

1 Corinthians 6

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Tape #8141
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Open your Bibles now to the sixth chapter of 1 Corinthians, where Paul asks, first of all, the question, *Dare any of you, having a matter against another*, (This “another” is a brother in the body of Christ. As Paul will declare in verse six, “But brother goes to law against brother”, so if you have a matter against your brother, (another), dare you *go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?* The Greek society was a very litigious society. Everybody it seemed was involved in court issues, many times during their lives. People were ready to sue over anything. And when sued, you were first of all provided an arbitrator, each side who would listen to the case and a third arbitrator would also be involved, and they would seek arbitration to come to an amicable settlement. If it could not be settled that way, then you would again go to court and this time before a jury. They had large juries of a hundred or so. I don’t know how they ever came to a solution or a conviction, you know. It’s interesting, of course, just recently the aspects of the legal system have surely been exposed. The jury system, it seems extremely strange how that one jury can declare a man innocent and another jury declares him guilty, with both of them with unanimous kinds of decisions. It only points up that the worldly system is faulty at best. So Paul is sort of rebuking them for taking the issues that they have with another brother to a Pagan court. He is saying that these issues between a brother and brother in the church, ought to be resolved in the church by those within the church and not in the heathen courts.

For he goes on to ask, ²*Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?* Now, when Christ returns, He will sit in judgment to judge the nations of the world. And as He reigns during the thousand-year reign, we will be participating with Him in that reign over the earth. So this is probably what Paul is referring to when he talks about, the saints will be judging the world.

And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? I mean, here are the issues of the world that we will be dealing with as we reign and rule with Christ over the earth. Can’t we resolve some of these small issues within the church that arise sometimes between a brother and brother?

And then Paul said, ³*Do you not know that we shall judge angels?* Now, again the Bible isn’t specific as far as which angels we are going to judge. I don’t think that we will be judging the good angels. Some of you may wonder where your guardian angel was when you smashed your car. You may like to sort of question him, you know, was he off somewhere asleep or negligent? But I don’t think that that is the issue involved here, but probably the fallen angels. Somehow we will be brought into that area of judgment of the angels. Now, these are in spiritual matters. You see, we ought to be able to judge in these small matters because we are going to be judging in international matters as we judge the world. We are going to be judging in spiritual matters as we judge angels; therefore, surely, you know, if someone borrowed a shovel from you and didn’t return it, we ought to be able to resolve those issues in the church without taking them to court.

How much more, things that pertain to this life? So how much more if we are going to be judging in spiritual matters are we and should we be capable of judging in matters that pertain to this life, the issues, the differences that we experience in this life.

⁴*If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?* Now, this is sort of a slap, I would suppose, at the judicial system, where Paul is saying, a person who is least esteemed in the church should be capable of judging the issues that arise in the family of God. The least esteemed, in other words, you don’t bother the people who are actually in the ministry of the church, take those that are the least esteemed to judge.

Paul has pointed out that the natural man does not understand the things of the spirit neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. Yet Paul said he that is spiritual understands all things though

he is not understood. In other words, a man who is filled with the Holy Spirit, who does not have a Harvard education is a better teacher of spiritual matters than some professor who knows all of the original languages and has the years of seminary training but who is not born again. You see, when we are born again of the Spirit, we come into a Spiritual understanding.

There is a Greek word, *ginosko*, which is to know by experience or by study. There is another Greek word, *eido*, which is just to know by intuition, an intuitive or knowledge that comes from the Spirit. And thus a person who only has the *ginosko*, the knowledge by experience or the knowledge by study, is missing out on a whole dimension of understanding in the Scriptural things. Because the natural man cannot understand the things of the Spirit or can he know them, thus he cannot be a competent guide to the Scriptures.

They talk often of these “scholars” who get together to determine which of the passages in the gospels are truly those of Jesus Christ and which of them actually are spurious or additions by the gospel writers. Here they are, they all have their degrees behind their names, but they are unregenerate. They are not born again. Thus their conclusions are totally unreliable, because they are coming at it just from a critical analysis of the text, the natural man, who does not understand the things of the Spirit and neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. So you are better off listening to some person who doesn’t even have a high school education but who has studied the Scriptures, a person who has walked in the Spirit, and is living in the Spirit. God has opened up the dimension of truth, that cannot be found in the seminaries, that are taught by natural men.

