

Lawsuits Among Believers:

1 If any of you has a dispute with another, do you dare to take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the Lord's people? **2** Or do you not know that the Lord's people will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? **3** Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! **4** Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, do you ask for a ruling from those whose way of life is scorned in the church? **5** I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? **6** But instead, one brother takes another to court—and this in front of unbelievers!

7 The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? **8** Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers and sisters. **9** Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men[a] **10** nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. **11** And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. 1st Corinthians Chapter 6, v.1-11 (NIV)

Observation (what does the text say?) Interpretation (what does it mean?) Application (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

Chapter 6:1-11

O: What is Paul's reasoning for forbidding Christians to take each other to court (6:1-8)?

Follow-up: If we say the issue is about a believer taking another believer to court, is it referring to things that we would think of small claims court? The carpet in the sanctuary should be red, not green? Criminal charges?

Follow-up: There seem to be cases of fraud and property rights violations within the Corinthian church community, and some of the believers are suing each other in the secular court system. What reasons does Paul give here for why believers should adjudicate such matters within the church rather than in civil courts?

Follow-up: What foundational principles would you say are the source of Paul's teaching here?

A: *From time to time in our own day it happens that church people, sometimes those in leadership, are taken to court by one another. It gets into the newspapers and all the gossips have a field day at the church's expense. A public dispute between Christians is a sign that Christians are really no different from everybody else. And 1 Corinthians is all about the fact that Christians are different from everybody else, and if they're not, they might as well not bother calling themselves Christians in the first place.*

- Where in the church (even in our church) are we behaving in such a way that we are shaming the gospel in the eyes of the world?
- Follow-up: If the words in verse 8 were in a letter written to your church, how accurate would they be?

A: Verse 9 says “do not be deceived”, ... and then it ends the thought by reminding us, “*But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*” In what specific situations do you especially need to remember that “you are not your own ... for you were bought at a price”?

Review this process (each step) from Ryan's Sermon and discuss how you have seen this play out, and how you might need to better apply this to current situations/conflicts you find yourself in:

Resolving Conflict and Peacemaking

1. I can overlook the offense. (Matt 5:38-40, Prov. 19:11)
2. I can own my part in the problem. (Matt 7:3-5)
3. I can engage the other person gently.
 - a. 1-on-1
 - b. with 1-2 others
 - c. within the church
4. I can forgive.

Recommended Follow-up:

- Read: Next week's sermon (2/21/16) will focus on 1st Corinthians Ch6:9-20. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.

* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid “go through this guide word-for-word.” There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. This guide relies heavily upon *1st Corinthians discussion guides* by N.T. Wright (ISBN# 9780830821877), *MacArthur* (9781418508760), *Wiersbe* (9781434703767), *Stevens & Williams* (9780830830091), *NavPress* (9780891095590), *Life Application* (9781414326481), *Serendipity Bible* (Littleton, CO 1989).