

1Corinthians 18-04-08a

This is Sunday, April the 8th, 2018, and we continue our study in the book of 1 Corinthians, resuming in chapter 6. And we're going to be picking up this morning with a quick review of the first part of the chapter, but we're going to be concentrating beginning at verse 9, 9 through the 11th verse, 9 through 11. Let's take a moment as we begin our study to go to the Lord in prayer, ask God's blessing on our study, on our fellowship, and ensure that God's Holy Spirit is present to superintend and to make the Word of God real in our hearts. Shall we pray? Father, what a wonderful time of opportunity for shared enthusiasm and for catching up and for spending time together.

We're grateful for all of the logistics that You've provided, all of the protection and provision that You've made so that we have these opportunities to renew our close fellowship and catch up on all of our circumstances. We're grateful for the Lord Jesus most of all, and for the true bond of brotherhood that we share in Him. We thank You for this passage that lies before us this morning, and we ask Your blessing on us as we study it together, and we ask that Your Holy Spirit will minister it to each heart in a way that is meaningful and effective, that we will find a brighter light shining on our path, that our footsteps will be more sure and our progress more confident as we look forward to the day when the Lord Jesus returns to bring us to Himself and if we are qualified, to bring us into Your presence where we have such wonderful opportunities for stewardship and for service.

We pray that each one will receive a blessing and can be a blessing as we spend this time of fellowship together, and we pray it in Jesus' name. Amen. Let's read the first part of this.

We've covered the first part of chapter 6, and I'm not going to dwell on it, but it does provide a necessary context for the part we're going to concentrate on today. Paul, of course, is talking to a church that has some problems. We've already addressed the man living with his father's former wife, and he has addressed the difference between what we do inside our circle of Christian fellowship and what we do with those who are outside, and there is a difference.

And because there's a difference, it means we have to identify those who are a part of that inner circle where the way we treat each other is conditioned by different principles. And what we might feel free to do with a rank unbeliever, we may not be free to do with a fellow believer based on that, and we covered that in chapter 5. Coming in then to chapter 6, he addresses a new issue, another thing that has come to his ear from those who have visited the church and come back to report on their status. "...dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life? If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge? I say this to your shame.

Is it so that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers. Now, therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourself be cheated? No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren.

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." That's our context.

The verses we're focusing on are the last three, inheriting the kingdom of God. One of the things that you notice, perhaps, as we reread this section, is that Paul's exhortation is framed in terms of the future. There are three do-you-not-knows in here.

Do you see them? Verse 2, is this present or future? Do you not know that you have the Holy Spirit and you ought to be able to adjudicate these things? He says, do you not know that saints will judge the world? How about verse 3? Is it a present tense thing? Do you not know that you've got the Word of God and it's available for doctrine, proof, and correction? What does he say? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? And then finally, in verse 9, do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? These current issues that they're taking each other to court over, and they seem to be a variety in terms of categories. Some of them seem to be issues that relate to immorality, and somebody is suing because there has been some infraction involving morality of a physical nature, whether it's adultery or fornication or whatever, and they are actually suing over this. Maybe they felt somebody was underage, maybe somebody was taken advantage of, somebody was plied with seduction and then was robbed in some way.

There's some sort of complex situation where one thing led to another and now it's in the courts. And we'll see that in the vocabulary that he uses here in a moment. But instead of appealing to present resources in terms of, can't you solve these problems, can't you figure out the answers and the righteousness that's involved in this, he appeals to the future.

And this is really something we need to take a look at because, I don't know about you, actually I do know about some of you, but we tend to live in the present. We try to take present resources to fix present problems. And here's an issue, this is something that needs to be decided.

I've got to make a choice between options here. And we tend to look around for, well, let me Google that and find what part is broken that I need to order or where can I get a replacement or an upgrade or a manual. And it's not unusual, it's not anything intrinsically wrong to look around in the immediate area to find answers.

And if we're trying to figure out what's right and what's wrong, what typically happens today? In our modern internet milieu, an event hits the news, where are opinions expressed? They're expressed on Facebook. They're expressed on the internet. They're expressed on the talking head shows that we're inundated with.

And many times now, we are tempted, and a lot of people freely and cheerfully suspend their own analysis and go look to see, well, what's the popular opinion? What are people generally saying about this? And, of course, it depends on whether you turn on CNN or Fox News or CNBC or whichever outlet. You try to go to somebody more objective and say, well, let me go to BBC. They're over the pond.

Maybe they will have a more objective view. Or let me go to Reuters or The Wall Street Journal or try to find somebody. I've actually gone.

