, we might say the warning this way:** If you are not walking in Christlike manner, how

would you judge yourself through the lens of whether you are part of the unrighteous not inheriting the kingdom of God? This judgment is far more difficult than any judgment regarding horizontal matters.

A. Even as I say this, I understand some with a more Calvinistic leaning in their theology will dismiss the clear tension in this text. The tension is because Paul is speaking to saved people...if they persist in the same behaviors as the unrighteous, does that not indicate a real danger of the same judgment?! This does not mean there is not security in Christ for nowhere in Scripture do we read of Christ withdrawing His salvation. Yet, as these and other Scriptures note, there is clearly an opportunity for false security of some sort.

3. At the end of v9 and into v10, Paul offers a partial list of sins with the clear conclusion being all Christians are to always walk in righteousness... including how Christians judge other Christians with an eye toward honoring Christ and His church rather than enforcing our own rights.

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A. There is a broad point I think important to make here. We are to call sin exactly what it is – sin. But we are to do so out of care and concern and not condemnation. In grace, we are to call others into the freedom from sin only Christ offers.

B. My next point is not gratuitous nor do I want to over-or-understate it – for it serves as a robust example of what Paul has in view here. Just as tortured and failed arguments are made by some favoring same-sex relationships attempting to position Paul's words as saying homosexual prostitution is a sin, but NOT a 'loving, caring homosexual relationship', those saying that homosexuality is a special classification of sin worthy of condemnation are equally tortured and failed. In context, with the combination of homosexuals nor sodomites, it is clear Paul is addressing all homosexual acts as being sin.

C. Of importance given the hyper-sexually charged day in which we live, one commentator noted that hyper-sexual sin, including homosexuality, was rampant in the ancient world in which Paul lived. Indeed, 14 out of the first 15 Roman emperors were bisexual or homosexual. At the very time Paul wrote, Nero was emperor. Nero castrated a boy named Sporus and then married him (with a full ceremony), brought him to the palace with a great procession, and made the boy his “wife.” Later, the emperor lived with another man, and Nero was declared to be the other man’s “wife.”²

4. Finally, in v11, Paul paints a dramatic picture of who the Corinthians saints were and who they now are. While we will touch on this a bit more next time, for today it’s enough to see that Paul is pressing them to answer (at least to themselves) why they are returning to the empty deadness they had already been saved out of...why are they exchanging the hope of Jesus for the hopelessness of hell?!

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A. I pray that Paul’s words here are not seen strictly in an historical context, but are received as an invitation by each of us to unapologetically and unambiguously step into faith of Jesus as Messiah.

- i. If you have previously confessed Christ, but there is no Biblical fruit in your life, I pray Paul’s words will prompt you to surrender in getting serious about your faith journey.
- ii. If you have never confessed Christ and have reached that point where you know Jesus is inviting you, I encourage you to join me with this prayer.

² Enduring Word, David Guzik, <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/1-corinthians-6/>

5-Day Devotional

1 Corinthians 6:1-11

Christians Dealing With Christian Disputes

Day 1: Who You Are in Christ Changes How You Act Reading: 1 Cor 6:1-3

Devotional: The Corinthians had forgotten something essential -- their identity in Christ. Paul's pointed questions were not attacks but reminders. When we forget who we are in God's economy, we begin borrowing the world's tools to solve kingdom problems. We run to systems, courts, and human reasoning, bypassing the wisdom that the Holy Spirit provides. The saints will one day participate in judgment over the world and over angels. That is a staggering reality. If God has entrusted us with such eternal responsibility, how much more should we trust His wisdom to govern our present disputes? Identity shapes behavior. Who you are in Christ must inform every conflict you enter.

In what area of your life are you currently relying on worldly wisdom rather than the wisdom God has given you through His word and His Spirit? Before engaging in any dispute today, pause and ask yourself whether your approach reflects your identity as a child of God or your habits as a person of the world.

Day 2: The Witness Your Conflict Sends Reading: Mt 5:38-42

Devotional: Jesus did not abolish justice -- He reoriented it. The principle of "an eye for an eye" was never meant to fuel personal vendettas; it was a civil boundary. Jesus pushes further, calling His followers to absorb wrong rather than escalate it. Every unresolved Christian dispute that spills into secular courts or public accusation sends a message to the watching world. That message is often this: Christ is not enough. The church cannot govern itself. The world's systems are more trustworthy than God's people. Paul echoes Jesus in 1 Corinthians 6 because the principle is the same. Your willingness to suffer a small injustice for the sake of Christ's testimony is itself a proclamation of the gospel.

