When a Christian Rips You Off June 19, 2022

*1 Cor. 6:1-8, Matt. 18:15-17 Series: Why Church Discipline?*

Sometimes it's worse to win a fight than to lose. — Billie Holiday

Intro: Chicken sandwich outrage

1. When another Christian rips you off, take it to church not to court
2. Airing your grievances in court shames the church

v. 1 *When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints?*

v. 4 *So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church?*

v. 6 *brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers*

1. Believers will be entrusted with much greater judgment later

v. 2 *the saints will judge the world*

v. 2 *the world is to be judged by you*

v. 3 *we are to judge angels*

v. 3 *How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!*

1. Believers should be able to demonstrate judgment now

v. 2 *are you incompetent to try trivial cases?*

v. 5 *Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers …?*

* What’s so wrong about taking another believer to court?
* Why would someone be tempted to go to court instead of having a fellow believer mediate for them?
* What kinds of sins shouldn’t just be handled by the church?

1. When another Christian rips you off, choose loss over war
2. Seeking to win through the courts is a loss for a Christian

v. 7 *To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you.*

Proverbs 20:22 *Do not say, “I will repay evil”; wait for the LORD, and he will deliver you.*

1. To use the injustice of the legal system against a Christian is doubly unjust

v. 8 *But you yourselves wrong and defraud—even your own brothers!*

1. Jesus taught us how to be wronged when we’re in the right

v. 7 *Why not rather suffer wrong?*

v. 7 *Why not rather be defrauded?*

Matthew 5:39–40 *Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.*

* How can people “wrong and defraud” people through civil lawsuits today?
* When should a Christian choose to “suffer wrong” and “be defrauded”?
* What kinds of situations do Jesus’ teachings in Matthew 5:39-40 apply to? What situations might they not apply to?

1. When another Christian rips you off, seek to save not to win
2. Sharing a grievance privately and graciously can help a person

v. 15 *If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone.*

Leviticus 19:17 *You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him.*

v. 15 *If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.*

Galatians 6:1 *Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.*

1. When there’s an impasse, we need a second opinion

v. 16 *But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.*

1. Treat a believer who won’t listen to the church as an unbeliever

v. 17 *If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.*

2 Thessalonians 3:14-15 *If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.*

* Why is it better to speak frankly with someone who has hurt you than silently hate them?
* Why does it help to take one or two others along if you can’t make progress with a person on your own?
* Why would it be necessary to treat someone “as a Gentile and a tax collector”? What would that look like?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study 1 Corinthians 6:9-20

Notes