

Hatfields Versus McCays

#1 FAITH FAMILY FAILURE

By David Lee Burris



Monday 5/28 CLOSE-UP

FAMILY FEUD

Kevin Costner and Bill Paxton play rabble-rousing rival patriarchs in History's epic miniseries *Hatfields & McCoys*

BY DAVID HOCHMAN

For Kevin Costner, the beard was probably the toughest part. "It went on one hair at a time, singly laid in," he says of the old-man whiskers he wears for *Hatfields & McCoys*, an epic three-night miniseries beginning tonight on History. Costner plays Devil Anse Hatfield, patriarch and neighbor-from-hell to Randall McCoy (an equally fuzzy-faced Bill Paxton). "My chin would get poked and prodded for an hour every morning," says Costner. The pain registers in his voice even now. "I'd play music, I'd talk to people, but it never got any easier. Fortunately, it's the best damned beard I've ever had."

That's saying something coming from the Oscar winner who Fu Manchu'd his way across the American West in "Dances With Wolves" and "Wyatt Earp." But it speaks to the passion Costner brings to *Hatfields*, a project that had him grubbing it for weeks in drizzly Transylvania, 100 miles outside of Bucharest. "Apparently, the forests of Romania today look very much the way West Virginia and Kentucky did in those bloody years after the Civil War," Costner says.

The Hatfield-McCoy saga began around 1865, when one murder escalated into the bitterest of feuds between once friendly clans on opposite sides of the Tug Fork River. Fifteen years and a dozen more killings later, the fight became a metaphor for family loyalty gone haywire.

In other words, it's the perfect historical backdrop for six hours of rifle-popping, hog-stealing, squirrel-hunting good times. "This is a war that defined our country in many ways," says Paxton. "Any subsequent feud that sprung up between families or even sports teams got branded a Hatfields-and-McCoys situation. This is our



Hatfields & McCoys BY THE NUMBERS

- 1,480 extras
- 781 wardrobe changes
- 273 crew members speaking seven languages: English, Romanian, Italian, German, Polish, Hungarian and Bulgarian
- 142 period pistols, rifles and knives
- 94 hand-glued beards
- 84 original sets
- 83 shooting days
- 78 speaking roles
- 73 stuntmen
- 40 liters of fake blood
- 5 weeks in the Carpathian Mountains of Transylvania
- 3 houses burned to the ground
- 2 rebuilt back-lot mountain towns of Pikeville, Kentucky, and Mate Creek, West Virginia
- 2 real snowstorms
- 1 concept album produced

"I don't know why I felt such an affinity for this project," says Costner (left and top, on horseback). "It's iconic. Our fabric of America is about fighting—holding on to things." Says Paxton (above, with Winningham): "When Randall McCoy is being overtaken by his alcoholism...it became macabre."

brought along a family history book, passed down through the generations, that made the past come alive. "The misery of war never really changes," Paxton says. "You still feel the spirit of these characters 150 years after they're gone."

The real spirits came out at the end of each shooting day. With little else to do in the Romanian outback but drink and make merry, the nights turned into old-fashioned hootenannies, particularly when Costner's band performed. "A bunch of music started pouring out of me in that setting," says Costner, who wrote a concept album, *Famous for Killing Each Other*, based on his *Hatfields* experience (available on iTunes and amazon.com). "The story is so deeply American and affecting, I wanted a personal soundtrack to accompany it."

As production neared completion, Costner's character had aged from 30 to 73, and his real beard was growing in where the fake whiskers had been glued. Still, Costner was ready for it to be done. "We were a long way from home and you start to miss the comforts of a hot shower and your own bed," he says. "And I won't say I was sorry to see that beard gone once and for all."

chance to tell the real story behind the legend."

To do that, History "went for authenticity down to the smallest detail of how these two rival families really lived," says Nancy Dubuc, president of History and Lifetime. That meant training actors to ride stallions, shoot heavy weapons and live without—Sweet Abraham Lincoln!—reliable wi-fi in the Carpathian Mountains.

The miniseries also stars Tom Berenger as Jim Vance, the real troublemaker among the

Hatfields; Powers Boothe as Wall Hatfield, Devil Anse's even-keeled older brother and a local judge; and a cast of 1,480 extras. "It was a multitudinous group of mostly cute young men playing dress-up and carrying guns for seven weeks," says Mare Winningham, who plays Randall McCoy's wife, Sally. "Soon enough, even the actors playing Hatfields and McCoys started forming separate cliques."

Paxton had a particularly deep connection to the material. *The Big Love* actor's great-great-grandfather was a Confederate general under Stonewall Jackson, and Paxton

HATFIELDS & MCCOYS
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‘Hatfields & McCoys’: Real historical ties to Churches of Christ?



Bobby Ross Jr.



The television miniseries “Hatfields & McCoys” premiered recently on the History channel.

The first installment prompted several viewers to e-mail *The Christian Chronicle*. This query from Bob West, a member of the Ellisville Church of Christ in Missouri, was typical:

In the first episode, it showed the Hatfields and McCoys worshipping in a church building and singing a cappella. As they exited the building, the camera focused on the sign above the door: “Tug Fork church of Christ.” Do you know if the Hatfields and McCoys were brothers in the church?



I didn't know, so I contacted [Doug Foster](#), professor of church history and director of the Center for Restoration Studies at Abilene Christian University in Texas. Foster didn't have any firsthand knowledge but contacted the [Disciples of Christ Historical Society](#) in Nashville, Tenn., which collects historical information on all three branches of the [Stone-Campbell Movement](#).

