

Chapter 6

1. “Dare any of you having a matter against another, to be judged before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

The Greek word translated “dare” (*τολμα*) has the idea of *dare to venture* or *dare to be bold enough*, when one of you has a “matter” (*πραγμα*) or thing against another, to be judged before the unrighteous. Considering the basic meaning of the preposition translated “before” (*επι*), there is the implication that this judgment will be *on the basis of the unrighteous*; i.e., sinful men, on the basis of merciless human laws, will judge them.

Regardless of the thing one might have against another, Paul chides them for submitting their disputes to civil courts. Instead of doing this they should submit such matter to the saints in the church. They will be qualified to judge on the basis of the principles God has revealed for governing His people. They will have both Divine wisdom and Divine laws to guide them.

2. “Or don’t you know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you unworthy to be the smallest of courts?”

This is the only time Paul says anything about the saints judging the world. His epistles clearly teach that God the Father is the one who judges the unsaved world (Rom. 2:16; 3:6; 1 Cor. 5:12–13). We raise the question — does Paul have in mind the saints doing this in the future or in the present? The following clause suggests that it is something which they are doing *now*, for he literally says, *and if the world is being judged by you*. The Greek verb translated “being judged” (*κρινεται*) is in the present tense and passive voice, and as such it means that the saints are *continuously judging the world now*.

We raise the question — how are the saints judging the world now — for Paul asks, “What do I have to do with judging those outside” (5:12)? Our answer is that the saints, who are reflectors of