**The Church at Corinth**

**A Church Facing Inner Problems – #16**

**Scandal: Christians Taking One Another to Pagan Courts**

**1 Corinthians 6:1-11**

***1 Corinthians 6:1*** *Does any one of you, who has a case against another, dare to take it to court before evildoers instead of before the saints?* ***2*** *Or do you not realize that the saints are going to judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you unqualified for petty courts?* ***3*** *Do you not realize that we are to judge angels let alone the affairs of everyday life?* ***4*** *If, then, you have courts for everyday affairs, do you seat as judges those who have no standing in the church?* ***5*** *I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a case between brothers?* ***6*** *Yet does a brother go to court against a brother, and this before unbelievers?* ***7*** *In fact [then], it is already a disaster on your part that you have lawsuits against one another. Why not rather put up with injustice? Why not rather be cheated?* ***8*** *Instead, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and this to your brothers.* ***9*** *Or do you not realize that evildoers will not inherit the kingdom of God?* ***10*** *Do not be deceived! Neither fornicators nor idolaters, neither adulterers nor catamites, neither sodomites nor thieves, neither the greedy nor drunkards, neither slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.* ***11*** *This is what some of you were; but now you have been washed, you have been sanctified; you have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

**The Overall Picture**

1. Paul now turns to another practice among Christians in Corinth affecting church life and discipline: the taking of a fellow Christian into pagan courts. Paul considers that such a practice seriously concerns how individual Christians should be conducting themselves with one another while living in this world. This is a breach of the two great commandments, love God and your neighbor.
2. Paul does not fight with secular or the civil courts, but his reaction to lawsuits is strong and expressed in two stages. First, in verses 1-6, he tells them that they should be settling their disputes among themselves. Second, in verse 7-11, he reacts more firmly and tells them that they should not be having lawsuits at all.
3. Paul’s criticism springs from the fact that the Corinthians are ***hagioi*** (saints)and not “evildoers” (6:1, 9). They are also ***adelphoi****,* (brothers) not “unbelievers” (6:6) and if they are as such, they have a witness to this world. They are destined “*to judge the world*” and even “*to judge angels*” (6:2-3). This means, ***a fortiori***, *[argument from a stronger reason]* that they are qualified to handle “everyday affairs” and treat them in “petty courts” (6:2-4)
4. The failure, or the scandal, is that “*a brother goes to court against a brother, and this before unbelievers*” (6:6). Worse still, they “*have lawsuits against one another*” (6:7), do wrong, and cheat one another (6:8). Going to court against a fellow Christian is deeply wrong, and Christians who do such a thing have failed to love one another.
5. Paul then asks, if they can look inwardly to their own life, “why not just put up with injustice and cheating?” And continues that if they remember that “*evildoers will not inherit the kingdom of God*”, they will never go to court (6:9). Paul then lists ten different kinds of wrongdoers (6:9-10): fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, catamites (that is having a young man as a partner in sexual union), sodomites, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, slanderers, and swindlers.
6. Then Paul does not end with what they were before because they have been washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by God’s Spirit. Such a calling summons Corinthian Christians to the new life that cannot be marked by trivial lawsuits or other questionable conduct.

**Paul and Church Courts**

1. Did the church later take the advice of Paul (1 Cor 6:1- 6) to create its internal legal system parallel to that of Jews and the civil Roman, with jurisdiction over its members? For Paul the OT itself has offered a precedent as such (Exod 18:13-27 or Deut 1:9-17; 16:18-20), where Moses has appointed judges for God’s people, long before they became a nation.
2. But it would be a mistake to see in the words of Paul what was developed later in the history of the church which is now known as “Canon Law.” Paul himself asks, “*Why not rather put up with injustice?*” (6:7), as he will in another formulation, “*Why then do you sit in judgment over your brother?*” (Rom 14:10). Or again, “*If your brother is indeed distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer conducting yourself in love*” (Rom 14:15). Christians should have their life and their relationship governed by “love,” which should enable the Christian to put up with even injustice and cheating. “*Love does no wrong to a neighbor*” (Rom 13:10).

