



Focus Points...*For I Corinthians 6*

Stop And Consider...

- * What happens when Christians forget they are one in Christ;

Look...

- * At how the Corinthians were so self-absorbed that they would destroy other Christians by their lawsuits, quarrels and immorality;

Listen...

- * To Paul's admonition: "You are bought with a price. Therefore honor God with your body" (I Cor. 6:20 [NIV]).

Prayer:

Holy Father, when Christians can't get along the problem is more than meets the eye. Instead, the problem is their relationship with You. As I consider the Corinthians' selfish destruction, help me to see how important it is to honor You in all I do. In the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son. Amen.

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Commentary:

By the time the reader gets to First Corinthians chapter six, one starts to get a sense that Paul's Corinthian letter is a laundry list of everything that can go wrong in a church. In many ways, it is!



Chapter one described divisions between members and ministers. Chapter two detailed Paul's self-defense against those who claimed to be wiser than Paul. After further discussion on divisions again in chapter three, Paul's words in chapter four instruct the Corinthians to discipline the arrogant and powerful among them (4:19). Chapter five detailed the church's pride in allowing—and promoting—sexual immorality and incest among its members. "Expel the wicked man from among you!" Paul commanded in 6:13.

It comes as no surprise that chapter six describes another problem: lawsuits among believers. Paul is absolutely aghast as to why Christians would go to civil authorities to air out their laundry and get matters settled. Out of sheer unbelief he asked,

"Is it possible there is nobody among you *wise enough* to judge a dispute between believers?" (6:5).

In Paul's mind, a church which claimed such extraordinary wisdom ought to be smart enough to resolve Christian disputes behind closed doors.

What a tragedy when Christians have to go the way of the world to civil courts to settle disputes among themselves! What do the non-Christians think about this? What does this say about Christianity? "The very fact that you have lawsuits among you," Paul lamented, "means you have been completely defeated already" (6:7).

But the Corinthian Church is not a lost cause. There is hope and a cure. Paul's prescription was simple. He simply reminded them of who they were in Jesus Christ.

"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" (6:11 [NIV]).

The only difference between Christians and non-Christians is our justification in the name of Jesus Christ. Having been redeemed by His blood, means that Christians live on a higher—and wiser—plane than non-Christians. In Christ, we are no longer our own, hence Paul's reminder to the Corinthians in I Corinthians 6:15.

"Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ Himself?" (NIV)

Since our bodies are really Jesus' body, how should we then live? For Christ alone! If the Corinthians understood this, they would not engage in unbridled permissiveness (6:12). They would not be guided by their insatiable appetites, desires and lusts.

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."

(I Corinthians 6:19-20 [NIV])

Often used as a confirmation verse, I Corinthians 6:19-20 best describes the core of who we are as Christians. We are redeemed. We are not our own. We are God's. We are, therefore, called to serve God—not ourselves, our appetites, our freedoms or our lusts.

This was the Corinthian's problem. It is the Church's problem as well in every age. It's a problem every genuine Christian struggles with every single moment.

What's the most effective way for Christians to address this problem? Paul's words in Romans 12:1-3 provide the best response.

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve

what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will...Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.”

Romans 12:1-3 (NIV)

Following these timeless principles given to the Romans, the Corinthians could also enjoy a greater life in the grace of Jesus Christ. As we, too, view God's mercy we give ourselves as a living sacrifices to God. In that service we find eternal joy in Jesus Christ.

Prayer:

So many times in my life, Lord, I find myself insisting on getting what I want. I sometimes use my freedom as an excuse to follow my passions and realize my desires...even at others' expense. Lord, remind me each day that I am not my own. I am bought with a price. Help me honor You with my heart, my soul, my mind and my body. Amen.

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TFF 3/09