So if you have matters of judgement, take the person who is least esteemed in the church. Let him judge. Paul said, ⁵*I say this to your shame.* Shame on you, going to court. Don’t you realize that you are exposing the things of the Lord to pagan courts and so forth?

So he questions, *Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, (Don’t you have anyone in the body that’s wise enough to deal with this?) not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren?* Don’t you have anyone? Isn’t there someone there that can judge in the issues between the brothers that you can bring a resolution to these things?

Now in our time, we do have the benefit of Christian arbitration. There are a group of attorneys, who do Christian arbitration. So if we have a case of brother with brother, that cannot be resolved, these attorneys will listen to the issues and will arbitrate the issues so that you don’t have to go to court. It not only saves a tremendous amount of money but it also is a good thing where Christians can resolve their differences within a Christian environment, rather than in the environment of the court room.

So Paul goes on to rebuke them, saying, ⁶*But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!* ⁷*Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another.* It would be better if you would just suffer the wrong.

Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated? That is better than to go to an unbelieving court.

⁸*No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren!* Now in the previous chapter, Paul in dealing with some of the problems of immorality in the church in Corinth, in verse eleven said, but now I’ve written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person. Sad, but in the church in Corinth, there were those who were defrauding others in the body of Christ. There were terrible things in Corinth. Hey, wait a minute, in the church today, there are those today who are guilty of defrauding others in the body of Christ. We have had many issues, where people who have claimed to be Christians, have defrauded one another. The love of money, the Bible said, is the root of all evil. It is tragic how that when money is involved, people can quickly lose their spirituality, their commitment, and greed can set in so readily.

So it was wrong, it was happening, there was extortion and the fraud that was going on in the church in Corinth. Just because a person puts a fish on his business card, doesn’t mean that you should blindly trust him but use good judgment. Be prudent. because you are asking to be taken. Not all who way, Lord, Lord,

not all who say, Bless God, brother, I'll be glad to do that for you, you know, it won't cost you much. Look out! Get a contract. Be wise. So there are always those who look upon Christians as patsies, taking advantage and ready to take advantage of them. Because we have been taught to trust, and thus they look upon us as an easy mark. It's sad that these things have to be brought up, but Paul had to bring them up in the church in Corinth. And people are people in every generation.

Now Paul goes on to say, ⁹*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,* ¹⁰*nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.* Don't be deceived. Because you go to church, because you regularly attend, if you are engaged in these practices, don't be deceived into thinking that your church attendance is going to cover your sin. If you are in fornication, if you are an idolater, if there are other things in your life that supercede your commitment to Jesus Christ, if you are an adulterer, engaged in an extramarital affair, if you are effeminate, (in the Greek that is a male prostate, a homosexual prostitute), or those that abuse themselves with mankind (in the Greek that is those who are homosexuals, seeking that homosexual prostitute, (the one refers to the one who takes the female role, the effeminate, the other is the one who takes the male role in homosexuality), or thieves or covetous or drunkards, or revilers, don't be deceived. These people are not going to inherit the kingdom of God.

When Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians, he exhorted them to walk in love—as Christ also loved us—Ephesians 5:2. Walk in love as Christ has loved us and given Himself for us as an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. But fornication and all uncleanness and sexual impurities, covetousness, let it not once be named among you as becomes the saints, neither filthiness nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not convenient but rather the giving of thanks, for this you know, that no whoremonger nor unclean person (that is in a sexual purity sense), or a covetous man who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Don't let any man deceive you. Now Paul said to the Corinthians, don't be deceived on this issue. Now as Paul brings up much of the same thing to the church in Ephesus, he said, don't let any man deceive you. Well, it's all right, you know, if you've once been born again, it's all right. It doesn't matter. Don't let any man deceive you with vain words because of these things the wrath of God is coming on the children of disobedience. This is why God's wrath and judgment is coming upon the earth. Peter said, the time is coming when judgment must begin at the house of God, but if it begins with us, where is the sinner and the ungodly going to appear? Now notice as he tells that you are not going to inherit the kingdom of God, he said, don't let anybody deceive you on this. Writing to the Corinthians, don't be deceived. Now when Paul wrote his letter to the Galatians, Paul in writing to the Galatians, in chapter five, he said to them, verse seventeen, "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to another. So that you cannot do the things that you would, but if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, (which again in sexual impurity), lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you before hand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." So once again Paul is warning the church about these practices that will exclude you from the kingdom of God. Don't be deceived!! In verse seven of chapter six, he said, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap." So, many people are deceived on these issues, thinking that you can live however you please in sexual impurity, in idolatry and in reviling, that is cutting people apart with your words, destroying people's reputation with your words. They think that they can do these things and still inherit the kingdom of God, Paul said God's wrath is coming upon the world for these very things. These are the things that are precipitating the judgment of God, that is coming.

