

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
When Grace Fails
1 Cor 6:1-8

Last time...an issue of sexual immorality, one that was even beyond the pale of acceptable behavior to the heathen

A division the church at Corinth must make in order to keep the unity in Christ

Casting out of the fellowship an unrepentant sinner for the good of

- the sinner...to learn not to sin and come to repentance to be reconciled
- the Body...a little leaven leavens the whole lump
- the witness of Jesus Christ in Corinth

The church at Corinth did not exercise Biblical Church discipline (Matt 18:15-18)

This time...The church at Corinth is failing in another area of Church discipline:
What to do when a brother in Christ wrongs another brother in Christ

Issue: Grace

v1 a matter against another:
 Somebody done somebody wrong
 And the two parties end up in a court room before a judge

The problem is

- the somebodies are
 - believers
 - children of God
 - followers of Jesus Christ
 - new creatures in Christ
 - members of the Body of Christ
 - accountable to the Head of the Body
- the court is
 - secular
 - part of the Roman Empire
- the judge is
 - an unbeliever
 - a wicked heathen
 - a mocker of the Living God
 - dead in sin
- the issue is
 - an internal disagreement
 - Family business to be settled in the Family

To which the Apostle Paul, filled with, and inspired by, the Holy Spirit cries,
“How dare you!
How can any of you be so bold as to act in such a way?!”

This undisciplined, carnal, disorderly handling of a dispute between brethren in the Family of God has happened because

- the Lord Jesus Christ does not reign in the hearts and minds of the people involved
- unforgiveness and bitterness reign

The issue of gross sexual immorality was mishandled and became public/common knowledge (1 Cor 5:1)

Correcting the issue Biblically now must also be public/common knowledge

- for the sake of the name of Jesus Christ
- that those in the church would fear (God’s fear is healthy)
- to do “damage control” on the integrity of the Church’s witness in Corinth

Now grace has failed in the Church and

- an internal disagreement has been mishandled
- the witness of the Church in Corinth is again damaged

v2 judge the world...unworthy to judge:

Do ye not know:

6x in this chapter the question “Know ye not” is

- a rebuke, not a pop quiz
- correction
- instruction in righteousness

the saints shall judge the world:

During the Mill Reign of the King of kings and Lord of lords

Dan 7:19-22 Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth *were of* iron, and his nails *of* brass; *which* devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that *were* in his head, and *of* the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even *of* that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look *was* more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

Rev 1:5-6 made us kings and priests unto God and his Father

How shall we so judge the world?

According to the wisdom of God – the Word of God

are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters:

“How in the world” (bad pun intended) are you going to perform in the massive task of judging/making verdicts about the world during the 1000 reign of Jesus Christ when you are

- unfit
- unable
- unwilling
- unwise

to make verdicts when it comes to the smallest matters in the Church?

- personal squabbles
- personality differences
- hurt feelings
- issues of no consequence that should be covered by love
(Love covers a multitude of sins)

Paul is flabbergasted by the behavior of his “children” (1 Cor 4:15)

v3 we shall judge angels:

The Church will judge angels!

Angels are spiritual beings inhabiting eternity

1/3 of the angels joined Lucifer in his rebellion against God

We have been made lower than the angels

But we are joint-heirs with Christ and will rule and reign with Him

And Jesus, to Whom the Father has given all judgment (John 5:22),
will be with us until the end of the world

So, we the followers of Jesus Christ are going to judge, pass verdicts on,
angels?!!!

Another mystery...a heavy lifting for which we will be equipped

So what is the problem in applying the wisdom of God in the issues we face
in this world now, for which we are equipped with the Word of God
and the Spirit of God?

Note: we judge issues, never hearts

Again, the purpose of this, Church discipline, is reconciliation

v4 least esteemed:

Therefore, being equipped with the Word of God and the Spirit of God,
even the least person in the Church is wiser than, and more qualified to
judge the Body's internal matters, than the greatest in the world!

1 Cor 1:18-21, 27-28

Rather than standing before an unbeliever and a mocker of God, appoint anybody
in the Church who can follow the Head of the Body (1 Tim 1:17)
to sort out this disagreement/hurt and reconcile the brothers

v5 your shame...not a wise man:

A heart-piercing rebuke:

“You all should be ashamed of yourselves!