Associate archivist Elaine Philpott with the historical society provided this background:

I have done a little investigative work on the Hatfields and McCoys and haven't found a link to an actually Church of Christ congregation. Anderson "Devil Anse" Hatfield, the patriarch of the family, was baptized by a Church of Christ itinerate minister in the area by the name of W. Dyke Garrett.

Academy Award-winning actor [Kevin Costner](#) plays Devil Anse in the miniseries, as [_USA Today notes](#):

In *Hatfields & McCoys* ... Devil Anse Hatfield (Kevin Costner), the head of the legendary clan, is baptized in a river. It looks like a warm, sunny day, and Devil Anse appears to be slipping peacefully into warm waters.

- Feedback

June, 12 2012

While I don't remember if it was the Hatfields or McCoys that my father stayed with in the 1950s, but I know that he spent time with one side while in the area for a gospel meeting. Therefore, he told me that at least that side were members of the church.

Stanton See

June, 12 2012

My wife and I spent the summer of 1975 in the Prestensburg, KY area not far from the KY/WV border and just a few miles from Pikeville, KY (mentioned several times in the mini-series). The church was strong in that area and we ran into several of the Hatfields and McCoys while there. Although, I do not remember any in the Prestensburg congregation, it would not be surprising to find a good number in other congregations.

There was mention in the movie of the name Blankenship, and it so happens that Benny Blankenship had been the preacher at Prestensburg C of C when we were there (I would remember since that is where I was baptized).

Glenn L.

June, 13 2012

My uncle George Biggers who was born in 1905 and was a travelling minister in his early years told me that he had baptized members of both families in a gospel meeting that he held.

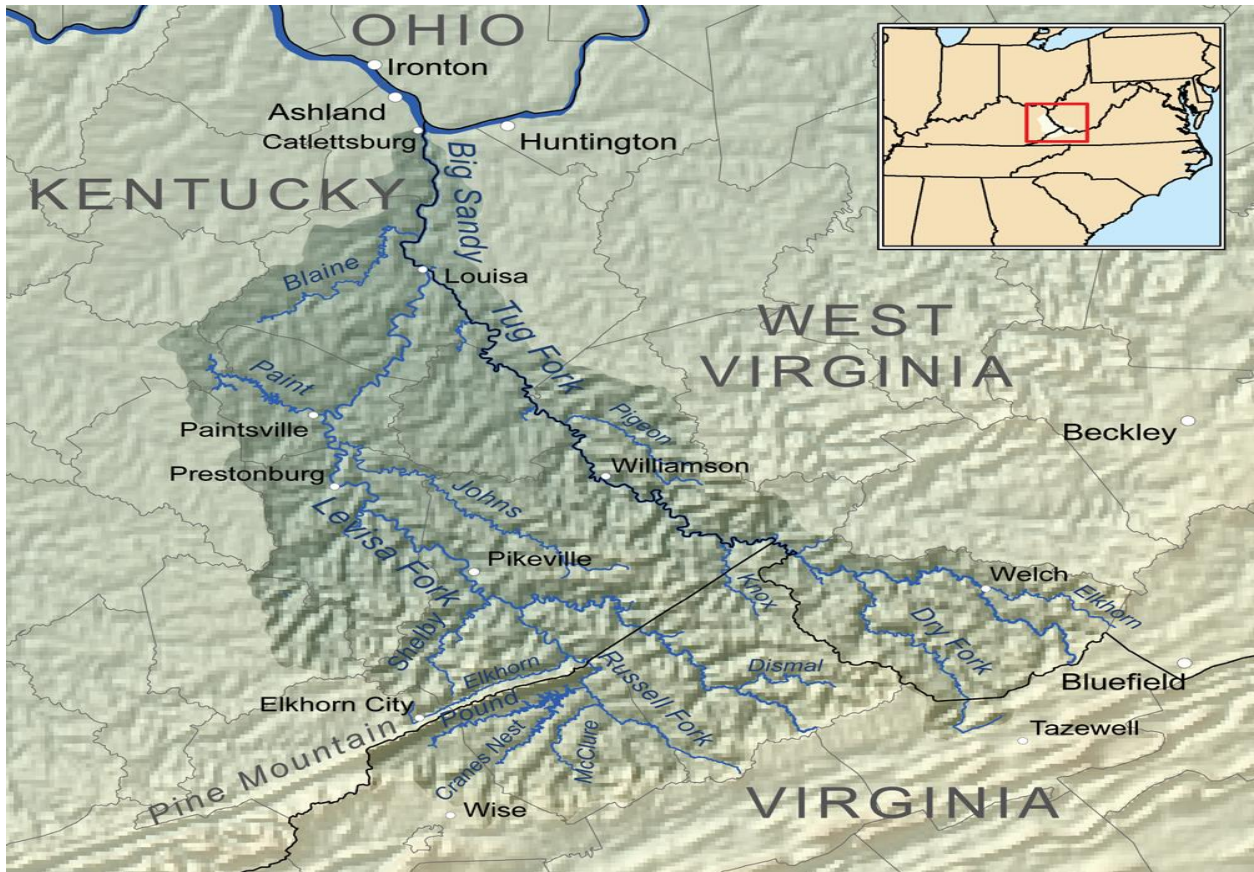
Edwin Biggers

June, 18 2012

I have done some research on the Hatfields and McCoy feud, and in the course of this research, I found that Devil Anse Hatfield was indeed baptized into Christ in 1911, and two of his sons later. After the movie, I had to dig hard to find information from my research, and found that information. Hatfield was baptized by a man named "Uncle Dick" Garrett, who was a circuit preacher that was known for establishing the Crooked Creek church of Christ around the turn of the century. Devil Anse Hatfield's baptism shows the power of God over man's corruption & how glorious a sinner's redemption is when God's grace is extended, no matter how horrific the sins.