**The List of Sexual Behavior**

In Romans 1:29-31 Paul presents a list of vices and evildoers, but herein (1 Cor 6) Paul twice uses the expression “*inherit the kingdom of God,*” as he has already in Galations 5:19–21. Those who behave in such away will not inherit the kingdom. These vices / behaviors (verses 9-10) are rejected by most Christians today, who would agree with Paul’s condemnation of such evildoers as idolaters, adulterers, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, slanderers, and swindlers (6:9-10), even though they might not be so severe in their judgment. But in the last 25 years of that past century some, however, would express hesitation to pass judgment on those who are listed according to the Greek as:

***Pornoi***

***Malakoi***

***Arsenokoitai***

These Greek words refer to sexual behavior as sex offenders but because of the way these terms are often translated into English to make them vague while these three words are, per se, clear. These are three types of persons whose conduct is no better than the other seven in the list; none of such ***adikoi*** (evildoers)will inherit God’s kingdom. Paul’s condemnation of such persons is frank, and it has to be reckoned with as a norm for all Christian behavior.

1 ***Pornoi***Paul is using the generic sense for “fornicators,” and in Greek it is the unmarried men and women who cohabit or have casual sexual intercourse, or male and female prostitutes. This specific meaning is clear, because it heads the list of other specific evildoers. It is distinguished from “adulterers” and other sex offenders, and is the subject matter of his exhortation (6:13, 15-18).

2,3 ***Malakoi****,* ***Arsenokoitai*** These denote male persons who practice different kinds of sexual acts with other males. These persons fall under Paul’s condemnation, along with other evildoers. But outside the Jewish and the Christian circles, they were often tolerated in ancient Greco-Roman society more than today. For further reading, see:

1. J. K. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*
2. John Boswell *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the 14th century.*
3. A reply to Boswell book by Mathew Kuefle, *The Boswell Thesis: Essays on Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*

Homosexual activities among males were common in the Greek-Roman culture, especially because of the esteem held for the beauty of the youthful male body in Greek education and athletics.

Today it is commonly acknowledged that there is a distinction between homosexual orientation (an innate erotic attraction toward a person of the same sex) and homosexual activity that is a full sharing of the body. This distinction was introduced in our modern times but it was hardly known in Paul’s day. Paul is writing about the homosexual acts of males, for these above Greek words were used for males only. (As for female homosexual activity, see Rom 1:26-27). Paul’s condemnation of such is in harmony with the OT, where they were roundly denounced (Gen 19:4–5, 11, 24–25; Lev 18:22; 20:13; Judg 19:22–26; and the Jewish letter of Aristeas *to* Philocrates, 152; also Philo, De spec. leg. 3.7 §§37–43 (paiderastein); De Abrahamo 26 §§135–36; De vita cont. 6 §52; 7 §§59–62; Hypothetica 7.1 *paiderastes*; and later *m. Sanhedrin* 7:4 where stoning for *mishkab zakar,* “a male sleeping with a male for sex”).

Paul used the compound noun ***arsenokoites****,* and was certainly aware of the condemnation in LXX Lev 20:13 (“*a man lying with a male as with a woman,*” see RSV 18:22). Paul now uses two specific Greek words for the activity that he will also criticize in Romans 1:27. He lists persons who engage in such activity among the evildoers who will not inherit the kingdom. Paul seems to imply that there may be such persons among the Christians of Rome and in Corinth, for this kind of social life was commonly known and it may have been part of their former way of life before their faith: (v11) “*This is what some of you were*”.

**Study notes on the verses – 1 Corinthians 6**

**Seven questions**

VERSE 1 **–** *“Does any one of you, who has a case against another, dare to take it to court before evildoers instead of the saints?*”

Paul begins with a question – this daring behavior in pressing charges against a brother. It seems that Paul was indignant as he formulates seven questions in these verses (vv. 1, two questions in 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), as he challenges the Corinthians and seeks to make his *case/lawsuit against someone*.” It could be a lawsuit involving business (as in 1 Thess 4:6), or possibly involving adultery, because ever since the time of Augustus the Roman Law “*lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis”*considered adultery a crime that was to be tried in a special court according to the Roman Historians Suetonius (he is known as Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, commonly known as Suetonius, c. 69 - c. 122), a [Roman historian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_historiography) belonging to the [equestrian order](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equestrian_order) who wrote during the early [Imperial Era](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Roman_Empire) of the [Roman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire). His most important surviving work is a set of biographies of twelve successive Roman rulers, from [Julius Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Caesar) to [Domitian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domitian), entitled [*De Vita Caesarum*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Twelve_Caesars). He recorded the earliest accounts of [Julius Caesar's epileptic seizures](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_people_with_epilepsy) (*The Life of Augustus 34*). Dio Cassius (c. 150-235 A.D.), a [Roman consul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_consul) and noted [historian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historian) who wrote in [Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language), published a history of [Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome) in 80 volumes, beginning with the legendary arrival of [Aeneas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aeneas) in [Italy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italy). The volumes then documented the subsequent [founding of Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Founding_of_Rome) (753 BC), the [formation of the Republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic) (509 BC), and the [creation of the Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Roman_Empire) (31 BC), up until AD 229. The entire period covered by Dio's work is approximately 1,400 years. Of the 80 books, written over 22 years, many survive into the modern age, intact, or as fragments, providing modern scholars with a detailed perspective on Roman history. (*Roman History* 54.30.4)

