

God will provide a way for you and Jesus is the proof.
1 Corinthians 6:1-11

I. The Historical Reality

A. The Problem in Corinth

1. Personal Sin - Some in the church are defrauding and cheating other brothers and those brothers are seeking redress in the secular courts.
 - a. The sins
 - (1) The sin of cheating others to gain for ourselves
 - (2) The sin of turning to the world to gain for ourselves
 - b. Reminiscent of Cain & Abel
 - (1) One brother seeks self-justification not by doing what is right but by harming his brother
 - (2) This strategy is soundly condemned
 - (a) By God for the world
 - (b) By Jesus for the church
 - i) **Matthew 5:38-42 (ESV)** ³⁸ *“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’”* ³⁹ *But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.* ⁴⁰ *And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.* ⁴¹ *And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.* ⁴² *Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.*
 - ii) Jesus set a different moral standard for his people than the world sets for sinners
2. Corporate sin - As with the case of flagrant sexual immorality, the church accepts this practice without resistance, without identifying, confronting, and dealing with sin.
 - a. Faithful church discipling means faithful church discipline
 - b. Disciple-making requires the church to engage in the lives of people with the love of Christ and the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit in order to confront sin, promote personal holiness, and nurture spiritual maturity.
 - (1) **Ephesians 4:11-15 (ESV)** ¹¹ *And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,* ¹² *to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,* ¹³ *until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,* ¹⁴ *so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of*

doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ *Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,*

- (2) The commission to disciple-making involves not only presenting and persuading people regarding the gospel; it means assisting one another in love to live the gospel more and more everyday as the Holy Spirit leads us in sanctifying grace.
 - (a) The church is more than just “outreach”
 - (b) The church must also be genuine, loving “in-reach”
3. Public sin - The church, through the active pursuit of lawsuits among brothers and through inaction towards sin, compromises their witness to the life-changing power of the gospel in the eyes of the world.
 - a. No indictment of secular courts
 - (1) The spiritual nature of unbelievers precludes their ability to judge the hearts of Christian brothers
 - (2) Unbelievers have no spiritual ability to discern and judge matters at the level of the redeemed and sanctified heart.
 - (3) **1 Corinthians 2:14 (ESV)** ¹⁴ *The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*
 - (4) Secular courts cannot bring the spiritual wisdom of God to bear upon the hearts of God’s people.
 - (5) Those who will not enter the kingdom of heaven themselves, through lack of faith, can neither judge the kingdom of heaven nor prepare anyone else to enter or live in the kingdom.
 - b. Indictment against the church
 - (1) When the world sees the church acting like the world, the world decides the church is not different than the world and the gospel message is no message to be heeded at all.
 - (2) People know intuitively, when they hear the teachings of Jesus, that the result of following Jesus means a life lived very different than one lived according to the principles of the world: selfishness.
 - (3) When the world sees the world in the church, they see no reason to leave the world and enter the church.

B. Paul Addresses the Heart of the Problem: The Problem of Their Hearts

1. Consider that you are not now who you once were.
2. Consider that who you are now prepares you for what you will become.
 - a. Judge the world
 - b. Judge angels
3. Consider Jesus!

- a. **1 Corinthians 6:7 (ESV)** ⁷*To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?*
- b. Rhetorical questions imply this question: why do you act in self-reliance rather than God dependence as Jesus did?

II. **Jesus, the Example of God-dependence**

A. **Jesus teaches dependence on God to his disciples.**

- 1. Sermon on the Mount
 - a. **Matthew 5:3 (ESV)** ³*“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
 - b. **Matthew 5:38-42 (ESV)** ³⁸*“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ ³⁹ But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. ⁴⁰ And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. ⁴¹ And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. ⁴² Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.*
 - c. **Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV)** ¹⁹*“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*
 - d. **Matthew 6:25-33 (ESV)** ²⁵*“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁸ And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*
 - e. **Matthew 7:7-11 (ESV)** ⁷*“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For*

everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. ⁹ Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

2. **The heart of Jesus' teaching is that in the kingdom of God, God will always provide a way for you, you can depend on him, you no longer have to depend only on yourself.**

B. Jesus demonstrates dependence on God for his disciples

1. Jesus clearly demonstrates his utter dependence on God in the final hours of his life
 - a. In the garden
 - (1) **Matthew 26:39 (ESV) ³⁹ And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."**
 - (2) **Matthew 26:42 (ESV) ⁴² Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done."**
 - (3) **Matthew 26:44 (ESV) ⁴⁴ So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again.**
 - b. At his arrest
 - (1) **Matthew 26:52-54 (ESV) ⁵² Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?"**
 - (2) **Matthew 26:52-54 (NIV) ⁵² "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"**
 - c. Before the authorities
 - (1) **Isaiah 53:7-12 (ESV) ⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my**

people? ⁹ And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. ¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

- (2) The high priest - Matthew 26:63 (NIV) ⁶³ *But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God."*
- (3) Before Pilate
 - (a) Matthew 27:12 (NIV) ¹² *When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer.*
 - (b) Matthew 27:14 (NIV) ¹⁴ *But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge--to the great amazement of the governor.*
- d. He could have demanded his rights as the Lord of lords and King of kings, but he did not.
 - (1) Instead, Jesus practiced what he preached, demonstrating the validity of his teaching.
 - (2) 1 Peter 2:23 (NIV) ²³ *When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*

C. Jesus rewards dependence on God of his disciples.

- 1. Revelation 21:5-7 (ESV) ⁵ *And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."* ⁶ *And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment."* ⁷ *The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.*
- 2. Revelation 22:12 (ESV) ¹² *"Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done."*
 - a. To the faithful - vindication and life
 - b. To the unbelieving and faithless - judgment and death

III. Conclusion

A. Jesus sets us an example that we should follow it

B. Applications

1. In the day and on the occasion when injustice knocks on your door
 - a. Consider your response carefully
 - b. Consider Jesus
2. In regard to attaining your personal interests and your personal rights over your brothers and sisters in the Lord, Jesus says, “As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”
3. When disputes and conflicts arise in the church
 - a. Don't
 - (1) Don't ignore them or sweep them under the rug
 - (2) Don't haul them out into the city center
 - (3) Don't leave the church and take your hurt and bitterness with you
 - b. Do
 - (1) Trust that Christ has empowered the church with sufficient faith, sufficient grace, sufficient wisdom, and a sufficient example to sufficiently handle resolutions to conflict in house
 - (2) Depend on the grace of God to act on behalf of His glory and your joy in Him in your life
4. There may be occasions when injustice strikes others that we will have need to use secular courts
 - a. to protect the weak and innocent
 - b. Or, as Paul did, to protect ourselves from unbelievers in order to advance the gospel
 - c. But
 - (1) the internal workings of relationships among brothers and sisters in the church belongs in the church and not in the public arena.
 - (2) **When conflicts arise within the church, among believers, we must, acting in genuine love, confront and correct sin by depending on God and applying the teaching and example of Jesus in the kind of prescribed church discipline that promotes authentic discipleship.**