Praise God!!

Stephen Maple



“I have been away in Murderland for nearly ten days...”

Depicting Logan County and the bordering counties as godless and lawless is a statement not borne out by Logan County Circuit Court records. The records do not show an unusually large amount of violent crime for the time period. Records that are available do, however, indicate a robust religious presence in the area.

Describing the absence of churches, Crawford writes:

“There is not in the county of Logan a single church built by popular effort. In fact, there is only one church throughout this great county. ..[T]he building in its incomplete state is now used by ignorant itinerant preachers...”

Coming to Logan County, West Virginia after traveling throughout Europe may have been a letdown. Of course, there were no churches to rival Europe’s grand places of worship: Saint Peter’s Basilica, in Rome, or Saint James Cathedral in London, England.

What is the evidence, then, from primary sources of the existence of various Christian churches in Logan and surrounding counties?

1. Church of Christ; Christian Church; Disciples of Christ – Alexander M. Lunsford, a disciple of Alexander Campbell, came to the area around 1867. Another preacher that came to the area was William Powell. Later, in the mid-1870s, Lunsford converted William Dyke “Uncle Dyke” Garrett to the faith.

William D. Garrett began his ministry near Crooked Creek in Logan County in 1878. By September 24, 1879, he was authorized by the Logan County Court to perform weddings. A few years later William Powell wrote regarding church activities:

“Through Brother W. D. Garrett I learned that there have been 90 additions to the churches in Logan and Boone County since the last annual meeting...Brother Lunsford preaches occasionally at Logan Court House. ” (Christian Standard, May 1, 1881)

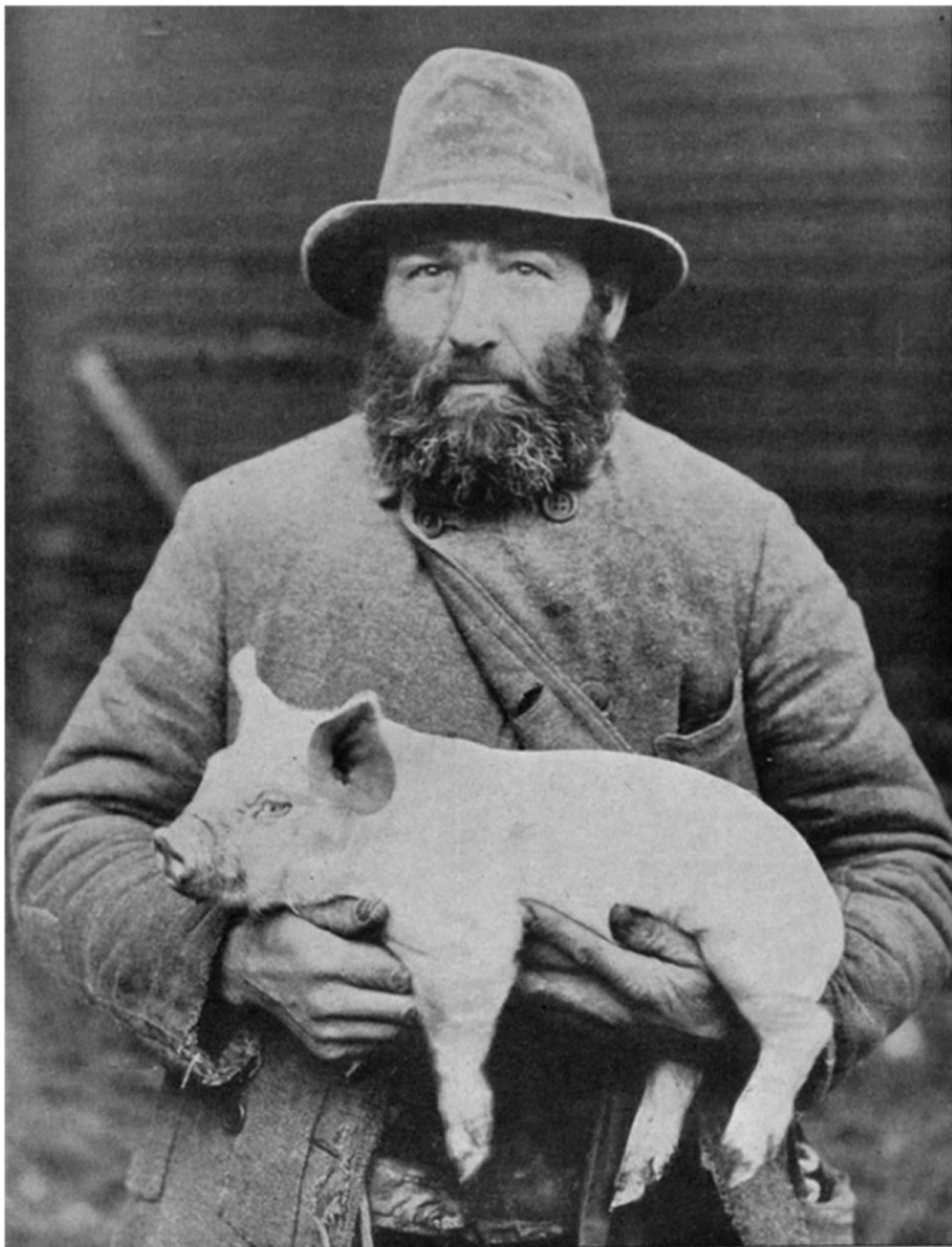
From 1867 to 1889, growth was steady, new congregations formed, membership grew.

