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# WHEN A CHURCH IS NOT THE CHURCH

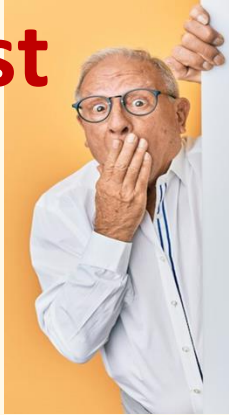
1 CORINTHIANS 6 : 1-11



# SCANDALS IN THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

1 CORINTHIANS 1 - 6

## 5: Incest



*It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated among pagans ...*



## 6: Lawsuits over trivial matters

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

## 1-4: Contentious divisions



**- Courtroom -**

in the public square,  
marketplace

Acts 18:12-17

**- Greeks -**

loved litigation

**- Corinthians -**

proud  
and assertive





GREEK

ROMAN

JEW

Greeks  
formed the  
majority in the  
church at Corinth

“*apostereo*”

-defraud-

refers  
to unethical  
business  
practices  
among wealthy  
people



## CIVIL CASES

(PRIVATE DISPUTES)



Property Dispute



Divorce Cases



Contract Breach

**EXAMPLES:**

- Property Issues
- Divorce Cases
- Money Recovery




• **COMPENSATION**

• **PROTECT RIGHTS**




## CRIMINAL CASES


(OFFENCES AGAINST SOCIETY)



Murder / Theft





Assault / Rape



• **PUNISHMENT**

• **LAW & ORDER**



The church is called to protect the vulnerable:  
seek justice and defend the oppressed (Isaiah 1:17).  
It is not equipped or authorised to investigate  
or punish crimes (Romans 13).

# WHEN A CHURCH IS NOT THE CHURCH

1 CORINTHIANS 6 : 1-11

- WHY GO TO COURT?
- WHY NOT RATHER SUFFER WRONG?
- SUCH WERE WE, BUT ...





# WHY GO TO COURT |

## Why go to law before the unrighteous?

6:1

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

6:9

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?

### **Paul's understanding of the civil governments and judiciary systems:**

Romans 13: Governing authorities have been established by God

Acts 18 : Paul found help in the legal system

Acts 25 : Paul appealed to have his case tried in a higher court

# 6:2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?

## “Saint” in Roman Catholicism:



In honour of one's virtues and good work, after death, a person may be canonized a saint.

“Saint” in the Bible: *hagios*  
a holy one; sacred, physically pure,  
morally blameless, consecrated.  
(Saved by grace, through faith.  
Ephesians 2: 8-9)

*To the church of God that is in Corinth,  
to those sanctified in Christ Jesus,  
**called to be saints** together with all those  
who in every place call upon the name of  
our Lord Jesus Christ ... 1 Corinthians 1:2*

# 6:2 -3 | Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? ... angels?



## Daniel's Prophecy:

*And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High...*

Daniel 7:27

## Jesus to His disciples:

*Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging ...*

Matthew 19:28

**Believers are raised with Christ in all the reality of his resurrection life.**

*But God, ... made us alive together with Christ ...*

*and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.*

Ephesians 2:4 -7

# OPTIONS FOR THE CORINTHIANS TO SEEK REDRESS FOR GRIEVANCES

## IN COURT - LITIGATION

Adversarial, fighting to win.  
In full view of the public.  
Punitive; instilling pain and shame,  
exacting revenge,  
“making the other party pay”



## BEFORE THE SAINTS - ARBITRATION

Conciliatory, working to settle  
the dispute.

Away from public eye.

Concern for the other person.

Principles of truth,  
justice,

forgiveness,

restitution,

mercy and grace



## DISPUTE BETWEEN BIBLE COLLEGE AND CHURCH

## Court to decide how both parties share premises

Decision for 'sharing scheme' believed to be the first here



ST FILE PHOTO

BY K.C. VIJAYAN LAW CORRESPONDENT

UNRESOLVED talks between a church and a Bible college over how to share their premises have led to an unusual decision: Let the courts decide. After four years of a legal battle, a High Court judge will now decide how Life Bible-Presbyterian Church and Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC) will share

their Gilstead Road home, where they have been based for at least 50 years.

The Court of Appeal said in judgment grounds released yesterday that the two parties, being "separate and distinct from each other", should be treated fairly.

Among other things, the High Court judge will have to draw up a scheme that will cater "equitably" to the needs of both parties

without subordinating the interests of one to those of the other.

The Appeals Court, however, noted also that it did not have a "preconceived notion" of what would be considered a "fair division", nor did it prefer an arrangement of "equal use".

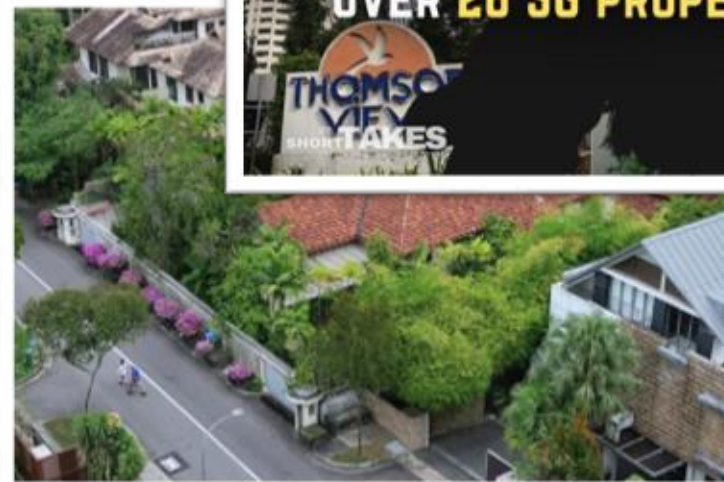
Such a direction for the scheme given by the Appeals Court is believed to be the

## THE STRAITS TIMES

## Family feuds over fortunes and business empires: cases that have grabbed headlines



## MUM, DAUGHTER FIGHT OVER 26 SG PROPERTIES





**GOT A CONSUMER  
DISPUTE? TRY...**

# **CASE MEDIATION**

**CASE MEDIATION CENTRE**

170 Ghim Moh Road #05-01 Ulu Pandan Community Building

Website: [www.case.org.sg/complaint\\_mediation.aspx](http://www.case.org.sg/complaint_mediation.aspx)



- **WHY GO TO COURT?**
- Should Christians or Christian groups sue each other over church matters?
- Should they take each other to court over civil matters?
- Should Christians take non-Christians to court over civil matters?

- **WHY NOT RATHER SUFFER WRONG?**

- **SUCH WERE WE, BUT ...**



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

## Why not rather suffer wrong?

Why not rather be defrauded? 1 Corinthians 6: 7-8



If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent', you must forgive him."

Luke 17: 3-4

For to this you have been called, because **Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps....**

When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

1 Peter 2: 21-23

Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?

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

1 Corinthians 6:8



'That's it agreed then - the company's new motto is going to be "We didn't do anything illegal".'



**SHARP PRACTICE**

violates the Christian principle of love; believers ought to have a special care and concern for one another.

(Romans 12:10;  
1 Corinthians 12:25)

# Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?



## **Do not be deceived:**

neither the sexually immoral,  
nor idolaters, nor adulterers,  
nor men who practise homosexuality,  
nor thieves, nor the greedy,  
nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers  
will inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 6: 9-10

**Do you know how serious your sin is?**

**And such were some of you.**

**BUT**

you were washed,  
you were sanctified,  
you were justified  
in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ  
and by the Spirit of our God.

1 Corinthians 6:11

