

First Corinthians
Chapter Six
Leon Combs, Ph.D.
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Examples of Non-Christian Behavior That Are being Practiced.

1Cor 6:1 “Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

1Cor 6:2 Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts?

1Cor 6:3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, matters of this life?

1Cor 6:4 If then you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church?

1Cor 6:5 I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren,

1Cor 6:6 but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?”

The Jews were very strict in not letting cases go to public law courts. All legal cases involving Jews were to be settled in the Jewish courts. Paul is here saying that the Christians should likewise take up legal matters in the Christian courts. It was not that the public legal courts were dishonest but that their rules were not in accord with Christian doctrine or Jewish doctrine in the case of Jews. Paul uses the phrase “do you not know” six times in this chapter as he is emphasizing that these people are ignorant of Christian matters of which they should be knowledgeable. The word for world is “kosmos” and refers to the entire universe of intelligent beings. Paul is following the teachings of Jesus regarding the saints judging the world:

Matt 19:28 “And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

In referring to their judging the angels, Paul is considering that the angels are the highest class of created beings. Paul is not specific about our judging of angels but he probably has reference to the end times when Jesus will judge the fallen angels and we will be involved in such actions. If then we are to judge the angels we can certainly judge the mundane matters of this world.

Verse four is sarcastic in tone. He is saying that they must appoint church members of excellent reputation as judges of the court in dealing with legal matters among other church members. Since the judges of their courts would be Christians of high integrity they would be very well qualified to judge any legal issues arising among the church members. We combine the understanding of both verses five and six to translate his meaning, again in a sarcastic sense. He is saying that they would be greatly shamed if there were not even one man among them who is of high integrity and qualified to be a

judge in a legal case among church members. Since they are taking their cases before a public court the implication is that there is none in the church suitable to be a judge and such would be a great shame on that church.

1Cor 6:7 “Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded?”

1Cor 6:8 On the contrary, you yourselves wrong and defraud, and that your brethren.

1Cor 6:9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,

1Cor 6:10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1Cor 6:11 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 Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.”

Even Plato said that it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong. Jesus told them that it is better to lose more than was asked rather than to go to court and to let the world see the disagreements involving a child of God. It is better to lose something rather than to let the body of Christ be shown to be inferior.

Matt 5:39 “But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Matt 5:40 And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.”

Jesus also set the example that He preached:

1Peter 2:23 “and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;”

Paul said that rather than following the teachings and example of Jesus Christ they are wronging and defrauding their fellow church members for the world to see. He then tells of some types of sins that people are practicing that show that they have no right to inherit the Kingdom of God even though they have been baptized. Their actions as practicing sinners show that their ceremonies in the church were meaningless since they were not changed from the inside out.

1Cor 6:12 “All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.”

Christianity is not about doing things to earn salvation or abstaining from things to earn salvation. Salvation is entirely by grace. When Paul says that he will not be mastered by anything he is pointing out the difference between occasionally doing something and habitually doing something. For example, we may lie occasionally and not lose our

salvation but if we are a liar we are demonstrating that we have never been saved. We will not practice sin because we are justified and being sanctified. Being mastered by something means that we are its servant, which means that we uncontrollably participate in it. Such cannot happen to a Christian.

1Cor 6:13 “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food; but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord; and the Lord is for the body.

1Cor 6:14 Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.

1Cor 6:15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be!

1Cor 6:16 Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, "The two will become one flesh."

1Cor 6:17 But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.”

God will one day do away with the stomach and food for that stomach. The body as it exists by itself is also going to decay and cease to exist. But the Lord is going to take the Christian’s body and glorify it one day. As we know and as Paul and others had seen, God raised up the Lord and someday He will also raise us up by His power. So our body is very special in that it is now indwelt by the Holy Spirit and meant to serve the Lord. Since we are made one with Christ we need to be very careful how we treat our body. A sin involving a harlot is particularly heinous because sexual interaction is a sort of bodily fusion and we cannot join our body with a harlot when it is also joined with God. Since Paul is writing to Corinthians, we know that prostitutes served in their unholy temples and making oneself one with such harlots would be serving that idol also.

1Cor 6:18 “Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.

1Cor 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

1Cor 6:20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

The present imperative verb tense implies a habitual action so we are to immediately and consistently flee immorality. We Christians are one with the Lord and we must be careful where we take that temple. We are to constantly glorify God with all that we have and that includes our body. Paul points out that the Holy Spirit living within us is a gift from God and since the Holy Spirit lives within us we cannot now claim that our body is our own. So the argument “I can do with my body what I wish” is no longer valid for the Christian. The word for temple describes the inner sanctuary of the temple proper in which only holy people may dwell. For the Christian, his body belongs to the Lord! Our body was bought with the price of the crucifixion of Jesus. We were first servants of Satan but God the Father sent His son Jesus to die on the Cross to set us free from servant hood of Satan so that we could be servants of God. Since our body is no

longer our own and since it was bought with the price of the blood of Jesus we should treat it as what it really is and always glorify God with it.

References

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