

👉 Listen to how Eugene Petersen in the "The Message" paraphrases 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians verses 1 through 8.

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**1. Lawsuits have become a way of life in America**

- ✓ It seems that "In God We Trust" has been replaced by "See you in Court" as the Motto of the United States of America. The church hasn't escaped this proliferation of lawsuits.

**2. Lawsuits were as popular if not more popular in the day Paul wrote this letter to the Corinthians.**

- ✓ Lawsuits constituted a large part of the entertainment in Corinth as the trials were held publicly with hundreds in attendance in the open-air courts. Corinthian believers had brought that lifestyle and mentality into the church. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1, "when he has a case against his brother" the NIV says, "If he has a case against his brother", but it's not a matter of if, but when. Disputes happen among believers and Paul assumes they do. Unity in the midst of diversity is the artwork of the Holy Spirit, this is why we always need to be submitted to Him. To preserve His artistry, we need to handle our differences very carefully.

**3. Proper handling of Disputes among believers.**

- ✓ Disputes among believers should never be brought to the courts of non-believers! There are two reasons given for this:
  - 1) The best judges are in the church not outside the church, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:2-3.
    - ✓ The righteous will judge the unrighteous someday, so why would the righteous ever bring a case before the unrighteous? Daniel 7:27, we have Spirit of God; We have the mind of Christ. Could it be that we really don't want to hear the truth, could that be the reason why we go outside of the church?
  - 2) We have a testimony that must be maintained before our world that outweighs everything else.
- ✓ Let's talk about our rights, at the most we are being shorted some temporary things or are receiving some temporary mistreatment. Whatever it is, it is temporary since it won't matter at all the second we're dead. The lost people of this world stand to lose a far greater right, the right to hear of the salvation of Jesus without barriers or distractions. They have a right to see our good deeds so that they can glorify our Father who is in Heaven. There is something more important than having your temporary rights upheld. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:7, it is a lose-lose situation, they were defeated before they ever went to court about it. We may think, "this leaves me no recourse since the other person will not do the right thing." There is justice in this life, Romans 12:19.

**If you take care of your testimony, God will take care of your justice.**

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