– Internet Description



Devil Anse Hatfield & Randal McCoy





Ladufogdens kelgris. Efter en fotografi af Gust. Heurlin.

It Was 1878 When One Family Brought The Other To Local Court Over A Pig!



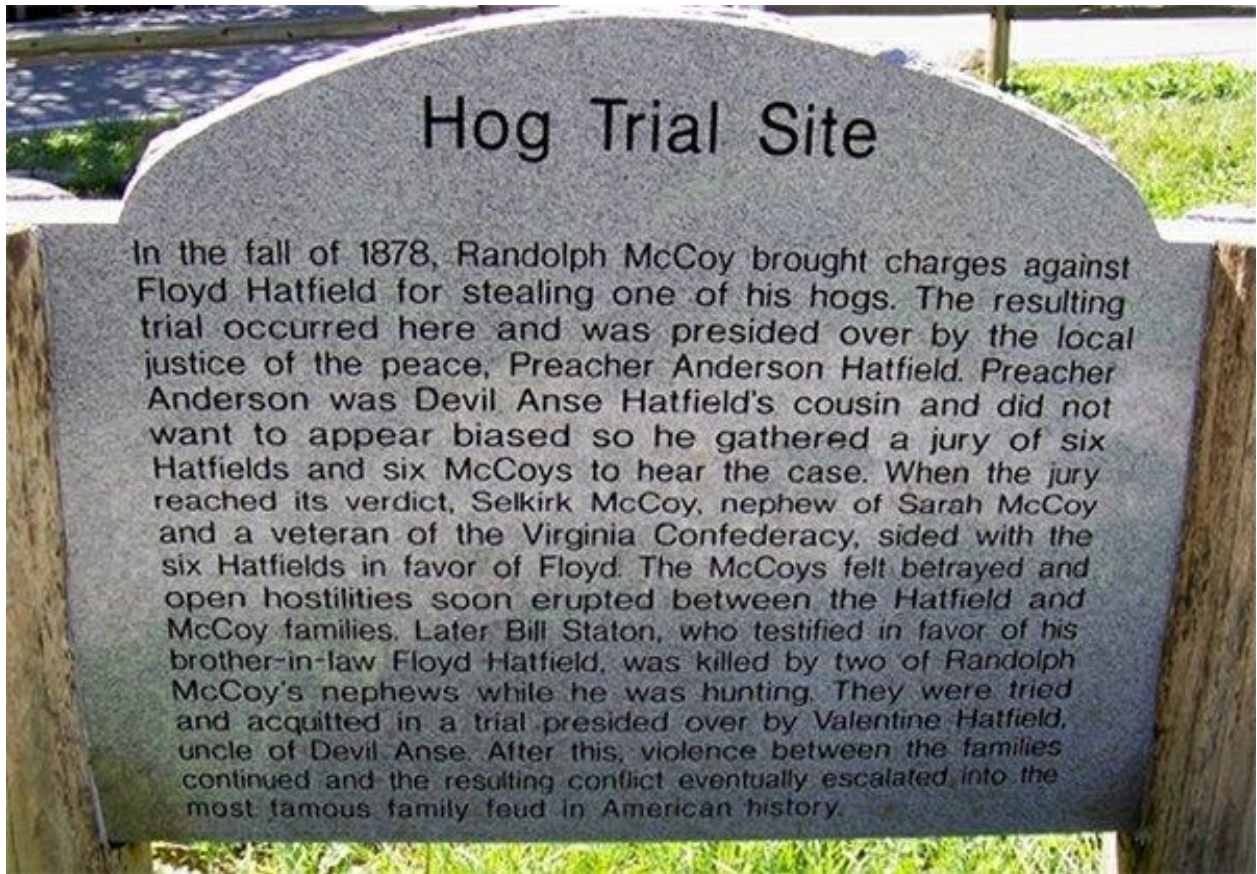
More than 35 lives were lost between 1878 and 1890 during the Hatfield-McCoy feud, which stemmed from a dispute over the ownership of a pig.

HATFIELDS & McCOYS ON DVD



>Events Escalate Exponential>



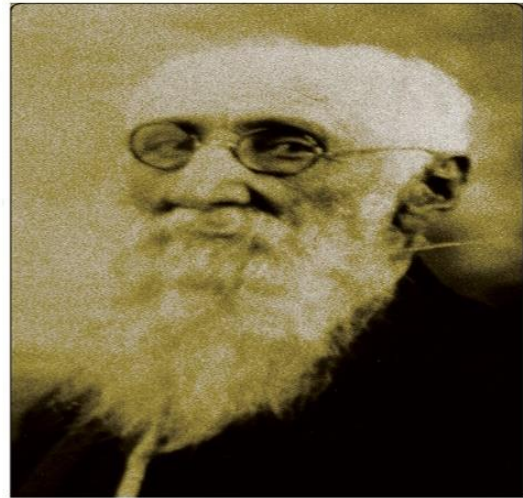




FAITH

IN THE LOGAN COUNTY MOUNTAINS

**Evangelist, Circuit-Ridin' Preacher, Church Planter;
Friend and Spiritual Mentor to Devil Anse Hatfield**



Uncle William Dyke "Uncle Dyke" Garrett
December 1841 - May 1938





Clergyman William Dyke “Uncle Dyke” Garrett (December 10, 1841–May 29, 1938) was Logan County’s most famous preacher for the Church of Christ. He was born on Big Creek, the son of John and Eliza Godby Garrett. He enlisted on the side of the Confederacy in the Logan Wildcats (Company D 36th Virginia Infantry) at the start of the Civil War but was made the company’s informal chaplain when it was found

he was deaf in one ear. He deplored the war, denouncing it as being against God’s will, having evidently come to that conclusion after witnessing execution of Southern deserters.

