

Studies in 1 Corinthians

Lesson XVI: *Taking Care of Business in the Church (part two)*

TEXT: 1 Cor. 5:9-13 (NLT)

5:9 When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in sexual sin. **10** But I wasn't talking about unbelievers who indulge in sexual sin, or are greedy, or cheat people, or worship idols. You would have to leave this world to avoid people like that. **11** I meant that you are not to associate with anyone who claims to be a believer ^[a] yet indulges in sexual sin, or is greedy, or worships idols, or is abusive, or is a drunkard, or cheats people. Don't even eat with such people.

12 It isn't my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning. **13** God will judge those on the outside; but as the Scriptures say, "You must remove the evil person from among you." ^[b]

6:1 If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints? **2** Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? **3** Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! **4** Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church! ^[c] **5** I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? **6** But instead, one brother goes to law against another—and this in front of unbelievers!

7 The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? **8** Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers.

Footnotes:

[a] 1 Corinthians 5:11 Greek *a brother* [b] 1 Corinthians 5:13, cf. Deut 17:7

[c] 1 Corinthians 6:4 Or *matters, do you appoint as judges men of little account in the church?*

Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. What “bread” does God desire us to “eat”? What “bread” is poison to us? (chapter 5, verse 8)
2. Compare verses 9-11 with 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15.
 - a. What should our attitude be towards believers who have strayed from the narrow path?
 - b. How are we to respond to them?
 - c. What if they repent (2 Corinthians 2:5-11)?
3. In what sense does Paul direct the church to “judge” those who are “inside”? (verses 12-13)
 - a. How do we reconcile this with Christ’s teaching about judging (Matthew 7:1-3; Luke 12: 57; John 7:24; 8:14-16)?
4. Chapters 5 and 6 are often treated as dealing with separate issues. However, seeing that Paul did not write in chapter and verse, what thought connects these two passages?
5. What role is the church to have in settling disputes between brethren? (chapter 6, verses 1-6)
6. Does this passage forbid Christians from engaging in a lawsuit against anybody for any reason?
7. Why were lawsuits in the church a sign that the Corinthian congregation had been “completely defeated already”? (verse 7)