Have you ever tried to go and find who has rated the most objective news and commentary available? Nobody knows because what I consider to be objective is not what somebody else considers to be objective. There are people who think CNN is just as objective as it gets. There are people who think BBC or The Guardian are as objective as it gets in the U.K. But what generally happens is that we hear conversation.

It used to be around the water cooler. I don't know where it is now. I don't know if they have one.

Everybody brings their own bottled water, so I don't know if they have water coolers. But at work or in social context, oh, did you hear about this and so? And in your circle of acquaintance, these things are adjudicated. They are decided.

Now, that's one thing. Out in the objective world of happenings in the nation and overseas and such, there's a fresh shooting. And what do you think about gun control and that? But because we so often take the temperature of those around us in those areas, and it's a lot easier to be accepted and to be hail fellow well met and to go along, to get along.

And even if you might have a qualm or a question or you're not really sure, it's so much easier to just chime in. Somebody posts a little snarky video that makes fun of some politician and ha-ha, you know, rather than, well, you know, that doesn't really seem quite fair. Did you know that was edited and that's just a snippet? And in the context, that wasn't what he meant at all.

It's just easier to chime in with the laughter and agree. And this Corinthians passage is talking about that. It is talking about letting our judgments about personal matters in particular be made by those with a worldly viewpoint, according to worldly standards.

Godless analysis, circumstantial and incomplete and often twisted accounts. And we have to be very careful because what becomes habitual and nothing intrinsically wrong with it, in the stuff that's beyond arm's reach, tends to drift in. And pretty soon, our friends that we chat over a snack or a cup of coffee with or our people that we text with or people that we're in contact

with, as details of our current circumstance leak out, there are opinions expressed and there are ideas that come across.

And if they are not people within the family of God, if they are not people who are like-minded in terms of spirit-filled, Bible-defined norms and standards and values and goals, we basically do what the Corinthians were doing. We take our issues and put them before the world and let the world tell us what's right and what's wrong. And it's dangerous.

The reason it's dangerous is because of these three do-you-not-knows. It might turn out good. Somebody might give you a piece of completely secular wisdom and you might apply that and go with it.

And in the short term, that circumstance might resolve just fine. Try birch beeswax on that. That'll fix it.

And maybe it does. The problem is, when we rely on the gods of this world, when we go to the godless in terms of our faith and our practice, we forfeit the future. You can't judge it by how it turns out in this life.

There are people who will chase the almighty dollar and they will get financially quite comfortable and even extremely well off. And you look at them and you say, Wow, I wonder if I should have done that. Well, what about the kingdom? What about the future? It isn't what you do and it isn't even how it turns out, it's why you do it and in what strength and for what purpose and in what light we do it that counts.

John the Baptist did one of the greatest jobs that any Old Testament prophet ever did and he got his head cut off. We've talked about that many times. You can't judge by the short term.

The Lord Jesus was the Son of God, the Savior of the world and He was crucified by the world. And crucified by His own people. He came to His own and His own received Him not.

Was He a failure? We have to look at things in this light that Paul is shining. Look at the future. As soon as this letter is read in Corinth, the people are saying, Well, he's heard about Demetrius over here suing Androcles over his daughter big dealing the other guy's son out of a bunch of jewelry and not giving it back when they split up.

And he's taking him to court because that was the mother's jewelry and he gave it to the girlfriend and they got tangled up and he won't give it back. And I'm going to sue him and get that back. That's a lot of money there.

And this sort of thing. So as soon as Paul starts saying you're taking each other to court, they've got specific cases in mind. And what happens as soon as you start thinking about a specific case? Well, but anybody would say, I mean, this is just common wisdom.

That's not right or this is right or this should be the solution. Why aren't they doing that? It's

just unjust. It's unfair.

Have you ever seen interviews with family members of people that get shot by the police? I'm sitting there thinking on the video. The police are saying, drop the weapon. Get down on your face.

Stop walking toward us. The guy doesn't do any of those three things. He continues to walk forward.

He doesn't drop the weapon and he doesn't get down on his face and then he gets shot. And then they interview the family. He was the nicest boy.

They were so unfair and unkind. By their standard, their subjective standard, something went wrong with the police. There's no way their wonderful, kindly, criminal boy there should have gotten shot.

Their son or even their daughter now. There's ladies that get shot for not paying attention and obeying instructions that they are given. And then there will be a swell of public support.

They see this crying mother or sister or aunt or whatever. And next thing you know, there's this huge groundswell. Lock up the officer.

Hang him from a post. This is just a trend and a pattern. Look at our whole city.

It all needs to be reviewed. Fire the chief. And it all blows out of proportion.