Previously unordained, Garrett began thinking seriously about Christianity after the war and was converted by Alexander M. Lunsford, who preached in Mingo and Logan counties. **In 1878, Garrett became a circuit rider, preaching all throughout Logan County the rest of his life.** He was the inspiration for the construction of the Crooked Creek Church of Christ and helped establish a sister church in Logan Courthouse, now Logan.

Garrett married Sallie Smith in 1867, and he and “Aunt Sallie” remained married for 71 years. **He was a friend of feudist Anderson “Devil Anse” Hatfield from at least the late 1860s onward, and his greatest fame was for converting Hatfield and baptizing him in Main Island Creek.** Anse Hatfield and Dyke Garrett were members of the Camp Stratton United Confederate Veterans, the social organization that controlled Logan County politics between 1870 and 1915, with Garrett serving as the group’s spiritual leader.

Narrow Window For Intervention

BEFORE THE PIG TRIAL IN 1878:

- **Dyle Garrett Was Available**
- **Place Of Assembly Available**
- **Hatfield Family Congregants**
- **McCoy Family Congregants**
- **Sermon On 1st Corinthians 6**
- **Sermon On Matthew 5:24ff**
- **Sermon On Matthew 5:38ff**
- **Sermon On Matthew 18:17**

Seek the Welfare of the City/Civil Litigation/1st Corinthians 6

“Paul’s condemnation of Christians appearing before ‘judges’ or ‘juries’ who were patently unjust in the way they arrived at judicial decisions is explicable, given the difficulties of civil litigation in the 1st Century.

It has also become clear that the strife and jealousy had split over into the area of seemingly minor disputes which were being settled by civil action.

In presenting his argument, Paul not only referred to the important issue of the future role of the saints in judging the world. He also asked ironically about ‘the wise man in your midst’ and those ‘least esteemed’. The former was represented in the Christian community by the ‘wise among you in this age’ (3,18). The latter group was readily recognized in the city of Corinth in stark contrast to those ‘most esteemed’ in the secular.

Paradoxically, the Corinthian church had judged the outsider in politeia when they had no right to do so (5,12) but failed dismally to judge the insider when they should have done so (5,13). On the other hand, they had allowed the unrighteous outsiders to judge the insiders (6,1) when they should have resorted to the use of a fellow Christian from their number who, by reason of his legal training, would have had the requisite qualifications in order to act as a private arbitrator. . .

The contest which had surfaced in jealousy and rivalry between factions in the Christian meeting had also spilt over into the secular courts of Corinth in civil actions.

The presence of Christians in civil courts taking actions against fellow members of their ‘association’ was prohibited. Their conduct had nothing to do with benefactions or gospel concerns. It was simply a **spill-over of divisive behavior** from the Christian into the civil courts which were regarded as a legitimate sphere in struggles for primacy.”

– Bruce W. Winter, pages 118-121

IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH

Going To Law, Unrighteousness, Use of Body

The Design Of This Chapter

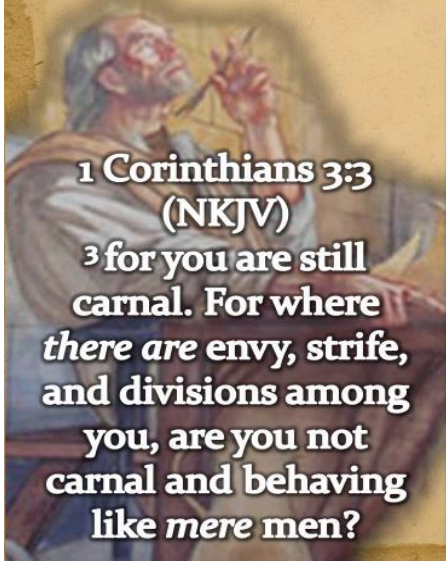


I CORINTHIANS 6:1-20

- ◆ To reprove the Corinthians for the practice of going to law before heathen courts - (6:1-7)
- ◆ The importance of the church making distinctions between righteousness and unrighteousness - (6:8-11)
- ◆ The sin of fornication is again brought to the forefront to illustrate that the body is to be used for serving God - (6:12-20)

God's Building

Problem of Carnality - (3:1-4)



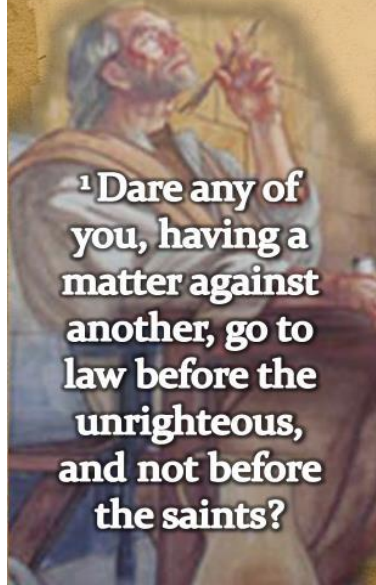
1 Corinthians 3:3
(NKJV)
3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