Have none of you the mind of Christ?

You have not so learned Christ!

Not one of you has the wisdom to stand up and do the right thing and
mediate this disagreement?

Is not Israel an example for us?” (1 Cor 10:6, 11)

Ex 18:13-26 “self-governed”, according the Word, w/o heathen

v6 brother...brother...unbeliever:

But no.

Brother...cleansed of all sin, separated from the world and unto the living God,
inheritor of eternal life by grace thru faith

sues a brother in a wicked heathen court...submitting to one defiled by the filth
and corruption of this fallen world, a judge who is absolutely
untrustworthy with the Truth and has chosen death over life

Thereby given great occasion for the unbeliever to blaspheme the name of
Jesus Christ (2 Sam 12:14)

“These Christians are terrible people!

They do not do as they say to us.

They do not believe what they so self-righteously preach to us.

They are a bunch of stinking hypocrites!”

Such a bad witness of Jesus Christ, which is our “job”

John 13:34-35

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

1 John 2:6

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked

1 John 3:10-11

In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

v7 utterly a fault...rather take wrong:

The name of Jesus Christ is being blasphemed by the mockers of God because the “Christians” are such a bad witness of Him
“Christians” are seeking justice/judgment and condemnation of one of their own in a harsh, unmerciful worldly arena

The preaching of the Gospel of Grace is being hindered
The faith of some in the Church may be made shipwrecked
The love of God and the grace of God are rendered unfruitful

This is an utter failure by the church at Corinth –

- the failure of grace in those saved by grace
- the failure of love by those loved by God

It would be FAR better to suffer an unjust hurt...to be wronged...
than to be “right” in such a wrong way
v7b is so much better than v1!!!

Suffering the unjust hurt and covering it with love and grace is...Christ-like
Follow Jesus!

Matt 16:24

Matt 5:38-46

Rom 5:8

1 John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.

They have not so learned Christ, but...

v8 ye do wrong:
 They are not following Jesus
 They are not Christ-like
 They are sinning against each other and the Head of the Body

 Shameful!

Take-away

This passage is instruction in righteousness when “somebody done somebody wrong”
If a believer hurts you, does you wrong, take the wrong
Be as gracious to that person as Jesus is with you

Then, to bring about reconciliation with that person, do not take your complaint to an unbeliever
You will give that person cause to blaspheme the name of Jesus Christ
Instead, go to another believer, a mature Spirit-led believer, and follow the process of reconciliation given to us by the Lord (Matt 18:15-18)

It is tragic and even blasphemous when grace fails in the heart of a believer and unforgiveness and bitterness reigns instead of the Lord Jesus Christ

Grace is an attribute of God’s nature, not an attribute of fallen man’s nature
For those indwelt by the Spirit of the Living God, grace should never fail
But when the flesh reigns and the Spirit does not, grace fails...a self-inflicted wound by the Body of Christ and a terrible witness of Jesus Christ to the unbelievers watching

Using the wisdom of God, the Word of God...

Matt 6:14-15 To not forgive is to be not forgiven!
Mark 11:25-26

Ps 130:3-4, 7 If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But *there is* forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared...for with the LORD *there is* mercy

James 2:13 he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy

Heb 12:14-15 Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled

When grace fails, such a bad witness of Jesus Christ remains and lingers for a long time
When grace fails, both the individual believer and the Church are weakened

With grace comes peace (Eph 2:1-9, Rom 5:1)

but with contention and strife comes confusion

1 Cor 14:33

James 3:16 For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work

Phil 2:3 *Let* nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind
let each esteem other better than themselves

The Church is to bear the Family resemblance, to reflect Jesus Christ and not society

Luke 23:34

Acts 7:60

When somebody does you wrong, do not cry “I want justice!”

No you don’t!

Justice is the very last thing you want!

Don’t think in the carnal immediate, think in the spiritual eternity

Instead, have a duck’s back, letting the wrong roll right off and away

Remember, your sins against the holy and Almighty God have been paid for, forgiven,
taken away as afar as the east is from the west (infinity), and forgotten

Be Whose you are

Let your light shine, be salt...in the world and in the Church (both are imperfect)

We hold to a Higher Law – Love

Matt 22:36-40

Rom 13:10

1 Thes 4:4-9

Dare to be Christ-like!!!