

Dare to be **Wronged**

1 Cor 6:1-11

But that's not fair! It's a sentence we've been rehearsing since we could first walk and talk... and for most of us, it still wells up with all the same intensity. When we're in the right, we're determined to stick to our guns... no matter what. And so, we're faced with the prospect of no more medical services, because our specialists can't afford insurance cover against litigation. It's a dog-eat-dog world.

What do you see as the root cause of the growth in law suits?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:1-11

1. What is the problem Paul is addressing (verse 1)?
2. What makes this behaviour even worse in his view (verse 6)?
3. In what ways do you think Paul sees this behaviour as opposed to the gospel and damaging to the Corinthians' witness for Christ? Has this been your experience?

Sideline:

What is a "saint"? You should be able to work it out from verses 1 and 2!

4. Set within an eternal perspective, why should we see disputes over such things as property matters as trivial (verse 2-3)?
5. How does this reveal wrong priorities and attitudes within the Corinthian church?
6. Who within the church does Paul say are capable of helping disputes believers have with each other (verse 4)?
7. Paul reminds the Corinthians that they have only been forgiven through Christ's death (verses 9-11). How does this provide a basis for his question in verse 7: "why not rather be wronged?"
8. In what ways do our priorities match/fail to match up to an eternal perspective on life?
9. Why do we tend *not* to regard our rights as trivial?
10. If clinging to rights is the problem, how is a focus on Jesus' death the solution?
11. What can we do to avoid disputes even emerging between us?

You and me....

How hard do you find it to “not stand on your rights”? Has there ever been a time that you've put the tough teaching of this passage into practice?

If people at church start asking you to solve problems between them, should you be pleased or offended? ;)

What sort of mechanisms are there for Christians to resolve their differences outside the legal system?

Read verses 9 to 11 again. There's certain baggage that you'll need to leave behind if you want to enter the kingdom of God. It's as if the Corinthians want to “have their cake and eat it.” We can be the same. But look carefully through Paul's list of the sort of sins that are unacceptable for Christians to continue with. It's easy to highlight things like homosexuality, and miss the point that you might be greedy! And sadly, statistically, at least one or two people who are reading this will currently be either tempted by, or actively involved in, adultery. Don't think that it doesn't matter!

What has happened to change “what we were?” Are you living like a “washed and sanctified person?”

Living for unbelievers...

Paul is staggered that believers would air their petty quarrels in front of unbelievers. Even apart from the problem of brother-against-brother, there's a total disregard for the damage their behaviour is doing to the reputation of Jesus Christ.

There are broader implications of this. Imagine that everybody, all the time, knew you were a Christian. Think through a typical day. How would your behaviour reflect on the reputation of the Lord Jesus in the way you...

- drive
- talk during your coffee-break at the office
- honour commitments to clients
- treat your workmates
- relate to your neighbours
- treat your parents
- treat your children
- play soccer
- choose a video

Tough questions

Is it realistic to simply let other Christians “walk over the top of you” without going to court?

Is it realistic to let “what non-Christians will think” change get in the way of our rights.

Would you rather be wronged - even on the sports field - than discredit Jesus? If not, what's your strategy for change?