

1 Corinthians Series, Lesson #18  
The Court of Public Opinion  
1 Corinthians 6:1-12  
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Pentecost Sunday

Overview:

1. The Problem
2. The Condemnation
3. The Panorama
4. Pentecost—how the Spirit changes everything when He pours through our souls

I. The Problem: Grievances.

**Problem:** lawsuits between believers

- Continuing theme of disunity, pride, worldliness, and warfare among the Corinthian Christians
- Continuing a discussion of public sins that shame the assembly

These lawsuits were:

1. Within the same region— “among you”
2. Worldly—about money, property
3. Public
4. Secular—before the unrighteous

A few questions raised:

- Should a Christian ever go to court against another believer?
- Should a Christian fight an unfair lawsuit in legal court?
- In other words: is it okay for me to press my legal rights against another believer, or to defend myself when I’m being cheated?

Paul’s answer: No

II. The Condemnation: They bring shame

These suits and counter-suits are:

1. Arrogant—does he *dare*?
2. Foolish—no one wise enough??
3. Petty—**trivial** cases
  - Everything in this world is trivial in comparison with ruling the universe and judging angels one day
4. Inconsistent— “such WERE some”
5. Greedy—wronging and defrauding
6. Defensive—rather be defrauded

7. Distracting—not helpful
8. Consuming—dominated by anything
9. Hellish—unrighteous will not inherit

\*\*\*Examples of grievances between Christians today:

1. One church won't pay its share to maintain a shared church building.
2. A Christian cheats his business partner
3. One Christian woman is accused of stealing or embezzling from another
4. A believer sells a car to someone at church without disclosing its problems, then won't pay to fix it and won't take it back.
5. A believer withholds payment to a Christian contractor who remodeled his house. He simply doesn't pay what is owed, or the full amount.
6. A fired Christian sues his Christian boss for wrongful termination
7. A divorcing couple fights for the largest share of property, money and custody of the children

The Corinthians looked at their grievances under a microscope. Today we tend to do the same. We have selfish tunnel vision. Now, let's switch to a panorama. The panorama will show us how we should respond to these very real, thorny problems today.

### III. The Panorama

Heavenly response to grievances:

1. Remember
  - Who you are
  - Who Jesus is
  - What the church is
  - Who is watching

Remember who you are:

1. A judge of angels
2. A judge of the world
3. A saint exalted and holy
4. An heir of all things

1 Cor. 3:21-23: "So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Remember who Jesus is:

1. Lamb of God
2. Emptied Himself of all rights, reputation and honor

3. Suffered in silence
4. Did not answer His accusers
5. Forgave His murderers
6. Surrounded His life to save us all

Greed-motivated, competitive extortion between Christians has to be the most antichrist spirit imaginable. Nothing is more contradictory to the heart of the meek, self-sacrificing Lamb of God.

Remember what the church is:

1. A body
2. A house
3. A temple
4. A family
5. A marriage

Remember who is watching

- Our divisions harden the world's heart
- Our squabbling sours our witness
- The enemies of the Lord take occasion to blaspheme (Nathan to David)

2. Confront the Issue—Matt. 18
3. Resolve in House—no one among you wise enough?
4. Identify covetousness— “greedy,” Lk. 12 and 14
5. Absorb the Damages—Heb. 10
6. Love Your Oppressors—Matt. 5

V. Pentecost

Questions:

- Do you have the resources to love your enemies? Do you have the abundance of heavenly possessions to renounce your earthly holdings if needed?
- Do you have a river, a fountain breaking loose within you?
- Do you spill over with spiritual eruptions of prayer, love, forgiveness, encouragements, gifts, etc.?

1. Who we used to be: Gal. 5:19-21

2. Who we are now

- You were washed, sanctified, justified . . . (Changed) by the Spirit of our God
- We bear fruit for God—Gal. 5:22-26

God promises the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh!

## How to Receive

- By believing there is more than our current experience
- By setting yourself and your rights and your strengths aside
- By believing the promise you hear from God's Word
- By receiving ministry through the laying on of hands

There's only room for one spirit in you. The Spirit of the world can fill your heart, mind and thoughts, driving you toward competition, envy and ambition. Or the Spirit of Jesus can fill your heart, mind and thoughts, driving you toward sacrifice, service and love at all costs.