And if a believer appeals to that system, Paul says, I say this to your shame. It is a shame. Not because you don't get the right answer.

And worldly wisdom gave you the wrong answer. Paul says the reason is you are sacrificing the future. Do you not know? So look at this a little more closely.

Verse 2. Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? So his first appeal to the future is, Why are you letting the world judge you when you're supposed to be getting ready to judge the world? Now what's he talking about there? Remember the promises to the overcomers? When the Lord Jesus says to him that overcomes, I will grant to sit with me on my throne. Remember when he told the disciples, You will sit on twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel. There are administrative jobs at all level in God's future economy that are going to require people with wisdom and experience and objective application abilities.

We are supposed to be learning that now. This is like being in school and not learning your formulas and then going out and trying to be an engineer and not being able to calculate anything. You can't even type it into the computer properly.

Have you ever tried to use a piece of software like Excel without looking up the syntax for putting in a formula? Have you ever tried that and it all comes out as a label or it says, error,

you get that pound sign error, and it says wrong syntax and you're looking at it and trying to dope that out. And what do you have to do? You have to go back and teach yourself how the software works. Oh, I guess I should have started with an equal sign to tell Excel that this is going to be a formula and not a label.

And then I've got to know how to string these things together. Take cell D3 and subtract D2 from it and give me a value and then divide that by 12 to annualize it or whatever or monthlyize it from annual. And you have to learn that.

Well, we are supposed to be learning that syntax and learning how to parse what is right and what is wrong now because you're going to have a job. Do you not know that the sanctified ones, and we're all looking at each other here, will judge the world? He doesn't say some of you will judge the world. He says you all will be judging the world.

The saints will judge the world. So if you can't figure out whether or not Androcles ought to give the jewelry back, how are you going to adjudicate in the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ? We build on small things. Remember the Lord said, He that is faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in that which is much.

Our problems and the things we have to figure out, this is the least. But Paul doesn't say, well, you know, the key to a successful life and how to really get ahead and be economically well off and solve your social problems and find your opposite number and all the rest of it, here's the key to success. I mean, this is what you get in a lot of modern Christian publishing today.

You know, keys to happiness this way, that way, and the other way. You remember Thursday night in Psalm 1 where the psalmist begins by saying, the key to the most joy is to not do certain things. And oddly enough, the things in that list are in the list Paul is going to give us here in just a minute.

So first, the first thing to do this successfully, to follow Paul's exhortation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit here, both his communication and our reception, is God's Spirit teaching us this is what our life ought to be. What is it? First of all, we should always be forward looking. I've said this many times, but I think one of the reasons God gave me just enough coordination to be able to row in a crew shell for a little while is just to plant in my mind how important it is to know where you're going.

When you're out on the open water and you don't have near frame of reference, what do you do? Anybody that's ever rowed a boat, anybody that's ever piloted a boat, if you're in a pontoon up there on Bull Shoals and you're trying to go somewhere, what do you do? You can't look at the water around you. That doesn't help. We've often come close to, especially when the lake is up and there's trees and things underneath, if you try to just look at the water around you, you're inevitably going to have a bad experience.

What do you do? You look at the horizon. You find a fixed point. Here's somebody that's built a

house on a ridge.

I'm going to aim for that thing, and that will keep me in the deep water. That will keep me from hitting a submerged obstruction of some kind. When you're rowing, you constantly have to refer.

If you're in a double oared skull and it's just you or you and one other person, you're going backwards. You face the stern, and you're pulling this way. There's no cox in there to steer the thing, so how do you know where you're going? You actually look at a point behind you.

To me, this is like us looking at the Old Testament truths that are given to us. We look at that, and it keeps us on a straight course going to the future. But you have to look beyond the immediate.

You have to look beyond the local. That's why Paul appeals to the kingdom three different times to the future. Do you not know that saints are going to judge the world? If the world will be judged by you, how are you going to learn anything letting the world be your judge? Letting their standards permeate your life and your decisions is just backwards.

Even the least of you ought to be able to judge these matters. Then in verse three, and this is the more interesting one. Do you not know that we shall judge angels? Now, I mentioned this last week, but how many different kinds of angels are there? You've got the angels in heaven, that's easy.

They used to call them elect, but I'm not a Calvinist, so I don't call them elect angels. I don't think God sovereignly decided that some angels would stay and some angels would fall. You stay, you go.

You go, you go. They're not elect. They are unfallen.

They are loyal. They are faithful. They are God's angels in heaven.

That's one clear, easy category. Gabriel, Michael, Uriel, Ariel, Muriel. The unfallen angels.

