



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians

Chapter 6

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Introduction

- In this chapter St. Paul deals with another fault: taking brethren to court before unbelievers
- He helped them to see how absurd and wrong such a thing was (1-11)
- The latter half of the chapter deals with immorality
- He explained that their bodies belong to the Lord, whose Spirit indwells them, and who will raise them from the dead by His own power (12-20)

Do Not Sue the Brethren (6:1-11)



- Dare: This word implies disloyalty against Christian brotherhood
- Though all Gentiles were not altogether unjust, yet in the highest view of justice which has regard to God as the Supreme Judge, they are so
- Christians, as regarding God as the only Fountain of justice, should not expect justice from them
- The saints: Who might easily decide these smaller differences in a private and friendly manner

Do Not Sue the Brethren (6:1-11)



- The saints shall sit with Christ, as assessors, while the world is judged (Mt 25:41; 19:29)
- If so high a trust is to be given, it is a little thing that saints should judge differences between church members
- Evidently we will judge the bad angels, who shall be judged when the world is judged
- An ironical way to hint that their differences were so little as to be worthy only of the least esteemed

Do Not Sue the Brethren (6:1-11)



- The last sentence was spoken to shame them, not as a serious rule
- A man of prudent judgment is capable of settling differences among them
- It was lamentable that brethren should go to law
- How much more of a scandal when they carried their cases into the heathen courts
- It was a fault to go to law at all

Do Not Sue the Brethren (6:1-11)



- It is better to suffer wrong rather than to go to law and injure the church by the ill-feeling aroused
- Also you will not set a good example in the eyes of the heathen
- If a settlement is required, we should refer the case, not to unbelieving judges, but to a wise man within the church
- Other Scriptures: 1 Pet 2:23; Mt 5:40; 1 Pet 2:19; Prov 20:22

Do Not Sue the Brethren (6:1-11)



- You, whom your Lord commanded to return good for evil, on the contrary, do wrong (openly) and cheat (privately)
- The church is God's kingdom on earth, and its faithful members inherit the heavenly kingdom (Mt 25:34)
- Let no one make the mistake of thinking that any unrighteous man shall be an heir

Do Not Sue the Brethren (6:1-11)



- Be not deceived
- None guilty of any one of the list of vices given can be an heir of heaven
- Some of the worst classes had been converted
- You are washed: baptism
- You are sanctified: set apart to God

Do Not Sue the Brethren (6:1-11)



- Sanctification refers to confirmation
- You are justified: their sins were blotted out and they were counted righteous
- By communion, our sins are forgiven
- The work was consummated by the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38) in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ

Glorify God in Body and Spirit (6:12-20)



- St. Paul had taught that a Christian could use liberty in regard to things indifferent
- But we need discretion
- All things are not helpful, for the Christians must not be brought under the power of any appetite
- Whoever is thus subjected is not a freeman, but a servant, the servant of sin
- Though all things are in our power, we must not be brought under their power

Glorify God in Body and Spirit (6:12-20)



- Because they counted many things as indifferent which were of themselves unlawful, as fornication, which they numbered among mere natural desires, as well as food and drink
- Self-indulgence was excused, because food and the stomach were made for each other
- But these are both perishable
- Moreover, if the belly was made for meats, the body *is* not for fornication

Glorify God in Body and Spirit (6:12-20)



- Body was not made for this, but for the Lord
- Hence, sensuality cannot be thus justified
- As the Lord was raised, so shall we be
- Hence, we are for a nobler purpose than engaging in sensuality
- Our bodies are a part of Christ's mystical body, the Lord's holy temple, designed for the indwelling of the Spirit

Glorify God in Body and Spirit (6:12-20)



- How profane to take a member of Christ's body and degrade it to fornication
- It is a duty which a Christian owes to Christ to keep his body pure
- Therefore he that is one with a harlot with their bodies cannot be one with Christ, which unity is pure and spiritual
- God speaking by Adam (Ge 2:24; Mt 19:5), (Eph 5:31)

Glorify God in Body and Spirit (6:12-20)



- To flee fornication, we need to avoid temptation
- We must conquer by running away (Joseph)
- The temptations come from without and attack the man through the sense
- Fornication is peculiarly a sin against the body
- It defiles a body which is designed to be a member of Christ, and a temple of the Holy Spirit
- Fornicator is profanity because our bodies are consecrated to God

Glorify God in Body and Spirit (6:12-20)



- You are not your own but members of Christ, and hence have not the right to use our bodies to our own pleasure
- Christ paid the price, even his blood (1 Cor 7:23)
- Hence, since both body and spirit are God's, both should be used to glorify him
- The fact that we are His, purchased, parts of His spiritual temple, makes the obligation essential to consecrate the body and spirit to His service



Conclusion

- What was the nature of the problem being discussed in the first part of this chapter?
- What is Paul's solution to such a problem?
- What would have been better than displaying their differences before the eyes of the world?
- Though something may be lawful, what two other criteria does Paul mention which should govern our use of it?
- To whom does our bodies belong?
- What is the body of one who is a Christian?
- What then should we do with our bodies? Why?