Is there a situation in your life where demanding your rights has overshadowed your responsibility to reflect Christ to those watching you? Identify one relationship where you have prioritized being right over being a witness. Take one concrete step today toward reconciliation or gracious release.

Day 3: The Danger of Pride Dressed as Justice Reading: Phil 2:3-8

Devotional: Pride is rarely honest about what it is. It disguises itself as fairness, as principle, as righteous indignation. Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 6 expose the uncomfortable reality that when Christians drag one another before secular courts over

matters the church could resolve, pride is almost always the engine driving the decision. We want results that favor us. We want a system we believe will vindicate us. Philippians 2 cuts against this entirely. Christ, who held every right imaginable, emptied Himself and took on the form of a servant. He did not demand what was owed Him. The cross is the ultimate picture of rights surrendered for the sake of others and the glory of God.

Where in your life is pride presenting itself as a pursuit of justice? What would it look like to lay that down before God today? Spend time in prayer specifically confessing any area where personal pride has driven a conflict. Ask God to replace the desire for vindication with a desire for His glory.

Day 4: The Weight of What Has Been Done for You Reading: 1 Cor 6:9-11

Devotional: Paul's list in these verses is not written to shame -- it is written to astonish. And such were some of you. Three words follow that change everything: washed, sanctified, justified. These are not small adjustments to a mostly decent life. They are the complete transformation of people who were heading toward spiritual ruin. When we grasp the weight of what God has done for us in Christ, petty disputes lose their grip. How can someone who has been forgiven an immeasurable debt turn and demand full payment from a fellow believer over something comparatively trivial? The memory of grace is the most powerful force available for resolving conflict among God's people.

How often do you meditate on the specific reality of what God rescued you from? How does that memory shape the way you treat others who have wronged you? Write down three specific things God has forgiven you for and freed you from. Keep that list nearby the next time you are tempted to demand justice from someone who has wronged you.

Day 5: Christ at the Center of Every Agreement Reading: Ro 12:17-21

Devotional: The story of Dan and the letter agreement witnessed by two pastors is a picture of what it looks like to put Christ genuinely at the center of a relationship with potential for conflict. The agreement was never needed for mediation, but the process of making it built trust and established shared accountability to God. Romans 12 calls believers to do what is honorable, to live peaceably as far as it depends on them, and to overcome evil with good rather than being overcome by it. This is not weakness. It is the most demanding kind of strength. It requires dying to self daily, trusting God with outcomes, and believing that His glory is worth more than your vindication.

Is there a relationship or agreement in your life that would benefit from placing Christ explicitly at the center of it? What would that look like in practical terms? If you are in a dispute with another believer, seek out a mature, trusted member of your church community to serve as a wise mediator. Commit to the process with a genuine desire to honor Christ above the outcome you prefer.

Small Group Study Guide

1 Corinthians 6:1-11

Christians Dealing With Christian Disputes

Opening Prayer: Pray that the Lord would open your eyes to see and understand His word as you discuss the sermon.

Key Takeaways: Query the group for takeaways first...you may stay with one or more of those.

1. Who you are in Christ must shape how you handle conflict. Paul's repeated refrain is essentially a call to remembrance. Saints who will one day judge the world and angels should not be running to secular courts to resolve disputes with fellow believers. Identity in Christ is not merely a theological category -- it is meant to govern daily behavior, including how we fight and how we forgive.
2. Demanding your rights at the expense of the body is a failure, not a victory. Paul calls the very act of bringing lawsuits against fellow believers a defeat, regardless of who wins in court. The willingness to suffer wrong rather than harm the witness of the church is not weakness -- it is Christlikeness.
3. The gospel changes what we were into what we are. Verse 11 is one of the most powerful pivots in the letter. Paul reminds the Corinthians that they were washed, sanctified, and justified. Returning to the behaviors of their former lives -- including the prideful pursuit of personal justice at any cost -- is a contradiction of everything the gospel accomplished in them.
4. Conflict resolution done well can glorify Christ. The story of Dan in the introduction illustrates that agreements made with Christ genuinely at the center, with accountability built in, can cement relationships and produce something that honors God -- even when those agreements are never tested.

Discussion Questions: Did the Holy Spirit prompt any questions with you? Start with those.

