

# Day 88, 1 Corinthians 6

by David Servant

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*David Servant emphasizes the importance of righteous judgment within the church and the moral responsibilities of believers regarding disputes and sexual immorality.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 18:15, John 7:24, 1 Corinthians 6:2-10

**Topics:** "Church Discipline", "Righteous Judgment"

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## Description

David Servant preaches on the importance of righteous judgment within the church, emphasizing the need to discern and address unrighteous behavior among believers to maintain purity. He highlights Paul's teachings on judging those who claim to follow Christ but engage in grievous sins, stressing the responsibility of believers to uphold God's standards of right and wrong. Servant also discusses the significance of believers participating in future judgments based on God's standards, urging the sharpening of judgment skills. Additionally, he addresses the issue of sexual immorality in the Corinthian church, emphasizing the sanctity of believers' bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit and the need to flee from all forms of immorality.

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## Transcript

Many of us have thought that it is wrong to make a moral appraisal of anyone since Jesus told His followers not to judge. Yet we're learning that we've been quite unbalanced in that regard. Jesus once told a crowd, "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment" (John 7:24). Why doesn't anyone ever quote that commandment? In the previous chapter of 1 Corinthians, we learned that it is entirely appropriate for devoted followers of Jesus to judge unrighteous people within the church in order that the church might remain pure.

Granted, this idea has been pushed to extremes by some Pharisaical pastors, who set human standards, such as hair lengths and tithing quotas, in order to keep their trembling little flocks "pure" or submissive to them. That is not, however, what Scripture advocates. Paul wrote about judging people who claim to be Christ's followers, yet who are guilty of obvious sins that are clearly very grievous to God according to Scripture, such as sexual immorality, idolatry, greed, drunkenness, thievery, and so on.

Today the theme of judgment within the church continues, and we learn that "the saints will judge the world" as well as angels (6:2-3). I wish we had other scriptures to give us more insight on that, but what Paul wrote certainly ought to motivate us to sharpen our judgment skills. We'll be participating in some very significant judgments in the future, and our appraisals of men and angels will of course be based on

God's standards of right and wrong. Thus it would be tragic for us to abdicate our responsibility to judge during the present time in smaller matters within the church.

In the Corinthian church, some believers were taking each other to court in order to let unbelievers judge between them. Paul questions why there isn't at least one wise person in the church who could arbitrate disputes, just as Jesus prescribed (Matt. 18:15-17). One might win his lawsuit against a brother in Christ, but the loss of reputation suffered by the church before the watching world would more than offset the gains.

The appropriate thing to do if one is defrauded by another in the church is to follow Jesus' instructions in Matthew 18:15-17, which keeps all judgment between believers in the church. If the person who defrauded another does not ultimately repent, he should be excommunicated, as Paul warns that not only will no idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, and so on inherit God's kingdom, but neither will any swindlers. Such people, when unrepentant, are not true believers in the Lord Jesus.

Do Paul's words, "All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable" (6:12), mean that Christians have no laws to obey since we are "under grace," as some teach? Clearly not, as just three verses earlier Paul solemnly warned that the unrighteous will not inherit God's kingdom (6:9-10). So what did He mean when he said that all things were lawful? Paul could have been referring only to the believer's relationship to the Law of Moses, and that will become more clear later in this letter as he elaborates on this theme. In fact, in the tenth chapter, he repeats that same phrase about all things being lawful. For now, let it suffice to say that Paul knew he was free from all the distinctive requirements of the Mosaic Law, such as the dietary laws and so on, yet he still found it wise to obey some of them, primarily out of love for Jewish believers.

Paul next turns his attention to the subject of sexual immorality, of which Corinth reeked. Residents and visitors indulged in sex with temple prostitutes as part of the "religious" experience. Paul lists a number of reasons why such immorality is wrong for Christians, the foremost being that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. As we keep that fact in mind it motivates us to avoid many other things that grieve the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit wants no part in anything unholy. That includes not only acts of immorality, but images and thoughts of the same. Flee every form of immorality! All immoral acts begin as immoral thoughts.

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