

Saint Litigation!

I. INTRO:

- A. **Announce:** Les Cochrane & team to Burma; Cambodia team (Ted/Caroline; Chad; Cindy); John Bonner, Lima Peru B.C.
- B. **Outline:** *Saint Litigation!* (1-11)
1. **Last week:** we dealt w/discipling a disorderly brother in the church, to safeguard the purity of the whole assembly.
- C. **Story:** *You Wear His Coat Very Well.* There is a magnificent story in Marie Chapien's book *Of Whom the World Was Not Worthy*. The book told of the sufferings of the true church in Yugoslavia where so much wrong has been perpetrated by the politicized ecclesiastical hierarchy. That which has gone on in the name of Christ for the enriching and empowering of corrupt church officials has been a terrible affront to decency.
- One day an evangelist by the name of Jakov arrived in a certain village. He commiserated with an elderly man named Cimmerman on the tragedies he had experienced and talked to him of the love of Christ. Cimmerman abruptly interrupted Jakov and told him that he wished to have nothing to do with Christianity. He reminded Jakov of the dreadful history of the church in his town, a history replete with plundering, exploiting, and indeed with killing innocent people. "My own nephew was killed by them," he said and angrily rebuffed any effort on Jakov's part to talk about Christ. "They wear those elaborate coats and caps and crosses," he said, "signifying a heavenly commission, but their evil designs and lives I cannot ignore."
- Jakov, looking for an occasion to get Cimmerman to change his line of thinking, said, "Cimmerman, can I ask you a question? Suppose I were to steal your coat, put it on, and break into a bank. Suppose further that the police sighted me running in the distance but could not catch up with me. One clue, however, put them onto your track; they recognized your coat. What would you say to them if they came to your house and accused you of breaking into the bank?" "I would deny it," said Cimmerman. "Ah, but we saw your coat," they would say," retorted Jakov. This analogy quite annoyed Cimmerman, who ordered Jakov to leave his home. Jakov continued to return to the village periodically just to befriend Cimmerman, encourage him, and share the love of Christ, with him. Finally one day Cimmerman asked, "How does one become a Christian?" and Jakov taught him the simple steps of repentance for sin and of trust in the work of Jesus Christ and gently pointed him to the Shepherd of his soul. Cimmerman bent his knee on the soil with his head bowed and surrendered his life to Christ. As he rose to his feet, wiping his tears, he embraced Jakov and said, "Thank you for being in my life." And then he pointed to the heavens and whispered, "*You wear His coat very well.*"¹
1. **Saints, are you wearing His coat well?**

II. SAINT LITIGATION! (1-8)

¹ Ravi Zacharias, *Can Man Live Without God*, (Word Publ., Dallas: 1994), pp. 101-102

A. **Saint Litigation...the Patron Saint of lawsuits?** No, maybe the **Saint of Mediation?** We as saints are to litigate, some matters!

1. *Saint Litigation not Secular Lawsuits!*

B. **Note:** 6 questions. **Do you not know that...?** (2,3,9; 15,16,19)

C. **Background:** William Barclay tell us in his commentary “(The Greeks) were characteristically a litigious (li-tij-is) people. The law courts were one of their chief entertainment’s...In a Greek city, every man was more or less a lawyer, & spent a very great part of his time either deciding or listening to law cases.”

1. Sounds pretty much the same in our day. **If we’re not in litigation we’re watching it!**

a) **What is the big one right now that is getting all the press?** *Michael Jackson's wrongful death lawsuit; Dr. Conrad Murray; Propofol.*

2. Our courts are very busy today in America!

3. We’ve raised Lawyers to even **celebrity status** (*OJ Simpson trial*: Robert Shapiro, Johnnie Cochran)

a) Larry H. Parker became a hero for many via commercials. (*LHP got me 5 Million dollars*)

D. **Some Scary Stat’s!**

1. As of 2006, we tipped the scales of over **1 million lawyers** in the United States, according to the American Bar Association, *more per capita than any other country.*

2. In 2011, **over 15 million lawsuits** will be filed in state courts throughout the land.

a) That works out to **one new lawsuit every two seconds.**

b) **Or, one lawsuit for every 12 adults** in America.

3. **How many civil lawsuits against business** are filed each year? About 20 million.²

4. The United States, as a country, and California, specifically, have the **highest number of lawsuits** in the world.

5. **94% of the world's lawsuits are in the United States.**

6. 70% of the world's **lawyers** reside in the United States.

7. **There are more lawyers in West Los Angeles than in all of Japan.** The United States has 30 times more lawsuits per person than Japan.

E. Ready for good news? Paul offers not only the **problem**, but also a **solution!**

F. **The Problem?** (1,7)

1. Problem #1 they were **going to law before the unrighteous** (1).

2. Problem #2 they were an **Utter failure** (7) in this area.

G. **The Solution!** (1)

² American Bar Association study over 10 years ago put the number at 20 million.