Paul’s use of“evildoers” simply describes non-Christians who are, from a Christian perspective, those who do not pursue justice or righteousness as in the OT (Isa 51:1; Sir 27:8). Although this is the first occurrence of the word ***adikoi***, “evildoers,” it has a predominantly legal sense. Paul will use it again (1 Cor 6:9) in a clearly moral sense; evildoers“do what is evil” (1 Cor 6:7-8).

**Saints in judgment**

**VERSE 2** **–** “*Or do you not realize that the saints are going to judge the world”?*

Christ, the judge of the world and the saints who are united with him, will judge the world. This is based on the OT of judgment given over to the “holy ones” of the Most High (Dan 7:22; cf. Wis 3:8; 4:16) and the early martyr Polycarp quoted the words of Paul (69-155) “I am deeply sorry for Valens, who was once made a presbyter among you, that he so little understands the place which was given to him. I advise, therefore, that you keep from avarice, and be pure and truthful. Keep yourselves from all evil. 2 For how may he who cannot attain self-control in these matters enjoin it on another? If any man does not abstain from avarice he will be defiled by idolatry, and shall be judged as if he were among the Gentiles who "know not the judgment of God." Or do we "*not know that the saints shall judge the world?*" as Paul teaches in his letter to the church of the Philippians 11:1-2*)*.

Paul does not mean that one day earthly courts will be filled with Christian judges. *“And if the world is to be judged by you, are you unqualified for petty courts?”* Paul argues with irony that those who will be judges of the world are surely fit to judge the minor problems of this life.

**Judging the angels**

**VERSE 3 –** “*Do you not realize that we are to judge angels—not to mention affairs of everyday life?*

So we are judging not only these matters of life in the present world but also the celestial. Here “angels” can be the good and evil angels, because Paul means not only human beings, but any higher order of God’s creatures (See 1 Cor 4:9; 11:10; 13:1 for other references to angels; also 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6 for sinful angels). In 2 Corinthians 12:7 Paul speaks of an “angel of Satan.” Angels were quite well known in the OT and appear also in the NT. If Christians are in such a high position, how can they lower themselves in such a way that they go to earthly courts?

**Who is seated as judges?**

**VERSE 4 –** “*If, then, you have courts for everyday affairs, do you seat as judges those who have no standing in the church?”*

This is often understood as asking a question, “Do you seat?” (as in the RSV, NKJV); *[“seat” is in the verb sense of “Do you seat them?”, e.g.]*,but it may be a statement or an exclamation, “you seat” (as in NJB, and some modern commentators). It is understood by KJV, NIV; to mean, “Appoint the despised as Judges!” If the meaning of the Greek ***exouthemenous*** is *those who have “been counted as nothing”* (1 Cor 1:28), it might refer to lowly Corinthian Christians who are to be set up as judges in the community, who are also destined to judge at God’s tribunal and all will appear before them, which is better than having lawsuits before a Roman judge in a Roman court, no matter how much this Roman judge may be competent in Roman law and ordinary civil affairs. But the saints, who are socially counted as nothing in the church, as Christians can judge what belongs to Christian life much better.

**No wise Christians?**

**VERSE 5 –** “*I say this to your shame. …”*

This statement refers to the five questions just posed.

**(cont.)** … *Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a case between brothers?*

That is, “who will be able to settle a case with his brother? (singular)” In this community where wisdom is so important (please remember what was said about wisdom in chapters 1-2), Paul wants to know whether there is no wise Christian to handle such trivial legal issues that arise among fellow Christians.

**Brother against brother**

**VERSE 6 –** “*Yet does a brother go to court against a brother, and this before unbelievers?*

What a bad reputation for the church and for the gospel, if a brother is being judged with another brother in a Roman court before unbelievers. Paul complains that some members of the Corinthian community have failed in that they can get justice more easily from a pagan court than from a Christian one; from unbelievers rather than from believers. The Greek work ***apistos****,* “unbeliever,” occurs here for the first time and Paul uses it only in his Corinthian correspondence (7:12-15; 10:27; 14:22-24; 2 Cor 4:4; 6:14-15). This distinction between a believer and unbeliever is applied only to this context and does not have the wide range of meaning that was added to it later on.

