

Studies in 1 Corinthians

Lesson XVII: *My Way or the Narrow Way?*

TEXT: 1 Cor. 6:1-11 (NLT)

1 When one of you has a dispute with another believer, how dare you file a lawsuit and ask a secular court to decide the matter instead of taking it to other believers^[a]! **2** Don't you realize that someday we believers will judge the world? And since you are going to judge the world, can't you decide even these little things among yourselves? **3** Don't you realize that we will judge angels? So you should surely be able to resolve ordinary disputes in this life. **4** If you have legal disputes about such matters, why go to outside judges who are not respected by the church? **5** I am saying this to shame you. Isn't there anyone in all the church who is wise enough to decide these issues? **6** But instead, one believer^[b] sues another—right in front of unbelievers!

7 Even to have such lawsuits with one another is a defeat for you. Why not just accept the injustice and leave it at that? Why not let yourselves be cheated? **8** Instead, you yourselves are the ones who do wrong and cheat even your fellow believers.^[c]

9 Don't you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, **10** or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God. **11** Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Footnotes:

a. 1 Corinthians 6:1 Greek *God's holy people*; also in 6:2.

b. 1 Corinthians 6:6 Greek *one brother*.

c. 1 Corinthians 6:8 Greek *even the brothers*.

Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. Why do you suppose Christians were taking each other to court in lawsuits? (verses 7-8) What was wrong with this picture? (verses 4-6)
2. What solution did Paul offer in settling disputes between brethren? (verses 2-3, 5) How does the advice in verse 7 mirror Christ's own teaching in the Sermon on the Mount? (see Luke 6:29)
3. Does this passage forbid a Christian from engaging in civil action against anyone for any reason? (see Romans 13:1-4) Under what circumstances might civil action be useful in advancing cause of justice, order, and safety?
4. Do verses 2 & 3 help to shed light on one of our roles in heaven? What does this say about our value and significance to God?
5. According to verses 4-6, should the church be concerned about its reputation to the outside (unbelieving) world? Why or why not?
6. Who can't enter God's kingdom according to verses 9-10? Is there hope for anyone on that list (see verse 11)?