- ◆ **Many of the Corinthians had not developed a spiritual, (mature) mind** - (2:6,14; 14:20; Mat 16:23)
- ◆ **They were undeveloped like babes** - (They could only bear the simple, rudimentary principles) - (John 16:12; Heb 5:12-14; 1 Pet. 2:2)
- ◆ **The proof that they were yet carnal was the existence of divisions in the church** - (envies, strife & division) - (1:11; 6:1-8; 11:18; Gal. 5:20; James 3:16)

IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH

Going To Law, Unrighteousness, Use of Body

Going To Law With Brethren - v 1-8



¹Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?

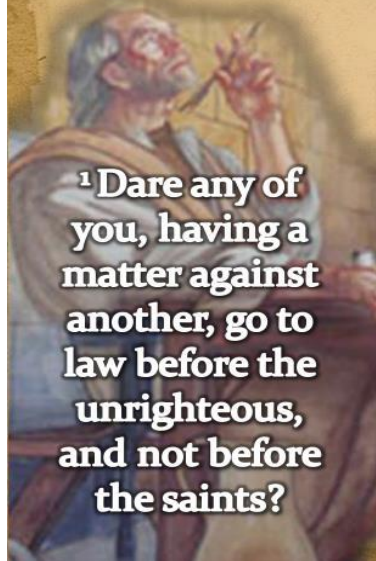
◆ **“Going to Law”**- violating the principle Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount—seeking revenge in court – cf Mat 5:38-42; 18:15-17

- Not a strict prohibition forbidding necessary lawsuits – (Mat 19:9)
- The Corinthians were going before the “unjust” to settle their personal differences – (Mat. 5:38-42)

IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH

Going To Law, Unrighteousness, Use of Body

Going To Law With Brethren - v 1-8



¹Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?

◆ **Involved at least four errors:**

1. Going to law with one another – (7)
2. Going to law before unbelievers – (1,6)
3. Going to law in pagan courts, which would involve oath-taking in the names of pagan deities and other abhorrent practices (see Matt 5:33-37 & James 5:12).
4. Not following the teaching of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17

IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH

Going To Law, Unrighteousness, Use of Body

Going To Law With Brethren - v 1-8



1 Corinthians 6:7
(NKJV)

7 Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather *let yourselves* be cheated?

- ◆ **The people in view here were vying for revenge, and thus bringing harm to the reputations of themselves and the church in public.**
- ◆ **When brethren are unable to come together as children of God and settle a matter, the church loses.**
- ◆ **The contrast of spiritual and worldly wisdom is still in view from the preceding chapters.**

IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH

Going To Law, Unrighteousness, Use of Body

Going To Law With Brethren - v 1-8



1 Cor. 6:2-3
(NKJV)

3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

- ◆ **Judging the angels** - Redemption is not provided for angels (2 Pet 2:4). Again, our decision to submit to God's righteousness stands against them in judgment.
- ◆ **The Point** - is the same - if we are able to determine righteousness by acting in a way to be saved, can't you help one another figure out these trivial matters?

1996 Florida College Lectures: Lessons From First Corinthians

Lawsuits Among Brethren

Paul's instructions to the church at Corinth fulfilled his responsibility to teach Christians to observe all things Christ commanded the apostles (Mt. 28:20). When his brethren behaved contrary to the will of Christ, he reproved the wrong and encouraged them in the right way. In First Corinthians 6:1–8, he rebukes the brethren for litigation before state courts. The principles he gives, in dealing with this and other problems among the early Christians, are universally binding (1 Cor. 1:1, 2). Except where situations are unique to the first century, the principles are bound on all today who “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7). In studying Paul's instructions, we see the problem and the cultural environment from which it arose, show why going to law is wrong, and learn the proper course for Christians.

The Problem of Lawsuits

After discussing the Christians' separation from immoral brethren, Paul abruptly turns his attention to the theme of litigation among them (1 Cor. 5:9–6:1). “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?” (1 Cor. 6:1; NKJV in all references unless indicated). He had learned that the divisions at Corinth found expression in brethren hauling one another before worldly courts. The manner in which he introduces the subject suggests that he was appalled by this activity.

It was so completely contrary to the spirit of brotherly love that inheres in a community of true Christians that he attacks it head on, in midst of a discussion about immoral behavior. Lawsuits are the world's way of settling disputes legally. The issue here is not the civil right of brethren to sue one another at law, but the teaching of Christ regarding the settling of disputes between brethren. All that is legal before civil authority is not lawful for the people of God.

It is the behavior of the brethren, as such, in carrying their conflicts to state courts for settlement that is called in question.

While the lawsuits to which Paul refers were apparently civil in nature, the specific issues involved are not disclosed. The descriptive terms he uses suggest that he was referring to matters involving money. *Bruce W. Winter*, writing about civil litigation in Roman Corinth, says:

In the first century there were specific offences covered by civil as against criminal actions. The former related to claims concerning legal possession, breach of contract, damages, fraud and injury. The breach of the law in 1 Cor. 6:2 is described as (the smallest matters), it is right to regard the actions initiated by a Christian against his fellow believer as coming within the cope of civil and not criminal law. (561)

Any criminal charges would be prosecuted by the government without any action by Christians (Rom. 13:1–7). It is also unlikely that Paul would refer to *spiritual* issues as “the smallest matters.” The government had no interest in religious matters as such (Acts 18:12–17).