So as he speaks of these things back in verse eleven, he said ¹¹*And such were some of you.* In your past life before you came to Jesus Christ, yes a lot of junk. A lot of filth. We don't have anything to be proud of back there.

Some of you, *But you were washed,* Oh, thank God! Come now, the Lord said, let us reason together,

though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; through they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. What a glorious Scripture! The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses a man from all sins! Such as some of you, but you have been washed! Thank God for that washing of the regeneration of the Word of God, by which we have been cleansed.

But more than that, *but you were sanctified*, This means that you've been set apart, apart from that old life, apart from the things of the old life. You have been sanctified. You have been set apart from that. The work of God's Spirit within our hearts and within our lives. The work sanctify means to be set apart for an exclusive purpose and use. In the Old Testament, when they made the Tabernacle, the vessels that were to be used in the service of the Tabernacle, they were sanctified. So that those vessels that were used in the worship in the Tabernacle were not to be used for any other purpose. There was a singular purpose. These vessels are set apart for our worship of God and they are not to be used for any other purpose. So our lives have sanctified. God has set us apart that we now belong to Him, exclusively! He wants that exclusive right over your life, over your body. You've been sanctified.

Then more than that, *but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God*. You have been declared innocent of all of these things that you once were guilty of. These things that you did when you lived your life in the flesh. God has washed those things from your life. He has set you apart, now for Himself. He declares you innocent of all charges. You are sanctified before God!

So Paul declares, ¹²*All things are lawful for me*, Christ is the end of the law to those that believe. The law was a schoolmaster to drive us to Jesus Christ. The law was for the lawless. If a person is living after the Spirit, following after God, serving the Lord, he has been set free from the bondage of the flesh, these things that used to be a part of our lives. But not only that, we've been set free to serve God with everything that we have. And so all things are now lawful for me because my purpose and my desire is to live a totally sanctified life, set apart for His use. My body now belongs to Him, for His use and thus in this mode, all things are lawful.

Now, if you have not yet come to Jesus Christ, the law still has power over you and you are going to be judged by the law. It's only when you come to Christ that you become free from the law. And there is now a new law in the Spirit of Christ Jesus, that has set me free from the law that had condemned me to death. But until a person comes to Christ, the law is still there binding and you are responsible to it. Once, you have come to this new life in Christ, there is therefore now no condemnation.

All things are lawful for me, but I am really held by a higher standard, *but all things are not helpful*. Because of this new life in Christ, it is my desire, it is my purpose and intent to run this race and win. As Paul said, (1 Corinthians 9:24), "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it."

We are told, (Hebrews 12:1-2), "Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Run a race. Race to win.

Thus though some practice may be lawful for me, you may prove that it, as a Christian, is all right for you to do, (of course this would not include the previous list because as a Christian, you wouldn't do those things and if you do those things, it is evident that you are not a Christian.), but you can prove that it is all right to do, but does it impede your progress towards the goal? I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, which is in Christ Jesus. As I am pressing toward this goal, I don't want anything that will impede my progress towards the goal.

As I mentioned this morning, if you were running the one hundred meter dash in the Olympics, and if you came out and set up there at the blocks and you had big, heavy boots on, people would think you were crazy and they would probably be right. You are not going to win the race in those heavy boots. They are going to be an encumbrance. They are going to impede your achieving victory in the race. And there are things that may be all right, but they will impede your running the race. So though it may be lawful, it is not expedient.