The seraphim and the archangels as their leaders. You have the clear, demonic, Satan following, one-third swept out of heaven by the dragon's tail, that roam the earth seeking whom they may devour in Satan's interest. And then we have a third category.

Remember them? This is 2 Peter 2, verse 4, and Jude 1, verse 6. The angels who kept not their first estate. The angels that are imprisoned in chains of darkness. And you could add to that perhaps the verse that talks about the Lord Jesus speaking to the spirits in prison.

But 2 Peter 2, verse 4, Jude 1, verse 6, and you can add to that Revelation chapter 20, verse 4. Now, Paul says, do you not know we shall judge angels? Do unfallen angels need any judging? Does Gabriel need to hear anything from me on what he's doing right and wrong? No. How about Satan and his angels? They've already been judged. The lake of fire, they've not only been

judged, they have been sentenced.

The lake of fire has been prepared for the devil and his angels. So it's not like there's going to be some additional judgment. So the only angels available to be judged is that third category.

And interestingly enough, all of the references to them refer to it. Look at 2 Peter 2, verse 4. 2 Peter 2, verse 4. He's talking about false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, secretly bringing in destructive heresies, denying the Lord who bought them. Notice they are believers because the Lord bought them.

And they're denying the Lord that bought them. And they're bringing on themselves swift destruction. And swift doesn't mean it's going to happen real, real soon.

It means it will happen in a surprising and unexpected and quick manner when it happens. They may go for years. But when it happens, it's not going to be a slow burn.

It's going to be a quick flash fire of destruction. This is Paul's point in 1 Corinthians 6. You're taking your dirty laundry out in front of the world. And you're shaming the church.

You're shaming the name of Christ. Indicating that you don't have enough wisdom to manage your own affairs. You're putting it before unbelievers.

The ones that you're supposed to be learning how to discern between and adjudicate. It's shameful. And it is causing the way of truth to be blasphemed.

Well, those Christians don't know how to do anything. Look how silly they are. Look at their problems.

They can't figure it out. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words. For a long time their judgment has not been idle and their destruction does not slumber.

For if God did not spare the angels who sinned. This is not the angels who rebelled. This is the angels who sinned.

And cast them down to Tartarus. Cast them down to Tartarus is all one word. It's Tartarao.

But then it's made into a participle. They are cast to Tartarus ones. And delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved for what? What's the last word there? Say it out loud.

Judgment. These angels who kept not their first estate have been reserved for judgment. Why hasn't God judged them already? God already judged Satan, already judged the demons.

Why are these not judged? They're reserved for judgment. Their judgment is future. So let me ask you.

Paul says we will judge angels. Peter says there are angels locked up in darkness waiting to be judged. How hard is it to connect those two dots? These are the angels who are going to be

judged.

And guess how and by whom? We. Us. Turn a page or two over to Jude chapter 1 verse 6. Verse 5. I want to remind you though you once knew this.

The Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their proper domain. See the word keep there? They did not keep their proper domain.

And the word domain there is archen. A-R-C-H-E-N. And it's like a domain of rulership.

Arche is one of the words used for principalities and powers and rulers. The arche and the exousias, the powers. But they didn't keep their proper function of leadership is what this really means.

They were to judge. Back in Genesis chapter 6 verse 3. My spirits, I believe there's been a corruption in the text and that that was once plural. My spirits will not dean, where we get Dan, judge.

My spirits will not judge man forever. 120 years and the curtain is going to fall on that. These are those spirits in my view.

Did not keep their archen, their proper domain. They left their abode. And this is from the word oikos and then it's got arian on the end.

So it's oikaterion. Our word cemetery comes from koimaterion. It's a place for the dead.

Well, this is a place for your house. This arian ending has the idea of a domain or a locale. And so the koimaterion becomes the cemetery.

The oikaterion is your dwelling, where you live. They left their abode. He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness.

This word darkness is the very same one that Peter uses for what? For the judgment of the great day. For the judgment. Peter and Jude both tell us that these angels will be judged.

Now, what would it entail to judge these angels? And why would we be detailed to do that judging? Let me make it more personal. There is a possibility that you, fill in your name here, are going to be seated on a bema, and some of the angels who ruled in the pre-flood days are going to be brought before you for adjudication. What kind of faults were they guilty of that we know from Genesis 6? Sons of God saw the daughters of men.

And what did they do? They took wives of all whom they chose. What happens when you take a wife? There is a contractual agreement with the family of the wife. There is dowry that can change hands.

You are now, why do kings marry princesses from other countries? There is now alliance and favor and us against them and so on. What is happening in 1 Corinthians 6? The court cases have to do with, Paul keeps talking about, fornication and adultery and relationships of a physical nature that are causing civil suits. Because there is more involved.

