

November 8, 2020 I Corinthians 6:1-8 “Between Brothers”

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION

“Setting the context:

Criminal cases are to be handled by the state, **Romans 13:3-4**, “3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; 4 for it is a servant of God to you for good.

But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a servant of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.”

In verse one the word “dare” is used implying that it “may” go before them because it is not commanded. So in some circumstances it may need to go before a secular civil court.

Remember that in the book of Acts the apostle Paul appealed to Roman civil law, governor, and emperor. Today for example a church may go to court to determine the congregations rights about for example, their own church property or its use.

Paul’s grievance was that they were not settling matters within the body of believers that they could and should, they didn’t go to seek the wise counsel of the elders of the church, instead they put their business out in the public eye of secular courts.” *W. HAROLD MARE*

Over the years of my own ministry, I have seen the sad results of churches and church members trying to solve personal problems in court. Nobody really wins—except the devil! *W.W. WIERSBE*

Paul declares a powerful message that needs to be sounded loudly and clearly to a society in which we incessantly hear about “getting our rights” but rarely about being willing to suffer earthly loss in order to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven (cf. **Mt 6:20**). After all, we cannot take anything earthly with us when we depart from this life (cf. **1 Ti 6:7-10** for more on this same issue), so why should we be so concerned about earthly rights and possessions here? . . . “Many unheralded Christian individuals ... continue to obey Paul’s words by not filing suit even when they have legitimate complaints and are encouraged by fellow Christians to get even.” *V. D. Verbrugge*

APPLICATION:

From our passage today we learn that it is not good for Christian brothers and sisters to carry one another to court over trivial matters. There may be some criminal cases that must go to a secular court to be settled, look back over **Romans 13:3-4. Matthew 5:39-45** gives the godly perspective on handling disputes. When one responds in this way the Lord works in the situation to bring about good.

It is sad when it is told that a church member is suing the church. To carry a trivial law suit before the secular world to be resolved is damaging to the testimony of the Lord’s church. Verse 7b says it so clearly, “Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded?” This is clearly not the world’s way, but it is our Lord’s way.