**Already a disaster, defeat**

**VERSE 7 –** “*In fact [then], it is already a disaster on your part that you have lawsuits against one another. …”*

From a Christian perspective, Christians should not go to court for everyday affairs. Paul used as strong word, “disaster.” This word was used in LXX in Isaiah 1: 8 for a defeat in a battle, but here its moral sense is obvious. What has been defeated is what comes next.

**(cont.) –** “*Why not rather put up with injustice?”*

Which means, “why not rather be wronged?” or “why not let yourselves be wronged?” This is not a passive behavior because it has to be freely allowed and it is based on Jesus’ sayings, “*39 But I say to you,* *Do not resist the one who is evil. But**if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.* ***40****And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.* ***41*** *And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.”* (Matt 5:39-42). Jesus’ conduct is also described in 1 Peter 2:23 and also Paul’s teaching in Romans 12:17-19).

**(cont.) –** “*Why not rather be cheated?”*

Or, “why not let yourselves be cheated?” The Greek verb ***apostereo***means “steal, rob, defraud,” and often connotes the theft of money or property from another (e.g., Mark 10:11, quoting prohibition of the Decalogue; Jas 5:4). In 1 Corinthians 7:5, ***apostereo*** will be used of cheating in marital rights; cf. (1 Thess 4:3–6).

**Carrying Our Cross**

**A letter from Abba Philemon**

Brother George,

May the Lord Jesus who is our peace be always in you and with you.

What does it mean to carry our cross? Our Lord Jesus did not ask us to carry his cross, because no one can, but [asks] that each one of us carry his own cross and follow Jesus to Calvary. Each one of us has a cross. It may be long illness, or disabilities, the loss of something dear or even some person like a husband or a wife or a child. It is the pain of loss that makes the nails, the fear of death and the sadness, all these added to the feeling of being alone just like Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, for Jesus was alone as his disciples were fast asleep. A cross is not what we create for ourselves but is all that life can bring and impose on us. The loss of your books and your money may be a blessing for the thief, and the loss is a great blessing to you for it brings freedom from what you possess.

The cross is what others can do to us. Although I was sad to hear of the hard time you have with one of your teachers, I became more convinced that this hard time will reveal to you some malaise hidden in your soul. Bear this cross, and see what is lacking in you, for to accept injustice without anger is a great victory of your heart. It is the victory of a crucified love that lets go without bitterness or seeking revenge.

Here when I am called the fool, for indeed I am a fool, I smile for this is my name among mortals and it will expire. All will end on the Day of the Resurrection, and if this is the glorious end let us be glad when all mortal things are taken away. Have the courage of the crucified and risen Lord, and walk with him.

Philemon

Feb 18, 1967

**Doing wrong**

**VERSE 8 –** “*Instead, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and this to your brothers.”*

It is not simply that some Corinthian Christians were taking other Christians to pagan court but that Christians doing wrong to Christians. Paul is not aiming his remark at any specific group of Corinthians.

**Evildoers will not inherit the Kingdom**

**VERSE 9 –** “*Or do you not realize that evildoers will not inherit the kingdom of God?”*

Paul asks again; such evildoers cannot be restricted to those outside the church but they are inside the church. *“To inherit the kingdom of God”* recurs in Paul (1 Cor 6:10; 15:50; Gal 5:21). It echoes Jesus’ saying (Matt 25:34), “*What am I to do to inherit eternal life?*” (see Matt 10:17; Luke 10:25; 18:18). The use of the verb *inherit* for “the kingdom of God” replaces that of the OT motif of inheriting the land (LXX Exod 23:30; Deut 1:38–39; Isa 49:8; Ps 25:13; 37:9, 11, 22; 1 Macc 2:56; cf. LXX Dan 7:22).

Christians are called to share together in that inheritance, but they too can fail to attain it, if they do evil. “Evil is what makes us alien to the kingdom. The Root of Evil is in the lack of True Love, while the kingdom is the Gift of Love.”

**VERSE 10 –** *“Do not be deceived!”*

An exhortations, (see 1 Cor 15:33; Gal 6:7; Jas 1:16). It is a warning of love.

**The Terms used for Sins of Sexual Behavior**

What follows is a discussion and revision of the English translations of the Greek Terms used for Sexual Behavior in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.