All things are lawful for me, (Paul said), *but I will not be brought under the power of any*. Now you talk

about liberty. I don't know of any greater liberty that a person can declare than, "all things are lawful for me." Now I mean, that is absolute! I mean, you don't get any more than that as far as liberty is concerned. And as a Christian, we have been set free. We were once living in bondage to our flesh and our fleshly desires. There are a lot of things that people do and they hate themselves for doing them, but it is the weakness of the flesh. As Jesus said to Peter, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak! I have talked to so many people who are engaged in activities that they hate. Paul the apostle said, that which I do not allow, I do and he talked about how frustrated he was because of the power of the flesh, until he finally cried, "Who shall deliver me?" He did everything he could to deliver himself and found out that he was still bound by the fleshly desires, impulses. So he finally cried, who shall deliver me? Then he found that strength outside himself through Jesus Christ. Thank God through Jesus Christ. And the life and the walk and the Spirit, I've been set free from the bondage to the flesh.

Now having been set free, I come into this glorious sense of liberty and freedom. I am no longer a slave or subject unto my flesh and the fleshly desires. I've been liberated. But, it is possible for a person to exercise their liberty in such a way as to bring them back into bondage. If I exercise my liberty to smoke cigarettes, if I so desire, and if I become addicted to the nicotine, then I'm no longer free anymore, I'm now a slave to this little cigarette. I've exercised my freedom in such a way that it has brought me into bondage. That's not wise.

Adam had perfect liberty in the Garden. In a sense, he could say all things are lawful for me, but that tree in the middle. He had the freedom to do what he pleased. He had the freedom to eat of any tree in the garden that he pleased, but he was warned, don't eat of that tree! That will bring you into bondage. That will bring you into death. But he had the freedom, God didn't tie him up in the corner of the Garden, nor did God build a high wall around that tree. He had the freedom to eat of it. But he exercised that freedom in such a way as to bring death and bondage to sin and to the flesh. As he obeyed the desires of the flesh rather than the Word of God and the commandment of God, he then found himself a victim of his flesh.

So I will not be brought under power of any. Enjoying my glorious liberty in Christ, I will not be so foolish as to exercise it in participating or taking of things involving myself in certain activities that can bring me under their power. Because once I'm under the power of any kind of activity, then I'm no longer free.

So Paul said, ¹³*Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods*, This was probably a proverb in Corinth. One of those worldly proverbs, by which they were saying, hey, you know, meat is for the belly, the belly for meat. It really doesn't really matter what you eat, you know, meat is for the belly and the belly is for meat. So it doesn't matter.

Paul responds, *but God will destroy both it and them*. I mean, these things are temporal things, what you eat and all. Those are temporal things. Those things are going to pass.

Now the body, he said, *is not for sexual immorality* (They probably were carrying that proverb over into the physical sense of fornication. In other words, God gave me sexual powers. God created the sex drive, meat for the belly, the belly for meat. God created my body with certain sexual organs and so, you know, they are for sexual practice. Carrying this proverb over into the realm of fornication.

Now the body, he said, is not for sexual immorality or fornication. That's not why God created you with certain sexual capacities.) *but the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body*. ¹⁴*And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power*. The resurrection, God has created for Himself our bodies. They are now the temples of the Holy Spirit. We are not our own. So even as God raised up the body of Jesus, so shall God raise us up by His own power.

¹⁵*Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?* We've been joined unto Jesus Christ, our bodies. He talked to the Corinthians. He said, now, the church is a body of Christ, members in particular. Parts of the body of Christ. We've been joined to Christ, in the body of Christ, the church of Jesus Christ, being the body of Christ. And Paul tells us not to yield our members as instruments for unrighteousness, but yield our member as instruments of righteousness unto the Lord. That is, your body, itself, yield it to God for His use, not for the fulfilling of your sexual drives.

Your bodies are the members of Christ and *Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them*

members of a harlot? Certainly not! Here my body is a member of Christ. It's to be used for Him. I'm to yield it as an instrument for Him to use for His purposes. Shall I then take this body, which is a member of Christ and go out and have an affair with a prostitute? God forbid, Paul said.

¹⁶Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? But here you are a member of Christ and now you are taking this member of Christ body and joining it to a harlot or a prostitute and thus you are bring Christ into that relationship. Paul said that this is unthinkable!

