

## First Corinthians 6:1-8

Introduction: Roman society was extremely litigious. Most legal disputes revolved around financial matters. Social inferiors could not sue members of the upper class. Civil lawsuits were a culturally sanctioned way of taking advantage of others.

### They wanted to get what they felt they deserved—6:1-6

- 1) Their struggle with an insolent attitude—6:1-4 <sup>1</sup> *Do any of you<sup>pl</sup> dare,*
  - a) They mistakenly expected justice from biased, unjust judges—6:1 *having a (legal) dispute with another, to go to court before the unjust rather than before the holy ones?*
  - b) They forgot their God-enabled competency
    - i) Future dealings with the world—6:2 <sup>2</sup> *Do you<sup>pl</sup> not know that the holy ones will judge the world?* (assumes a positive answer)
      - (1) “Do you not know”—cf. 3:16; 5:6; 6:2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 19; 9:13, 24
      - (2) Cf. Matthew 19:28; Revelation 2:26-27; 3:21; 20:4
      - (3) Proper assumption—*And if the world is judged in your<sup>pl</sup> sphere, are you<sup>pl</sup> incompetent to settle the smallest lawsuits?*
    - ii) Future dealings with fallen angels—6:3 <sup>3</sup> *Do you<sup>pl</sup> not know that we will judge angels?* (assumes a positive answer)
      - (1) Cf. 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6
      - (2) *How much more ordinary (everyday) matters?*
  - c) They mistakenly presented their spiritual problems to unsaved judges—6:4 <sup>4</sup> *If you<sup>pl</sup> have ordinary lawsuits, do you<sup>pl</sup> appoint as judges those who are despised in the congregation?*
    - i) Some versions translate this as a command and thus claim this refers to despised people in the congregation itself.
- 2) Their shame for their lack of wisdom was legitimate—6:5-6 <sup>5</sup> *To your<sup>pl</sup> shame I say this.* (cf. 4:14)
  - a) *Is it so, that there is no wise one among you<sup>pl</sup> who will be able to judge between his brothers?*
  - b) <sup>6</sup> *But brother goes to law with brother, and this before unbelievers?*

### They needed to settle their disputes within the congregation—6:7-8

- 1) Condemnation—<sup>7</sup> *Now therefore, it is **already** (emphatic) a complete (judicial) failure for you<sup>pl</sup> that you<sup>pl</sup> have lawsuits among yourselves.*
  - a) There is a spiritual danger far worse than losing a lawsuit.
- 2) Questions to ask ourselves when we are tempted to defend ourselves:
  - a) *Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be cheated?* (cf. 4:12-13)
  - b) Mundane monetary loss is better than any spiritual loss.
- 3) Condemnation—<sup>8</sup> *But **you<sup>pl</sup>** (emphatic) yourselves are doing wrong and are cheating—this even to brothers!*