

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 19TH - 20TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

## WHY NOT RATHER SUFFER WRONG? (1 CORINTHIANS 6:1-8)

After Paul had instructed the Corinthians to reserve their judgments to those within the church (5:12-13), he takes a short detour to address another issue happening within this church.

- Corinthian believers were taking their trivial, civil disputes before the court system (vs. 1-2).
- It's not that there isn't a need for a legal system, it's just that these believers should've **been resolving their differences the way Jesus taught** (Matthew 18).
- Christians should be **fully capable of judging their own matters** and resolving their own differences without having to get a secular legal court involved (vs. 2-6).
- The reason we should be able to resolve our differences and make proper judgments about disputes within the church is because of our destiny- someday we will "judge the world" and "judge angels"!
- **Our future role as believers in the coming Kingdom** is that we will rule with Christ and act as "judges" (Matt. 19:28, Rev. 20:4). The is a fascinating, mysterious text!
- Most likely we will judge fallen, evil angels (2 Pet. 2:4) in the age to come, which is a big responsibility!
- If **Christians are being prepared right now** (through prayer, spiritual warfare, growing in wisdom/discernment, etc.) for such a glorious responsibility in the coming Kingdom, why should we allow those **"who have no standing in the church"** (secular judges) to decide disputes among us?

### "WHY NOT SUFFER WRONG?" (VS. 7)

It's **better to just suffer wrong** and let yourself be cheated than it is to defend your "rights" at the expense of God's glory and the name of Jesus.

- When we're addicted to our "rights," that typically doesn't lead to us trusting God to be our judge and defender.
- Not only were the Corinthians **liberally suing other Christians who wronged them**, they were making a practice out of wronging and defrauding (maybe out of revenge?, vs. 8).

### THE GLORIOUS FREEDOM OF BEING UNOFFENDABLE.

All of us will be **hurt, wronged, or disappointed** by others in our lives - **that's inevitable**.

- But you have a choice in how you respond - either in an honorable, Christ-like manner, or in a dishonorable, un-Christlike manner.
- You have a choice to **forgive and release that person** to God to be the judge, or to hold onto offense, bitterness, resentment, and unforgiveness.

### SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU (1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11)

This church had created a **culture of believers** who were regularly defrauding, wronging, and suing each other (and probably justifying their behavior).

- "What I'm doing isn't as bad as what was done to me. It may not be good, but it's not all that bad," might have been **the justification over** some of this behavior.
- Paul says, "wrongdoing and unrighteous behavior (no matter the flavor) is a serious issue" (vs. 9).

### THEN THERE'S THE LIST... (VS. 9-10)

The reason for this list is most likely to show the believer who thinks that wronging or defrauding a brother isn't that bad of a sin that his sin is **no different from any of these other sins** that send someone to hell.

- We tend to set up "ranking systems" with sins, and our **sins suspiciously get placed near the bottom of the ranking**.
- Paul isn't saying that a person who has committed a sexual sin, gotten drunk, stolen, or swindled is **automatically going to hell**.
- Rather, he's describing individuals whose lives are dominated and characterized by these sins.
- If someone can regularly make a practice out of doing any of these things without conscience or conviction, it would be **a fair question if they even are a Christian**.

### "MEN WHO PRACTICE HOMOSEXUALITY..."

Paul actually uses two words - "malakoi" and "arsenokoitai" - refers to the passive and active partners in **consensual homosexual acts**.

- This is important to point out because many have wrongly said that Paul wasn't talking about monogamous, loving, committed same-sex couples; he wasn't aware of such relationships **when he wrote this**. Same-sex relationships were **exceptionally common and same-sex marriage** was practiced by Nero - the emperor at the time that Paul wrote this!
- Homosexuality is cited along with 8 other sins on the list - so the sexually immoral, drunkards, and revilers have **NO RIGHT** to condemn the homosexual. Your flavor of sin might be different, but **sin is sin**.
- For most folks with same sex attraction, they feel like they didn't choose their desires.
- Most Christians struggling with this issue deal with feelings of deep shame and unanswered prayer.
- First and foremost, **these conversations need to happen with compassion**, understanding, and love.
- The curse of sin has brought upon humanity corruption - we're all afflicted by different dimensions of it, therefore **we don't always choose our weaknesses and struggles**.

### "SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU..." (VS. 11)

These **kinds of behaviors** (and others that didn't make the list) characterized your lifestyle and mine before we met Jesus.

- But in Christ, we've been washed and sanctified - we've been **cleansed, forgiven, and set apart**.
- In Christ, we've been justified- we are "just" and "not guilty" before the court of God in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the **Spirit of God**.
- Not all of those who belonged to **the Corinthian church had truly** been washed, sanctified, and justified.
- Some were "deceived" (vs. 9) into thinking they would still inherit the Kingdom of God even

though their lifestyles begged to differ.