For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." It's just shocking because the Lord has said concerning this sexual union that the two become one. And thus in a sense you are joining Christ in this relationship.

¹⁷But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

Thus, *¹⁸Flee sexual immorality.* It is important that we have purpose in our hearts to live a life of moral purity. We read in the book of Daniel that he purposed in his heart not to defile his body with the king's meat. That's the purpose. I've purposed in my heart. I'm not going to do it! And we need to make these kinds of purposes in our hearts. I'm not going to commit fornication. You see the time to make your decision isn't when she is standing there before you naked. And then do I decide, well, shall I or shall I not? That isn't the time the decision is made. The decision is made long before. So that if that should arise, it isn't a thing that cannot be, shall I? But it's something that has already been predetermined. I purpose not to defile myself with the king's meat. I purpose not to commit fornication. It is something that is purposed long in advance. It needs to be a part of our whole process of thinking, concerning my body.

It's an instrument of God, to be used by God in the accomplishing of His purposes. And thus I'll not defile my body because I'm not going to bring Christ into some kind of an ungodly relationship. Flee sexual immorality!

We remember the story of Joseph in the Old Testament. How that he had established and purposed in his heart. I'm God's child. I'm a part of God's people. So that when Potiphar's wife sought to entice him. How can I do this thing? Others may do it. But how can I? I am special. I belong to God. My body belongs to Him. How can I do this evil? So that even when she grabbed him, intending to force into bed into bed with her, he fled! Flee sexual immorality!

Paul wrote to Timothy and he said, flee youthful lusts!

Every sin that a man does is outside the body, (They are outside.) but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. That is something that is within.

What? All of the "what's" of Paul. I mean, he sort of...don't you know? Can't you see? *¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, (Don't you realize that? Your body is now the temple of the Holy Spirit. He is dwelling in you!*

The Holy Spirit is dwelling in you, *whom you have from God*, God's glorious gift, the gift of the Holy Spirit. When on the day of Pentecost, the people were all gathered together. As Peter preached, they came under conviction, by the Holy Spirit. They began to say men and brothers, what shall we do? We blew it! We crucified the Lord of glory! Peter said, repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. You shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit! So he is of God! You have the Holy Spirit from God. God's gift to you! He is dwelling in you. Thus, *and you are not your own?* It's my body. I can do as I please. Isn't that the whole thing that we are hearing today, this pro-choice thing? It's my body. I can do with it as I please. I have a right to do with my body as I please. Well, that may be true of the person in the world, but it is not true of the child of God. It's not your body anymore. It's been redeemed! You've been bought with a price. You were once a slave, enslaved to the lust of your flesh. But Jesus purchased you with His own blood. He redeemed you from that lost, enslaved state, that you might be free not to serve Him and to worship Him.

²⁰For you were bought at a price; therefore (because of this), glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. I'm not my own! I've been bought with a price; therefore, I live to glorify God and to please Him because He owns me! I have no right of my own. I have relinquished that right to Him. He has redeemed me from that old life of destruction, of death, of misery, of indulgence. He has delivered me that I might live now unto Him in the newness of life in Christ Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Oh,

God, help us! These are vital, important, issues that we need to give careful attention to as the children of God. May God help us to realize that I belong to Him. This body in which I live is now the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is dwelling in me. I'm not my own! He bought me with a price; therefore, it is my duty, my obligation to glorify Him through this body.

Paul, the apostle, declared his desire that Christ be glorified in His body. That's my desire, he said, whether by life or by death, I don't care. It's just that I want Christ to be glorified in my body. That was his purpose of living. For me to live is Christ! To die is gain! But as long as I'm living in this body, I want Christ to be glorified in this body. That should be the desire of each of us, that Christ be glorified in our bodies because they are really His!

May the Holy Spirit take and impress these truths upon our hearts. That we would not just be hearers of the Word, but doers of the Word, lest we just deceive ourselves as seems to be such an easy thing to do as we are warned over and over again in the Scriptures about self-deception. Lord, help us, that we might live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit and recognize, Lord, that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, which dwells in us, which we have from You. Lord, we commit ourselves, our bodies as living sacrifices. May they be holy, Lord, and acceptable unto You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.