1. Think of a conflict you witnessed or were part of where the way it was handled either helped or hurt your view of the church. Without naming names, what stood out to you about it?
2. When you hear the phrase "Christians taking Christians to court," what is your initial reaction? Has that reaction changed at all after hearing this sermon?

3. In verses 1-6, Paul uses a series of sharp questions rather than direct commands. Why do you think he chose that approach? What does it communicate that a straightforward command might not?
4. Paul reminds the Corinthians in verses 2-3 that saints will one day judge the world and angels. How does that future reality have any practical bearing on how we handle everyday disputes right now? Does that truth feel real to you in daily life, or does it feel distant?
5. The sermon draws a distinction between matters the State requires be handled by the State and matters that should be resolved within the church or between individual believers. Where do you think that line is? What makes it difficult to identify in practice?
6. In verse 7, Paul calls the very act of bringing lawsuits against fellow believers a defeat. Do you agree with that framing? What does it reveal about what Paul values most in this situation?
7. Read Matthew 5:38-42 together. The sermon connects Jesus' words here to Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 6. What is the common principle running through both passages? Where do you find that principle most difficult to live out?
8. Paul's list of sins in verses 9-10 ends with the reminder in verse 11 that "such were some of you." Why is it important that Paul places the warning and the reminder of transformation side by side? What would be lost if he gave only one without the other?
9. The sermon makes the observation that too often we demand justice when we believe our rights have been attacked and desire mercy when we have done wrong ourselves. How have you seen that double standard show up in your own life? In the church broadly?
10. Pastor Jim shared that pride -- including a higher view of ourselves than of other Christians, the church, or even Jesus and His word -- is often at the root of how we mishandle conflict. How does pride disguise itself in the way we frame our grievances? What are some of the ways we dress up self-interest in the language of fairness or justice?
11. The sermon notes that Paul is speaking to saved people in verses 9-10 and that there is a real tension in the text regarding those who persist in unrighteous behavior. Without resolving every theological debate around that tension, what is the practical warning Paul is issuing? How seriously do you take it?

12. The story from the introduction involved two people building a working relationship with Christ genuinely at the center, including agreed-upon accountability through church leadership. What would it look like for your relationships -- business, personal, or otherwise -- to be structured in a way that makes Christ's lordship visible and not just assumed?

Practical Applications: Query the group for applications first...you may explore one or more of those.

1. Examine an active conflict: If you are currently in a dispute with another believer - whether it has reached legal action or not -- ask yourself honestly: Am I pursuing this because it honors Christ and His church, or because I want to win? Bring that question before God before your next conversation or action in that conflict.
2. Identify a wrong you have absorbed rather than retaliated against: Think of a time you chose not to retaliate or demand justice in a conflict with another believer. Reflect on what that cost you. Then consider whether there is a current situation where you are being called to do the same thing and have not yet done so.
3. Have a conversation you have been avoiding: Many disputes escalate because direct, honest conversation between the parties is skipped in favor of recruiting others, venting, or withdrawing. Identify one relationship where a direct conversation is overdue and take a step toward initiating it this week.
4. Invite accountability into a significant relationship: Following the model from the introduction, consider whether there is a significant relationship -- professional, personal, or ministry-related -- that would benefit from having a trusted, spiritually mature third party identified in advance as a potential mediator. Discuss what that might look like with the other person involved.
5. Sit with verse 11: Read 1 Corinthians 6:11 slowly and personally. You were washed. You were sanctified. You were justified. Write down what your life looked like before Christ, or what it would look like without Him. Then ask whether the way you are currently handling your conflicts reflects the person you were or the person you now are.

Closing Prayer Points:

- Humility to see our own pride and self-interest clearly
- Wisdom for any in the group currently navigating conflict with another believer
- A church culture where disputes are handled in ways that reflect Christ rather than embarrass Him
- Those in the group who may be examining whether their faith is genuine in light of Paul's warning in verses 9-10