Who were the brethren involved in the lawsuits? Not all people were granted the right to prosecute others. Winter says:

Generally, lawsuits were conducted between social equals who were from the powerful of the city, or by a plaintiff of superior social status and power against an inferior. The reason for these proscriptions were to avoid insult being given to the good name of the person concerned or concern for the lack of respect being accorded to one's patron or one's betters. 'Discriminatory rule or discriminatory practices, then, protected members of the higher orders from being taken to law in some circumstances' and 'the evidence shows that a humble prosecutor might be rejected merely because of the quality of his opponent.' (561)

The church at Corinth was apparently large and, while most of the members seem to have come from the lower classes, there were enough of the “mighty” and “noble” among them to disturb the peace of the church with lawsuits, if they were so limited.

But the principles with which Paul deals are unchanged by the status of the litigants. **The lawsuits involve litigation over which the litigants have control.** These are lawsuits initiated by brethren themselves to redress a wrong, real or supposed. This is clearly proscribed by the apostle. But there are some legal questions, even between brethren, that require courts of law for settlement. Christ grants the believer the right to divorce and remarry in the case of infidelity (Mt. 19:9). The exercise of this right, under modern governments, necessitates action before civil courts. Also, one who is dragged into court by a brother may have no choice but to respond, although the teaching of Paul suggests that he should make every effort to avoid it.

Furthermore, there may be situations where resort to civil courts may be appropriate, for example in regard to liability insurance which is applicable. A brother is injured by the negligence of another and the one who causes the injury acknowledges his fault. He is willing to grant the injured brother full compensation, but must go to law to obtain it. Assuming that a lawsuit under such circumstances could be filed without any divisive effect or the arousing of animosity between the brethren involved and that recovery is limited to the insurance coverage, then such a suit seemingly would not violate the principles given by Paul.

There may be other situations also in which legal matters before the law are taken out of the brethren's hands, but Paul is dealing with those over which they have control. Whether the cases are "trivial," as some no doubt were, or "major," the principle remains the same. All are forbidden! **Reference to "the smallest matters" (1 Cor. 6:2) is not necessarily a contrast of minor suits in relation to major ones, but rather between saints judging the world and angels in contrast to the lawsuits under consideration.** It is the matter of brethren going to law before unbelievers to settle differences that could be settled between brethren that is condemned.

The Causes of the Problem

The cultural environment evidently contributed directly to the rise of lawsuits among the brethren at Corinth. If the problem existed in other congregations, the New Testament does not mention it. William Barclay describes this as "a problem which especially affected the Greeks" (55). The Grecians were characteristically a litigious people. Here, as in other disorders at Corinth, the socially transmitted behavior patterns and traits of the Corinthians influenced the thinking and action of the brethren. Barclay says:

The law courts (among the Greeks) were in fact one of their chief amusements and entertainments. Going to law was integrally bound up with Greek life.... The Greeks were in fact famous, or notorious, for their love of going to law. Not unnaturally, certain of the Greeks had brought their litigious tendencies into the Christian Church; and Paul was shocked. (55–56)

Charles R. Erdman suggests that lawsuits were “a growing practice among the Corinthian Christians ... (which) had become so frequent as to constitute a scandal” (59). “It is easy to understand,” he writes, “how these Greeks, fond of oratory, fond of debate, fond of the excitement of a contest, had a natural liking for litigation” (59). Close kin to this is our **insistence upon “rights” and our almost universal quest for “compensation” for any deprivation of them. This has made Americans more litigious than the Greeks.** Our rights under the Constitution are granted by men, and if men can give rights, men can take them away. Our desire for “rights” and “compensation” could create situations among brethren today similar to that of the first century Corinthians.

While the practice of the Greeks gave rise to the problem of litigation in the church at Corinth, there was another problem that fostered it: the carnality of the Corinthians (1 Cor. 3:1–4). The right conduct of Christians in all realms of activity is primarily predicated on three things: (1) knowledge of God’s will regarding any thought, belief, or action under consideration (2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17); (2) growth in spiritual maturity and moral courage, or “virtue,” that enables the believer to put his knowledge into practice (2 Pet. 1:5; 1 Cor. 15:58); and (3) the desire to do right before God regardless of our circumstances, or the contrary influences of the cultural climate in which we live (Mt. 22:37–40; Phil. 2:13).

These requirements for true discipleship were lacking at Corinth because of their carnality. Instructions regarding the harm of lawsuits between brethren, or the manner of settling their differences peacefully, apparently had not been specifically given by Paul, but his teaching on brotherly kindness and love, which were surely included in his prolonged instructions to the church (Acts 18:11), should have alerted them to the evil of lawsuits and to their unbrotherly motives. The fact that Paul labels the practice as shameful and **evidence of “an utter failure”** shows that even minus the instructions he gives in 1 Corinthians 6, the brethren were without excuse for their behavior.

We do not need specific instructions for every detail of life to apply the principles that teach us how to treat brethren. But lest there be any further mistake regarding lawsuits, Paul shows that this is wrong and gives instructions regarding the proper way to deal with personal problems between brethren. The worldliness of the Corinthians shows that the members had not reached the level of spiritual maturity needed to overcome the devices of Satan, designed by him to destroy Godly living, brotherly love, and Christian fellowship. The result of his aim is to make the church an enclave of continued strife and division, and because of it, to make the brethren a spectacle for ridicule before the world.

