

1 Corinthians

Wisdom & Unity

Meeting the demands of
Christian life and living



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Starting where
you are:

Any questions?

September 1, 2022

1 Corinthians 6 – Accountability and Glory

The thread of wisdom and unity is seen in Paul's admonitions for Christians living in community. The idea here is that the Christian community ought to resolve disputes internally—not to dismiss the persons involved or their concerns, but to hold one another accountable. The strength for such accountability comes from the Spirit of God who justifies and sanctifies believers to and for God's glory.

Believers glorify God through accountability and self-control.

Chapter Outline

- How to handle disputes among believers (6:1-11)
- How to handle yourself as a believer (6:12-20)

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Handle disputes among believers (6:1-11)

A brief summary of the matter

- **The situation:** Believers were resolving disputes by taking each other to court (i.e., choosing secular laws that govern the unrighteous) to “distinguish” or decide what is right for those who should be righteous.
- **The complicating factor:** This approach to dispute resolution denies the power of the Gospel as the Christian’s guide and promotes a public narrative that reduces the value of Christian witness.
- **The resolution:** Baptism, sanctification, and justification separate Christians from unrighteousness. Relying on the Holy Spirit keeps believers from disqualifying themselves and offending one another.

Handle disputes among believers (6:1-11)

6:1-5, 7, 9 □ A series of questions reveals Paul's incredulity about the power believers give to the secular world to govern them when they ought to be led by the Spirit.

- The community of faith should be the first option.
- Believers will be the final judge.
- Those of lowest esteem (i.e., the unsaved) should be disqualified from rendering judgment.
- A community unable to govern itself is shameful.
 - None wise? Disqualified by their lack of practiced integrity (6:5, 7)
 - None worthy? Disqualified by their actions (6:8)

Handle disputes among believers (6:1-11)

- 6:6** □ The core of Paul's amazement at the state of believers in Corinth
- One believer at odds with another believer, based on secular law
 - The issue being adjudicated in a public forum by unbelievers

- 6:7-11** □ Why not take the law as a guide?
- Reinforced the legislation and enforcement of oppressive laws.
 - Reinforced litigious behaviors that characterized Greek culture.
 - Provides an excuse to act “according to the flesh” and to accept carnality as the believer's standard for behavior.

Handle disputes among believers (6:1-11)

6:9-11 □ As a bridge from the first part of Chapter 6 to the last part of Chapter 6, these verses outline some of the believers' past lives to convince them that the Gospel that saved them is what also enables them to deal justly with one another.

- “washed” □ physical and spiritual reality that the believer has been cleansed of sin by baptism (*or, immersion*) in Christ.
- “sanctified” □ spiritually set aside by God for godly service.
- “justified” □ made right with God by faith in Christ Jesus.

In the light of these realities, Paul moves to implore the Christians in Corinth to take control of their bodies in the authority of the Spirit.

Cautionary Notes for 1 Corinthians 6:1-11

- **Secular does not have to mean “bad.”** The same Paul enjoyed life-saving hospitality from Gallio (Acts 18:12-17) and viewed secular government as “appointed” and “ordained by God” (Rom 13:1-2).
- **Saints in “Caesar’s household.”** Many Christians work/serve in secular judicial systems. Thus, the application of laws does not have to be inherently unjust, because “wise” and “worthy” judges are in the system.
- **Seasons change.** Our world is much more religiously, legally, socially, and economically complex than that of the early-Church in Corinth.

While adhering to the principles of Scripture,
be careful not to overlook the nuances of
our own day and time.

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Handle yourself, as a believer (6:12-20)

A brief summary of the matter

- **The situation:** The actions of believers suggested that faith in Jesus had no bearing on what they did with their bodies.
- **The complicating factor:** What someone does says more about the person than what he or she says. “Actions are greater than words.”
- **The resolution:** Through the resurrection of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit, believers can unite with God to overcome temptations to yield, or give way, to appetites of the flesh.

Handle yourself as a believer (6:12-20)

6:12-14 □ Addressing the urge to separate body from spirit

- “All things are lawful for me” □ Paul mimics an appeal of the day that elevated the exercise of personal rights above spiritual wellness.
- The value of the body. The prevailing Gnostic belief viewed the soul as good and the body as bad. Two practices emerged:
 1. Deny the body: most common religious application was monasticism
 2. Indulge the body: The practice in Corinth was “anything goes”
- What will be allowed to master/lord over you? (6:12)
- The way out (6:13b-14)

Handle yourself as a believer (6:12-20)

6:15-17 □ Spiritually mature and healthy ways to view the body

- Sacred: Part of something greater
- Sanctified: Highest value is in unity with Christ
- Susceptible: Prone to unite with that to which it is attached

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Handle yourself as a believer (6:12-20)

6:18 □ Flee sexual immorality.

- Literally, “do not have sexual intercourse with prostitutes.” In the larger context of 6:12-20, the principal idea is: *Do not sell yourself to satisfy the appetite of your flesh.*
- “Every sin a person commits is outside the body”
 - You say: “external” sin impacts the community, because of the affect on other people.
- “but the one who commits sexual immorality sins against her/his own body.”
 - You say: “engaging in *porneia* —sexual immorality—is a personal sin, not of communal concern.”
 - But I say: sexual immorality is a communal concern (as in 5:1-2) when it impacts the community and its witness.

Handle yourself as a believer (6:12-20)

6:19 □ Sexual sins have spiritual effects in addition to its personal and communal concerns.

- The body is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit – by implication, the Spirit controls.
- The Spirit is God's gift to help you navigate life – you are not free to do as the flesh desires.

6:20 □ Concludes this section by summarizing what it will take to handle yourself as a believer.

- Remember what it took to redeem you.
- Practice what it takes to keep you.

Any Questions?



For next week:

- Pray about today's lesson**
- Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-24**



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