Discussion Questions

1 Corinthians 6:1-11

Christians Dealing With Christian Disputes

1. Paul argues that Christians taking disputes before secular courts rather than the church reveals something about who or what they truly trust — in what areas of your life do your actions reveal that you trust worldly wisdom more than the wisdom of God and His people?
2. The sermon describes a business relationship where placing Christ at the center transformed difficult, even confrontational conversations into opportunities for mutual honor — what would it look like practically for your most strained relationships to have Christ genuinely at the center rather than just nominally so?
3. Paul reminds the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 6:2-3 that believers will one day judge the world and angels, yet they were deferring to secular judges for everyday disputes — how does neglecting the eternal weight of your identity in Christ affect the daily decisions you make in conflict?
4. The sermon points to human pride as the root cause of Christians seeking secular courts over the church community — where do you find yourself holding a higher view of your own judgment than that of Scripture, the Holy Spirit, or your brothers and sisters in Christ?
5. Jesus teaches in Matthew 5:38-42 a posture of absorbing wrong rather than demanding restitution, and Paul echoes this in 1 Corinthians 6:7 — what would it cost you personally to choose suffering a wrong over pursuing your rights, and what does your answer reveal about your priorities?
6. The sermon observes that we tend to demand justice when wronged but desire mercy when we are the wrongdoer — how does this double standard expose the degree to which self-interest rather than Christlikeness shapes your understanding of fairness?
7. Paul's warning in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 creates genuine tension for believers who persist in unrighteous behavior, suggesting the possibility of false security — how do you personally examine whether your faith is producing the kind of fruit that distinguishes you from the unrighteous he describes?
8. The sermon emphasizes that calling sin what it is must be done out of care and concern rather than condemnation — how do you navigate the tension between speaking truthfully about sin and doing so in a way that genuinely invites others toward the freedom Christ offers?

9. Paul holds up a mirror in 1 Corinthians 6:8-11 reminding the Corinthians of who they were before the gospel transformed them — how regularly do you reflect on the depth of your own need for grace, and how does that reflection shape the way you treat others in conflict?
10. The sermon closes with Paul's dramatic contrast in 1 Corinthians 6:11 between who the Corinthians were and who they now are in Christ — in what specific ways are you tempted to exchange the living hope of Christ for patterns of thinking or behavior that belong to the person you were before Him?

Dinner Conversation Starters

1 Corinthians 6:1-11

Christians Dealing With Christian Disputes

1. Choosing Peace Over “Winning”

When we have a disagreement, do we care more about being right or honoring Jesus?

Question: Can you think of a time when you “won” an argument but still didn’t handle it in a Christlike way?

2. Remember Who You Are in Christ

Paul reminds believers that they belong to Jesus and should act differently because of that.

Question: How should remembering “I belong to Jesus” change the way I respond when I’m upset with someone?

3. Handling Conflict God’s Way

The sermon taught that Christians should try to resolve disputes with humility, wisdom, and help from mature believers when needed.

Question: Who are some wise, godly people we could go to for help if we had a serious disagreement?

4. Rights, Fairness, and Forgiveness

Sometimes we want justice when we are wronged, but Jesus calls us to be willing to forgive and even suffer loss for His sake.

Question: Why is it so hard to let go of something that feels unfair?

5. Remember What Jesus Has Done

Paul reminds the Corinthians that they had been washed, sanctified, and justified by Jesus.

Question: How does remembering what Jesus has forgiven in us help us forgive others?

Family Conversation Guide for Children & Early Teens

1 Corinthians 6:1-11

Christians Dealing With Christian Disputes

AGES 5-7: SIMPLIFYING THE MESSAGE APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Use Words Before You “Tell on” Someone:** Christians should not rush to “court” or public judgment. For young kids, this means learning to talk kindly before running to get someone in trouble.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) What could you say to your friend before asking an adult for help?
 - (b) When is it right to ask a grown-up to help?
 - (c) How can we use kind words even when we feel upset?
2. **It Is Okay Not to Get Your Own Way:** Paul says it may be better to accept being wronged than to fight for our rights in a way that dishonors Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) How do you feel when something seems unfair?
 - (b) What would it look like to “let it go” in that moment?
 - (c) How can we remember Jesus when we do not get what we want?
3. **Remember: “I Belong to Jesus”:** Paul reminds believers to remember who they are. Even children can learn that belonging to Jesus changes how they treat others.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) If you remember, “I belong to Jesus,” what might you do differently?
- (b) What are some Jesus-honoring choices when we are mad?
- (c) Can we practice saying, “I’m sorry,” and “Will you forgive me?”

AGES 8-12: BUILDING UNDERSTANDING APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Don’t Recruit a Team Against Someone:** The sermon warned that people often respond to conflict by recruiting others to their side. Paul calls believers to handle disputes in a way that honors Christ.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) What is the difference between asking for help and gossiping?
- (b) Why is it tempting to get other people on your side?
- (c) Who is a wise person you could talk to without creating drama?

