

“I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?” (1 Cor. 6:5).

Corinth's situation was somewhat different from today. Greeks in general were fond of going to the law. They were not only quarrelsome, but the suspense and uncertainty of cases before courts brought excited pleasure to their frivolous nature. These courts were quite different from modern courts. It seems as if Paul's discussion is not about crimes but rather about civil cases.

Christians should not take legal action toward one another. The fact that Paul was not talking about crimes does not lessen the axiom. Every implication of Paul's argument in this passage points out that when Christians do such, they are the losers.

Paul said that the saints will judge the world (1 Cor. 6:2). If saints are to judge the world, then pagan or civil courts should not be used to make decisions for Christians. Here Paul makes his argument from the greater to the lesser. He moves from the “world” to the “smallest matters.” The proper use of the Word of God judges the world, and that honestly. In the last days, the saints shall be associates of Christ in the matter of judging.

Paul's whole argument is that anytime a Christian goes before the court to settle an issue, he or she is going from the highest court to a lesser one.

The first wrong of a Christian going to court against another Christian is the admission of a lack of competence on the part of those who have the light of Christ.

The second wrong is recognition of defeat. The scale on which these matters work is a descending one. To have disputes is bad. To go to court with one another is worse. And to do it before unbelievers is even worse. The very question of courts indicates there is something wrong. Disputes ought not to arise, but if they do, they should be settled by a mutual friend. It should be done in the spirit of love and forgiveness.

The third wrong is that it causes an adverse effect on the church. Christians cannot go to court against Christians without having a harmful effect on the fellowship of the church. The fellowship of the church should always be based on love, brotherhood, and forgiveness.

In modern society some things must be settled in civil courts, but Christians should take every precaution to avoid using them. They should never do so unless it is the law of the land.

May God be our judge.