

## Family Fights

8/21/2016

The world is a mess... have you noticed that? No, really-

1. floods, thousands left homeless.
2. fires set by arsonists, thousands left homeless.
3. Riots in our cities...
4. Violence BY Refugees, violence TO refugees,

And Jesus has so much to say about all these things,  
but the world doesn't want to listen now,  
and never really has for 2,000 years.

We spent some time on this passage last Sunday-

### I Cor. 2:14

<sup>14</sup> The man without the Spirit does not accept  
the things that come from the Spirit of God,  
for they are foolishness to him,  
and he cannot understand them,  
because they are spiritually discerned.

<sup>15</sup> The spiritual man makes judgments about all things,  
but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:

<sup>16</sup> "For who has known the mind of the Lord  
that he may instruct him?"  
But we have the mind of Christ.

People who do not have the Spirit of Christ

are not going to understand things of the Spirit-

1. Spiritual values and priorities,
2. Striving for moral purity,
3. Sacrificing for others,

out of gratitude for what Jesus has done for us,

4. The whole concept of “godliness with contentment,”  
from I Timothy 6:6.

Nope, not going to make sense.

Watch any commercial, pick up any “secular” magazine,  
(in fact, even a lot of “Christian magazines),  
and none of these values are going to make sense.

People led by the Spirit are considered naïve, foolish.

(It’s interesting that those who condemn such naiveté-  
THEIR values don’t seem to be working for them...  
Their selfishness, their sense of entitlement.)

Paul anticipated the rejection of the values of the Spirit,  
but emphasizes how important those values are,  
if the Christian life is going to work for us.

So all that we looked at last week  
about spiritual wisdom was necessary background,  
in order to understand  
Paul’s admonitions beginning in chapter 6:1-

Paul says, “Let’s get practical, and zoom in on  
a specific application of doing things God’s way,  
instead of resolving them our way.”  
I Cor. 6:1-11

If any of you has a dispute with another,  
dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment  
instead of before the saints?

<sup>2</sup> Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?  
And if you are to judge the world,  
are you not competent to judge trivial cases?

<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that we will judge angels?  
How much more the things of this life!

<sup>4</sup> Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters,  
appoint as judges even men of little account in the church!

<sup>5</sup> I say this to shame you.  
Is it possible that there is nobody among you  
wise enough to judge a dispute between believers?

<sup>6</sup> But instead, one brother goes to law against another—  
and this in front of unbelievers!

<sup>7</sup> The very fact that you have lawsuits among you  
means you have been completely defeated already.  
Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated?

<sup>8</sup> Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong,  
and you do this to your brothers.

You cheat and you do wrong,  
and you do this to your brothers.

And when one of you does this to the other,  
instead of resolving it as Christ told us to,  
in humility and kindness, with honesty and integrity,  
you require a secular judge to work it out,  
because the two of you can't... or won't.

So a secular judge has to be called in  
to provide fairness and decency,  
because the two of you can't offer that to each other.

To me, the crux of this part of the passage is v. 7

<sup>7</sup> The very fact that you have lawsuits among you  
means you have been completely defeated already.  
Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated?

Satan has won. He is completely having HIS way with you-  
the greed, the dishonesty, the desire for revenge.  
Why not be wronged?

At least that way, you still win.

You still show "the way of Christ."

There is STILL chance for reconciliation.

Why not rather be cheated,  
then to give Satan that much hold on your heart,  
to give materialism and greed  
that much hold on your heart.

Lawsuits apparently were a big thing in Corinth,  
enough so that Paul has to address it in the letter.  
But the principle is far bigger than that.

You want "fair," or you want "grace?"

Interesting,  
studies that have been done of families in counseling.  
In the session,  
people report what percentage of chores  
that they think they do.

Then you install video cameras at the kitchen sink,  
in the laundry room, outside with the lawn, all the chores-  
you make them keep a log of time spent on chores.

Feuding couples "fudge the facts" in the log books,  
and they grossly over-estimate  
their contribution to running the household.

We all do it.

We see what WE do, but miss what other people do.  
 So, "fair to US," really isn't. It's skewed in our favor.

And when WE mess up,  
 there are always "extenuating circumstances,"  
 have you noticed that?  
WE have reasons, good reasons,  
 why it's not the way it appears...honest.  
 But the OTHER person,  
 all THEY have are excuses- lame, dumb, excuses.

"I only want what I am \_\_\_\_\_" (fill in the blank.)

Well folks, according to Paul,  
 that's the "way of the world," the way of our flesh.

And according to Paul,  
 If "that's the way we roll," we have already lost.

If we gonna fight, and we will,  
 and probably should every now and then,  
 -at least that what people tell me-  
 what would be the "Jesus way?"

(Chip and Dale-"You first.")

"No, after you."

"No, no, no, after YOU"...) )

Don't believe me? Listen to Paul in Phil. 2:3-4

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit,  
 but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

<sup>4</sup> Each of you should look not only to your own interests,  
 but also to the interests of others.