H. Take your problems *before the saints* (1).

I. **What Types of Lawsuits?** (2,3)

1. **The smallest matters** (2) - *Can't you deal with the small one's?*
2. **Those that pertain to this life** (3) -
 - a) A.T.Robertson (LKGNT) It means functions related to our life on earth or to the resources of life such as food, clothing, property, etc.
 - b) Frank Gabelein says, this is probably **not** referring to *criminal cases* because he later teaches in Rom.13 to **submit themselves to the governing authorities...he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.**

J. **Saints Qualifications?** (2,3) We were born(again) to judge!

K. **We will judge the world** (2) – It talks about ruling & reigning with Jesus during the millennium, “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them...they lived and **reigned** with Christ for a thousand years.”

1. Also John in the Revelation. **And have made us a kingdom of priests to our God; And we shall **reign** on the earth.**
2. And Paul to Timothy. **If we endure, We shall also **reign** with Him.**

L. **We will judge angels** [i.e. Fallen one's] (3) - 2 Pet.2:4 **For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;**

1. So Paul's logic here is simply, if God trusts us to judge **the world & judge angels tomorrow**, **can't** he help us in deciding **our petty decisions today?**
 - a) Saints you don't have to be *legal experts* to resolve most disputes!
*Know your **Position** in Christ. Know Biblical **Principles**. Know how to **Apply** them.*

M. **Degree of Sin Corinth Church Was In?** (7)

N. **Utter failure** (7)

1. Paul told them regardless of the outcome of their suits, they are already **losers**, **because** they've warred against each other in front of unbelievers. *Tarnished testimony!*

O. **What Paul Wasn't Saying!**

P. He **wasn't** attacking the **secular courts**; he's **not antigovernment**; his concern is **not** the **public court system itself**, **but** *the believers who use it as a floor for their squabbles!*

Q. **Steps to Biblical Resolve!**

R. When 2 believers can't reach an agreement together...

1. Follow Mt.18 - Handle it quietly (keep the circle small) & biblically.
2. Mediate - Invite some *spiritual believer's* to meet & help decide the matter.
3. Accept wrong - let yourselves be cheated!
 - a) Tough teaching to apply! Is this really what Jesus meant in Mt.5:38-40?
 - (1) You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'
"But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. "If anyone wants to **sue you** and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.
 - b) Better a Christian loose **money** rather than his **Testimony** & bring shame to Christ's name. (7)

S. When Are Lawsuits Permissible?

1. When one party *is not* Christian! (of course a believer should still allow biblical values to direct their every decision) [Our lawsuit against our county]
2. When one party *doesn't act like* a Christian! (eg. If they won't allow the church to handle their matter). [possible, *treat them like an unbeliever*]

T. Whats the Big Idea? (7,8)

U. Your witness, over winning!

V. Better a Christian loose **money**, rather than his **Testimony**, & bring shame to Christ's name.

W. **Story**: Amish man I met in Penn. (Ladder story)

III. UNRIGHTEOUS VS. RIGHTEOUS! (9-11)

A. Note, bookend of judgement (9a,11b).

B. Note, this is a list of those *practicing* them.

C. **The list**: *fornicators* (*pornos*, www.covenanteyes.com, sexual immorality), *idolaters* (a guy who likes his electronics more than God; or a gal who likes her shoes more than God), *adulterers* (at least 1 party is married), *homosexuals* (*catamite*, a male who submits to homosexuals), *sodomites* (a male homosexual)[graphic, but the detail here refers to both the "giver" & the "taker"], *thieves* (don't perform the work you promised), *covetous* (greedy people), *drunkards* (intoxication), *revilers* (abusive), *extortioners* (swindle, cheat people).

1. Gal.5:21 **...those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

D. (11a) Pre-salvation, they also were *riddled w/vice*, but in Jesus they were *washed, sanctified & justified*. (note: *were* Real transformation)

1. **Washed** - compound word (*prep.* away, off; & *verb* to wash - "to wash off something")

- a) Also, it has a *perfective* force, i.e. the preposition emphasizes the *completeness* of the action of the verb “to wash”.
- b) Paul says, “Corinthian believers, you have been completely washed of your former filthy & wicked lifestyles.” (man, let it go saint!)
- c) **Ex:** If you had a son that you forbid, “*Do not go in that room, there is a deadly communicable airborne disease inside.*” He decides to be disobedient & go in against your command & is seized with the infection.
- (1) **2 things happen:** he has transgressed your command **AND** he is also now diseased. **You can forgive him, but that does not heal him.** He needs both the **father’s pardon & the physician's aid!** (justification/pardon & sanctification/heal)
- (a) It’s the **blood & water** from Christ’s side!...1 atone’s & 1 purifies.
2. They were a **new people, w/a new moral code, a new mind set, a new world view, a new family, a new inheritance, & were under new authority & had new authority!**
3. So, again, **how could they think of handling their disagreements as they did when they were unsaved?**
- E. “If we **are not** what we once **were**, why should we **live** as we once **lived**?” (www)
- F. **Saints, wear His coat well!**