- When these things characterize and dominate our lives, this is **evidence of an unchanged heart**.

### BECOMING ONE BODY (1 CORINTHIANS 6:12-17)

In their **casual, flippant attitudes towards sin**, the Corinthians had adopted two mottos.

- "All things are lawful for me" - because they were saved by their faith in Christ and not their rule-keeping, they **could do whatever they wanted**.
- "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food" - which meant, indulging in appetites of the flesh was perfectly acceptable ("my body wants food, I eat. **My body wants sex**, I hire a prostitute.") Paul says, "Yes, **technically all things are lawful**, but not all things are helpful, and you shouldn't want to go back to slavery".
- Just because we're not saved by rule-keeping or our obedience to the law, doesn't mean we're to indulge in sin or disobedience (vs. 12).
- We can still indulge in behavior that hurts us and leads us back into bondage, even as believers.
- "Yes, you do have sexual appetites as a human being - but you're not an animal. **You are destined for eternal life!**" (vs. 13-14).
- One day, "God will destroy" our appetites both for food and sex - **we won't get hungry** in heaven and **we won't need sexual intercourse**.
- What will be **more satisfying than food** or sex is our union to Christ - our bodies were made for the Lord, who will raise up our bodies.
- Because we've been joined to Christ by faith, our bodies are members of His body, the Church.
- How then can we take a part of the body of Christ (our body), and join it to prostitute in an act of sexual immorality? (vs. 15).
- Sex is far more than a physical act - it is a **full self disclosure where body, mind, and spirit** become one flesh with another person (vs. 16) - which is why God reserves it for marriage.
- There's no such thing as, "**casual sex**".
- Why would we, as very members of Christ, **join all of our personhood with a prostitute** (or someone acting like one) in a sacred act that joins us to them as "**one flesh**"?
- Since we've been "joined to the Lord," (vs. 17) we don't have the right to give all of ourselves away to **anyone that we're not covenanted** to in marriage.

### FLEE SEXUAL IMMORALITY (1 CORINTHIANS 6:18-20)

#### "FLEE SEXUAL IMMORALITY!!" (VS. 18)

Prov. 5:8 "Keep your way far from her!" - don't go near and visit, **don't entertain mentally what she offers**, just stay away completely.

- To flirt and "**toe the line**" with sexual temptation is to play spiritual Russian roulette.
- Sexual sin is a sin against your own body - it has a **unique effect on the body** (physically, emotionally, morally, and spiritually).
- Our bodies are the very, "**dwelling place**" of God's Holy Spirit (vs. 19).
- Our bodies don't belong to us, but to God because **He purchased them with the blood of His Son** (vs. 20).
- So, if our bodies aren't ours and they are sacred vessels that house God's Spirit, **we have no right to pollute, abuse, defile, and blaspheme** them through sexual sin.
- We're to **FLEE** sexual immorality!

### FOR CHRISTIAN MARRIED COUPLES

The **best defense** is a good offense (1 Cor. 7:5).

- Hold each other accountable with **communication, good friends, or counseling**.
- Establish **guardrails with members of the opposite sex**.
- No device or social media account should be **off limits from your spouse** - sin grows in secret (**CovenantEyes is very helpful**).

### FOR CHRISTIAN SINGLES

Set up some **boundaries** & non-negotiables with the opposite sex (**no sleep-overs, no alone time after a certain hour, etc.**).

- Get accountability from more **mature Christian friends** that can ask you anything.
- **No missionary dating (if you're lonely or insecure, you probably shouldn't be dating or be on dating apps)**. So often we only see and think clearly about a sinful sexual decision until it's far too late.
- Don't under-estimate the power of sin and over-estimate your own Spiritual strength and will power - **RUN!** You are more than a sexual object and far more than your sexual desires - you were made for eternity and destined for the Kingdom of God.

### HOW DO YOU SEE YOURSELF?

- Are you the **master of your own justice**, the one who must fight for your rights and **make anyone pay who wrongs you**?
- If **you're in Christ**, you worship and claim to follow a God who surrendered His rights and forgave you even as your **sins nailed Him to a cross**.
- Are you **simply the sum total** of your past sins?
- If you're in Christ, that's who you **were**.
- How do you see yourself?
- Are you a victim to your **own physical desires** and appetites?
- If you're in Christ, **you are more than your physical desires** - you are God's temple, you are member of Christ's body, and you were bought with a price.
- Do you **see yourself as trash**?
- If you're in Christ, **you are God's daughter or son**, part of His bride, and you are **PRICELESS**.