You never can just light one little sin candle. The thing always catches fire and inflames everything around it. It spreads.

You've heard of people talking about chain sins or clusters of sins. It metastasizes. It's like a cancer.

You can't just dabble. You can't just contain. In another place the Bible says, Can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burned? What starts out as a dalliance or an affair or a non-marriage physical relationship spills over because now there is leverage.

There is the opportunity for embezzlement or for extortion or for unfair advantage. Well, this guy is a judge and now he can't do his job because in this case his daughter is boyfriends with their son and their girlfriend. So these interpersonal relationships have spilled over into civil suits and other kinds of suits that are now being taken into the courts because you can't contain these wrongs.

They will not stay in Pandora's box. So we understand this. We're living through this.

We're learning what should and should not be done in our life now. That's what happened back in the days before the flood when there was only evil all the day and there was iniquity in men's hearts and the angels were complicit and were a part of it. Well, what is going to be the fate of those angels? Because they're not going to the lake of fire.

It's very interesting. But these angels, if they were going to the lake of fire, they would have already been judged. But they're not.

They sinned. They didn't rebel. We sin.

We don't rebel, right? We don't say, well, you know, I'm going to have a mental attitude sin and now I don't want to be a Christian anymore. We're in that middle ground. These angels are in that middle ground.

We are qualified. We are qualifying ourselves to make these adjudications. God is going to call your name and say, sit here.

Here comes these angels. What should be done? How far away from the throne should they be located? What duties should they be assigned? What penalty, if any, should they be assessed? They're not gone, but they're penalized. What happened to Moses when he didn't rebel against God, but he sinned, he struck the rock? God adjudicated that and what happened? What was his penalty? After 40 years of preparation in Midian and 40 years of leading the people and being

the most afflicted man who ever lived, he didn't get to cross Jordan into the land.

Then, when did he cross Jordan into the land? Mount of Transfiguration. Moses and Elijah, he finally got to see it. But that was a penalty for error.

Paul says, you've got to learn how to judge, not just in order to be righteous and to be sanctified and to make progress in your spiritual life, but you've got to think ahead. And it's just an example. Everything we learn, we are going to be called upon to practice in the kingdom and beyond.

We are in school. We're learning. We're getting experience.

So this is what Paul appeals to. And he says, do you not know that you will judge angels? Well, we know which angels and we know when that judgment is going to take place. And you don't get to go back and cram for that exam.

We have to be ready. And I am sure that if we're not ready, God is not going to appoint us and we're just going to be useless servants. We're going to be sitting in the back watching more qualified believers serve God and reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus because they paid attention to this passage.

So, do you not know that we will judge angels? And do you not know that we will judge the world? If then, you have judgments concerning these things. And this, for us, is not a matter of actually going down to the county courthouse or the federal courthouse or the state courts. Where do our adjudications take place? In our social periphery.

And if we are going for counsel to people who are not in the faith and of the faith and don't have some Holy Spirit guided, loving advice for us, we need to shift our perspective to what Paul suggests and think about the future. We need to be able to stand on our feet. We need to put our matters before believers.

He says, isn't there even one of you who can help you decide these things? If you can't figure it out, he says, it's a shame that this stuff is even going on that needs to be adjudicated. Why do you have these issues to begin with down in verse 7 and 8? You yourselves do wrong and cheat and you do these things to your brethren. If you weren't doing wrong to your brethren, a lot of these things wouldn't come up in the first place.

But when they do, there ought to be somebody qualified in the church. Because this is what we're preparing for. So, what he's going to go on to now is verse 9. And do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? And once again, we're looking forward, inheriting the kingdom.

We're going to pause here and take our break. But when we come back, see if you can remember. We've covered it in the past.

Is there anything unique and definitional about inheriting the kingdom? How many different verbs can you put with the kingdom? Give me some besides inherit. Enter the kingdom. See the kingdom.

Remember when Jesus says, Theirs is the kingdom. Possession. You can possess, you can enter, you can inherit, you can seek.

Right? So, here he says, the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom. So, what exactly does that mean? We're going to see a weird... It happens so often when our other study says something similar. But remember in Psalm 1, where he began, Where the most joy and happiness is with people who do not do.

Those three things. And here, we have a list of ten things. Ten categories of people who will not inherit.

So, how does that apply to us? We say, well, I'm not a fornicator, I'm not a thief. Well, just like the civil courts have an analogy to something more immediate and pertinent to us, These categories that he's going to give us here, These ten categories have a pertinence that goes beyond the actual commission of some overt act. And so, we'll see that when we come back from the break.