2. **Go to the Person First When You Can**: Christians should try to resolve conflict directly, humbly, and lovingly when possible.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) What could you say to your friend that is honest but not mean?
- (b) How can you explain your hurt without attacking them?
- (c) When should you involve a parent, teacher, or church leader?

3. **Online Conflict Still Counts**: Paul's teaching applies not only in person but also to how believers act in public spaces. Digital behavior is part of our witness.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) Why can texting or posting make conflict worse?
- (b) What should you do before replying when you are angry?
- (c) How could your messages show that you belong to Jesus?

AGES 11-15: DEEPENING THE CONNECTION APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Ask: "Am I Trying to Honor Jesus or Win?"**: Paul challenges believers to examine whether their actions reflect Christ or worldly values.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) How can you tell when you care more about winning than making peace?
- (b) What does a Christlike response look like when you are actually right?
- (c) Would your words and attitude make Jesus look good to others?

2. **Handle Group Chat Drama with Integrity**: Taking disputes into public places can damage people and dishonor Christ. Today, group chats and social media can become "public courts."

Discussion Questions:

- (a) How is a group chat like putting someone "on trial"?
- (b) What should you do if friends are trashing someone online?
- (c) What would it look like to be a peacemaker instead of a spectator?

3. **Seek Wise Mediation, Not Just Validation**: Paul says disputes among believers should be handled with wisdom from mature people of faith.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) What is the difference between someone who tells you what you want to hear and someone who gives wise counsel?
- (b) Who are mature Christians you trust to help you think biblically?
- (c) When might it be wise to involve a parent, pastor, youth leader, counselor, or teacher?

Tips for Parents

- Be patient and listen: Give your child time to think and respond.
- Relate to everyday life: Use real-life examples and stories familiar to your child to make abstract concepts more tangible.
- Encourage questions: Let your son or daughter know it's okay to ask questions, even if things don't make sense right away.
- Share personal insights: Tell a personal story about a time you experienced these themes, adapting as needed for age appropriateness.

Family Conversation Guide for Gen Z

1 Corinthians 6:1-11

Christians Dealing With Christian Disputes

1. Don't Turn Group Chats Into Courtrooms

Bible References: 1 Corinthians 6:1-6; Matthew 18:15; Proverbs 18:17

Application: When conflict happens, don't immediately take it public, post about it, screenshot it, or gather a crowd to prove your side. Paul rebukes Christians for taking disputes before unbelieving courts instead of handling them with wisdom among believers. For Gen Z, one modern "courtroom" is the group chat, comment section, private story, or social media feed.

Scenario: Someone from your friend group hurts your feelings. Instead of talking to them directly, you send screenshots to five people and explain why they were wrong.

Discussion: Am I seeking wisdom and reconciliation, or am I trying to win public support?

2. Remember Who You Are Before You Respond

Bible References: 1 Corinthians 6:2-3, 11; Ephesians 4:1-3; Colossians 3:12-14

Application: Paul reminds the Corinthians that they are saints—people made holy in Christ. Your identity in Jesus should shape your tone, timing, and words. Before responding to drama, ask: "Does this response fit someone who has been washed, sanctified, and justified by Jesus?"

Scenario: You receive a rude text and immediately want to clap back with something sarcastic, cutting, or humiliating.

Discussion: If I remembered that I belong to Jesus, how would my next message change?

3. Choose Reconciliation Over Being "Right"

Bible References: 1 Corinthians 6:7; Matthew 5:38-42; Romans 12:17-21

Application: Paul says it is already a defeat when believers fight each other in a way that dishonors Christ. Sometimes the Christlike choice is not proving your point, but choosing peace, humility, and self-control.

Scenario: In a friend group argument, you know you have the stronger case. You could expose someone's hypocrisy, but doing so would embarrass them and escalate the conflict.

Discussion: Am I trying to restore the relationship, or am I trying to prove that I'm right?

4. Don't Recruit People to Your Side

Bible References: Proverbs 16:28; Proverbs 26:20; James 3:5-10; 1 Corinthians 6:5-6

Application: The sermon warned against recruiting others to fight for your "rights." Biblically, gossip and division are serious. Asking for wise help is different from gathering supporters to pressure, shame, or isolate someone.

Scenario: You're upset with someone at church, school, work, or in your friend group. You start telling others your version of the story so they will agree with you.

Discussion: Am I asking for godly counsel, or am I spreading my offense?

These points aim to empower Gen Z to live out their faith genuinely and courageously in various aspects of their daily lives, reflecting Biblical integrity, compassion, and steadfastness.