Verses 9-10. “*Neither fornicators nor idolaters, neither adulterers nor catamites, neither sodomites nor thieves, neither the greedy nor drunkards, neither slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God”*

Paul lists ten types of evildoers who will not inherit the kingdom of God. This list of evildoers appears also in Ephesians 5:5 and Galations 5:19. The list is a catalogue of vices. The Greek terms were known among Hellenistic Jews, as some commentators maintain. Rabbinic teaching about various sinners who will have no share in the world to come is also listed in *Talmud, (Sanhedrin* 10:1-4).

1. Fornicators. Often the Greek ***pornoi***is translated generically as “immoral” (RSV, or “sexually immoral people” (NJB, NIV, ESV). But “fornicators” is the correct rendering, because it heads the list of other specific kinds of sexual immorality which Paul will also treat elsewhere (1 Cor 6:13, 15-18, see NAB, NRSV, NEB, REB).

2. Idolators. The association of idolatry with fornication or adultery is well known in the OT, where the latter terms are used metaphorically to designate idolatry or apostasy that is worshipping other gods (Num 14:33; Hos 4:11; 6:10; Jer 2:20 -23; 3:6-10; in the book of Wisdom 14:12, “The beginning of fornication is the invention of idols”; (Cf. Eph 5:5; Rev 14:8; 17:1, 2, 4, 5, 15, 16).

3. Adulterers*.* Paul employs the specific Greek term ***moichos****,* “one who is unfaithful to a marital spouse.” Though the form is masculine in this context, it is used generically and would include adulteresses. In Romans 7:3 it has been used specifically for feminine noun, *moichalis*. Paul condemns adultery with the Bible again in Romans 13:9, where he repeats the prohibition of adultery in the Decalogue (Exod 20:14; Deut 5:18). In ancient Israel, adultery was the violation of marriage by a married man, by either his wife if she had intercourse with another man or by the man who seduced the wife. It was severely punished in Jewish law by death (Lev 20:10), as well as in Roman law, by the loss of part of the dowry.

4. Catamites.The Greek term ***malakos***means “soft” and was used referring to soft garments (Luke 7:25), but it was often used in the ancient Greek world to denote someone who was “effeminate,” or passive in same-sex relations. A catamite was a youth or boy kept for sodomy by another male; a “boy prostitute” (NAB). The word is so used in Dio Chrysostom (ca. 40 – ca. 120 A.D.; a [Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece) orator, writer, philosopher and historian of the [Roman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire) in the 1st century. Eighty of his *Discourses* or *Orations* are extant, *see Discourse* 66.25; also Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 60 BC-after 7 BC; a [Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greeks) historian and teacher of [rhetoric](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhetoric), who flourished during the reign of [Caesar Augustus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus), Rom. Antiq*.* 7.2.4). A ***malakos*** in Greek is a boy who was effeminate and allowed himself to be treated as a woman. It is the technical Greek name for such a person and also was named ***kinaidos***(Plato, *Gorgias* 494e), which was transliterated in Latin as ***cinaedus***. Another Latin name was ***catamitus****,* which was actually a form of the name Ganymedes, who in Greek mythology was the son of a Trojan prince and was snatched up by gods to be the youthful cupbearer of Zeus.

***Malakos***is often mistranslated as “self-indulgent” (NJB); “sensual” “masturbators” (Boswell). The NEB renders this and the following word together as “guilty … of sexual perversion;” similarly the RSV, “sexual perverts,” attempting to translate it as “soft males,” i.e., the aristocratic wealthy given to the luxuries and refinements of life, or even males with soft physical features, or youths who made their bodies soft by shaving them and powdering them is better; in the end such “softies” are said to submit sexually to older males, perhaps for pay. So what is the difference? The word *malakos* in the Greek language means what was said about it in the preceding paragraph.

5. Sodomites. The term ***arsenokoitai***occurs again in a similar catalogue of evildoers in 1 Timothy 1:10, but it is not found in the LXX or other Jewish Greek writings. The compound noun is formed from *arsen,* “male,” and *koite,* “bed” or “sexual relation” (this meaning is known from Romans13:13; LXX Num 5:20), and reflects the use of the two words in LXX Lev 20:13, so we have the meaning not the word*,* “whoever sleeps with a male [as in] sexual relation with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination” (see also Lev 18:22). The meaning of the term is clear and denotes the active partner in same-sex for sexual intercourse with another male; hence it can be translated “sodomite” (as in NRSV, NJB, NKJV). It too is often mistranslated: “sexual perverts” (RSV, REB), “practicing homosexuals” (NAB), “men who practice homosexuality” (NIV), “abusers of them selves with mankind” (KJV), or even “given to unnatural vice” (Goodspeed), “active male prostitutes” (Boswell). Such versions paraphrase and fail to express what Paul’s Greek does, that is sexual relationship in the old sense known to the Sodomites.