**Romans 12:9-10**

Love must be sincere.

Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

<sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.

**Honor one another above yourselves.**

So how does that work during a fight,  
esp. between believers?

1. I disagree with you, but I still want what is best for you.
2. I see things differently,  
but I am open to your perspective,  
because I know that I am not “all-seeing.”
3. I refrain from “rushing to judgment.”

Some Scriptures to help us out here-

**Proverbs 18:17**

The first to present his case seems right,  
till another comes forward and questions him.

**James 1:19-20**

My dear brothers, take note of this:

Everyone should be quick to listen,  
slow to speak and slow to become angry,

<sup>20</sup> for man’s anger does not bring about  
the righteous life that God desires.

**Matthew 5:23**

Therefore,

if you are offering your gift at the altar  
and there remember

that your brother has something against you,  
<sup>24</sup> leave your gift there in front of the altar.

First go and be reconciled to your brother;  
then come and offer your gift.

**Matt. 18:15-17**

**“If your brother sins against you,  
go and show him his fault, just between the two of you.  
If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.**

**<sup>16</sup> But if he will not listen, take one or two others along,  
so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony  
of two or three witnesses.’**

**<sup>17</sup> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church;  
and if he refuses to listen even to the church,  
treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.**

**(And how would Jesus treat a pagan or a tax collector?)**

**But WE say, “OK, I’ve gone through the necessary steps,  
OK, NOW can I sue him, can I, can I?”**

**If that’s our heart, Paul says we are already defeated.  
There is no evidence of the wisdom  
or the transforming power of the Spirit in our lives.**

**What if you insist on living according to the flesh,  
and the rules of this world,**

**like suing your brothers and sisters in Christ,  
instead of both of you working together  
towards a peaceful resolution?**

**Back to I Corinthians 6:9.**

**The very next section of the letter  
is linked to what he had just been talking about,  
in terms of lawsuits between believers.**

**<sup>9</sup> Do you not know that the wicked  
will not inherit the kingdom of God?**

**Do not be deceived:**

**Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters**

**nor adulterers nor male prostitutes**

**nor homosexual offenders**

**<sup>10</sup> nor thieves nor the greedy**

**nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers**

**will inherit the kingdom of God.**

**<sup>11</sup> And that is what some of you were.**

**But you were washed, you were sanctified,**

**you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**

**and by the Spirit of our God.**

**Translation- we are supposed to be different now,**

**based on what Jesus did for us.**

**If there is no change, WAS there a change, a conversion,**

**a commitment to the path of discipleship to Jesus Christ?**

**Lawsuits between each other are just a manifestation**

**that changes that are supposed to be occurring in us...**

**aren't,**

**which is NOT a good sign,**

**a clue that we are NOT moving towards maturity in Christ.**

**It doesn't matter how physically old you are,**

**how many years you have accumulated.**

**You may STILL be a baby in Christ,**

**if there is no evidence that you are growing.**

**But you were washed, you were sanctified,**

**you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**

**and by the Spirit of our God.**



These were supposed to mean something to you... do they?

As a parent, at any given point in time,  
I had different expectations of Jonathan than I had of Jeff.

Jonathan was four and a half years older.

It's not that Nancy and I had no expectations for Jeff,  
but we had age appropriate expectations for each of them.

And as Jeff got older,  
we continued to have age-appropriate expectations for him.

Paul here implies that the same thing should be true  
in the spiritual realm.

So one of you feels like  
you have been wronged by your brother or sister in Christ.

What are your options?

“What? Are we supposed to just roll over  
and be doormats?”

Maybe. Not always, but yeah, sometimes.

(I bet you've never heard  
THAT preached in a sermon before!)

1. I may choose NOT to sue, to let it go,  
to forgive the debt I feel that I am owed.
2. I may choose to sue to protect other people  
from ongoing abuse by that brother or sister.

But I think that we need to search our motives  
long and hard,  
and pray about that before acting in that way.

3. I may need financial help  
because of a hardship imposed by  
a brother or sister's neglect,  
and may sue in order to survive,  
but all the other avenues have to be explored first.

4. I "keep my nose on my own face"  
and don't sit in judgment of a course of action  
that another brother or sister feels called by God to do,  
...if THEY feel a lawsuit IS appropriate.

- a. I can call them to these Scriptures,
- b. I can encourage them to pray about the situation,
- c. I can offer to be a mediator, a go-between.
- d. I need to realize that I know  
only one side of the story,  
and that is a biased, subjective point of view.
- e. I need to leave judgment to the Lord.

Tough stuff, this living according to the Spirit,  
trusting the Spirit to get us through.

The world will tell us we are nuts- stupid, naïve.  
But we are no longer to be "of the world."

v. 11

But you were washed, you were sanctified,  
you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ  
and by the Spirit of our God.

And now we are called to live that way,  
even when we're wronged.

Chew on chapter 6. It's tough stuff.