Believers Judging Angels
Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6
Code: BQ040813

Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, matters of this life? (6:3)

Christians are not to take other Christians to worldly courts. When we put ourselves under the authority of the world in this way, we confess that we do not have right actions and right attitudes. Believers who go to court with believers are more concerned with revenge or gain than with the unity of the Body and the glory of Jesus Christ. Disputes between Christians should be settled by and among Christians. If we as Christians, with our wonderful gifts and resources in Christ, cannot settle a dispute, how can we expect unbelievers to do it? Paul insists that Christians *are* able to solve disputes, always. **Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts?** “If you are one day going to sit in God’s supreme court over the world, aren’t you qualified to judge in the small, everyday matters that come up among you now?” It should be noted that the term **law courts** can also be translated “law suits.”

When Jesus Christ returns to set up His millennial kingdom, believers from throughout all of history will be His coregents, sitting with Him on His throne (Rev. 3:21; cf. Dan. 7:22). Part of our responsibility as rulers with Christ will be to judge the world. The apostles will have special authority, ruling from “twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. 19:28). But every believer will participate in some way. He “who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to Him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father” (Rev. 2:26–27).

If the saints will one day help rule the entire earth, they surely are able to rule themselves within the church now. That future rule will be based on perfect adherence to the Word of God and proper godly attitudes, which are available now. There will not then be any different principles of wisdom and justice than we have revealed to us in Scripture now.

The Corinthian Christians, however, not only were not ruling themselves but were making a spectacle of themselves before unbelievers, airing their pride, carnality, greed, and bitterness before the whole world—the world that one day they would be called on by the Lord to help judge and rule in righteousness.

Believers will one day even **judge angels**. Scripture is not clear as to which angels we will judge. The fallen angels will be judged by the Lord (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6), but we are not told if believers will participate in that judgment. The Greek (*krino*) for **judge** can also mean “to rule or govern.” That certainly would be the meaning if we are to have authority over the holy angels, for they will have no sin for which to be condemned. One cannot be dogmatic, but I am inclined to think that glorified believers will help judge the fallen angels and exercise some rule over the holy angels. If Christ was exalted above all the angels (Eph. 1:20–23), if we are in Him and are like Him, and if we are to reign with Him, it must be that somehow we will share in His authority. Whatever the sphere and extent of that heavenly judgment or ruling, Paul’s point here is the same: If we are to judge and rule over the world and over angels in the age to come, we are surely able, under the guidance of Scripture and the Holy Spirit, to settle any matters of disagreement among ourselves today.

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