*Arsenokoites* should not be translated as “homosexual,” because that is a modern term for male or female sexual orientation as well as activity, coined only in the nineteenth century to denote the preference of a person for someone of the same sex and was unknown as a name for sexual intercourse between such persons in antiquity. The term *arsenokoites* is rare in Greek literature, being an alternate form of *arrenokoites*: (see *Anthologia Graeca, 9.686*, a collection of [poems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poem), mostly [epigrams](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epigram), that span the classical and [Byzantine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine) periods of [Greek literature](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_literature). Most of the material of the *Greek Anthology* comes from two manuscripts, the [*Palatine Anthology*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palatine_Anthology) of the 10th century, and we read in the *Anthologia,* “You do not have to be afraid of a barbarian or male sodomites”.

Because of its relatively rare occurrence, some writers have contested the meaning of the term here in Paul’s letter, and considerable debate has surrounded the understanding of this term, the meaning of which is per se clear and is in no way limited to just perverted behavior. Paul does not approve of such same-sex activity, no matter what Greek words are used by him (see, D. F. Wright, Homosexuality, 159). Even if it eventually proves correct that Paul has coined the word ***arsenokoitai***from the LXX of Leviticus, homosexuality was unacceptable even in the Hebrew texts of the OT and that we have to see that behind that forbidden sexual relationship stands two major issues:

- The first is the formation of the family, which can take place only in marriage.

- Second is the protection of procreation that can function only between a male and a female.

It is unfair to think that Paul was producing his individual judgment and that he has taken over from Hellenistic Judaism.

For the debate about the word and the issue, see Boswell, *Christianity,* 106–17, 335–53, 363–64; McNeill, *The Church,* 50–53;Robin Scroggs, *The New Testament and Homosexuality,* 106–8; Boswell’s erroneous interpretation of Rom 1:26–27; has been refuted by Craig Williams, *Roman Homosexuality* second edition, 22-47

The term *arsenokoitai* is found later in a number of patristic writers who have derived it from this Pauline passage, the LXX of Lev 18:22; 20:13: Polycarp, Letter to the *Philippians.* 5.3; Eusebius, *Dem. evang.* 1.6.67 ; *Praepar. evang.* 6.10.25 43/1.339); 13.20.7; Origen, *Comm. in Rom.* 4.4 (PG 14.973), quoting 1 Tim 1:9–10 and Lev 18:22; in Latin, cf. Tertullian, *Adv. Marcionem* 1.29.4.

*Malakoi* and *arsenokoitai* occur in a list of evildoers, Paul regards these diverse sexual practices in (Rom 1:26–27), as contrary to God’s creation of man and woman for each other, to cleave together as one. The distortion of God’s created order was described in graphic words in Romans 1:26, “*women who have exchanged natural intercourse for that against nature and men who have abandoned natural relations with women and burned with lust for one another.*” Overall, then, the evidence strongly favors the thesis that Paul was condemning not only sexual activity by pederasts that is the relationship between an adult male and an adolescent male. (The word *pederasty* derives from Greek (*paiderastia*) "love of boys", a compound derived from παῖς (*pais*) "child, boy" and ἐραστής (*erastēs*) "lover", but also by homosexuals, indeed any sexual activity outside of marriage between a man and a woman (R. E. Brown, *Introduction to the NT,* 530). Paul’s prohibitions against homosexuality were indeed against all forms of sexual relationships between persons of the same sex.

**VERSE 10 –** “*Nor thieves.”* Paul uses ***kleptai****,* whereas it was ***harpages*** in 1 Corinthians 5:10, which may be a more specific kind of thief. Cf. (Rom 2:21; 13:9; 1 Pet 4:15).

***(cont.)*** *“Neither the greedy,* “covetous,” i.e., those who seek to have more than their share in life; (see. Eph 5:5) this also appear later in the second Century Letter of *Barnabas 19.6*, and the *Didache 2.6*.

***(cont.)*** *“Nor drunkards, neither slanderers nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. This is what some of you were.”* Some Corinthian Christians before their conversion were undoubtedly to be found among the *evildoers* Paul has just enumerated.”

To be continued next week with the last words of verse 11 …

*“But now you have been washed, you have been sanctified, you have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*