Wherever the traits of true discipleship are lacking, brethren may not actually go to law with one another, but they will treat one another in ways equally as shameful and wrong. We do not have to be before a civil judge to be guilty of the spirit that Paul proscribes. While we are zealous about avoiding lawsuits, let us not at the same time be guilty of the same attitude toward our brethren that gave rise to the lawsuits among the Corinthians. *The devil knows more than one way to skin a cat.*

The Evil of Lawsuits

Paul's instructions to the Corinthians regarding litigation reveals the wrong involved in it. "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?" (1 Cor. 6:1). This, within itself, is sufficient to show that the practice, to the extent the Christian has control over it, is sinful. If nothing more were said, this would at least raise a question mark in the mind of the Christian about such lawsuits. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown say, "The word (dare) implies treason against the Christian brotherhood" (272). It is manifestly contrary to God's will for a Christian to drag a brother into court over such matters as those under discussion by Paul.

"If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge? I say this to your shame" (1 Cor. 6:4, 5a). Verse four is translated two ways because, "It is disputed whether (the Greek word translated *set*) is to be taken as an imperative, *set*, (A. V.), or as interrogative, *do you set* (Rev.)" (Vincent 213). Some translators think Paul is instructing the brethren to appoint as judges for their disputes "those who are least esteemed in the church." "Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church!" (1 Cor. 6:4 NIV). Barton W. Johnson expresses this view, seeing **Paul's words as, "An ironical way of hinting that their differences were so petty as to be judged only by the poorest witted"** (91). But this contradicts Paul's instructions in verse 5 to find "a wise man" among them to judge such matters.

Other translators **make the verse a question**, seeing Paul's words as an ironical objection to the practice of trying cases between brethren before worldly courts. "If then you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who are least esteemed by the church?" (1 Cor. 6:4 RSV).

J. W. McGarvey describes the case more colorfully: **“If called on as a church to judge any matter, would you choose its simpletons and numskulls as judges? I ask this to make you ashamed, for ye do even more foolishly when you submit your cases to worldlings, who are even less competent judges”** (75). The shame of referring such cases to secular courts is apparent on two grounds: (1) the high calling and destiny of Christians and (2) the low estimate in which such judges were evidently held by the church.

The litigation of Christians before civil courts is also wrong because it subjects the church to disgrace before the unbelieving community. “But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!” (1 Cor. 6:6). This is said in contrast to what should be done: find one among them who could judge such matters. Instead of that, “Brother goes to law against brother.” That is bad enough, but **the evil is compounded because it is “before unbelievers.”** Paul does not concede that insisting on one’s “rights” in litigious suits between brethren is best, but if such contests must come, they should not be before unbelievers. This is forbidden, but it might further be charged against such lawsuits before the world, that they betray the moral climate that should prevail among Christians and show a lack of brotherly love without which no congregation can succeed in its mission.

“Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?” (1 Cor. 6:7). Going to law against brethren is a “defeat for you” (RSV). It “means you have been completely defeated already” (NIV). “*Among* is omitted in the best texts, so we should read *a loss to you*” (Vincent 3:214). **Regardless of who might win the case, or what its outcome otherwise might be, the very fact that such lawsuits exist is a defeat for them as Christians.**

The practice shows that they had failed in one of the most elementary requirements of Christianity: the love of the brethren. In contending that lawsuits are a token of defeat, the apostle shows that the litigants have not yet realized the ideal of Christians loving one another. When our conduct as brethren, whether in legal battles or in church fusses or in animosity between brethren over who is greatness in the kingdom, it is an utter defeat for the spirit of Christ that is to mold, develop, and guide our lives.

The Solution to the Problem

Granting that we live in an imperfect world, we know such differences can and do arise among brethren. But how should they be dealt with? “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?” (1 Cor. 6:1). The latter part of the verse tells where unavoidable disputes should be settled: “before the saints.”

“Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?” (1 Cor. 6:2, 3). We need not be concerned about what Paul means by the saints judging the world and angels. In 1829, a brother asked Barton W. Stone how the saints would judge the world. Stone replied, “We are not informed *how*; it is sufficient for us to know the fact, that they shall” (Queries 14). On another occasion, he said, “They may simply say, righteous and true are thy judgments, O, Lord, and give a loud Amen” (A Few Thoughts 54). Stone’s answer is good enough here. The important thing is that brethren are worthy to judge in such matters.

Paul asks, “Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren?” (1 Cor. 6:5). When such disputes arise, there is no prescribed process by which they are to be carried out. The rule is, it is best not to have such disputes, but if they must be, then have them before brethren. The apostle is not contending for church courts as such, nor even that a matter of this kind needs to be brought before the church. **Two brethren with a problem could settle it with the help of one or more mutually trusted brothers without the church even knowing about it.** Some very serious problems in modern times have been settled in this manner.

The church has no authority to impose a solution on brethren. However, if brethren go to law with one another, it then may become a church matter, not to settle the case, but to deal with the brethren for going to law. Matthew 18:15–17 does not seem to be applicable to the differences under discussion. **Paul is dealing with matters instigated by one brother against another, which the instigator could ignore if he chose to do so. But Matthew 18 applies to offences that *must be settled*. “Is there not a wise man among you” indicates the arbitrator is a brother respected by both parties. He does not need to be an elder or preacher.**

Paul shows that there is yet a better course for the Christian of a litigious bent than bringing his case before saints. “Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?” (1 Cor. 6:7). In language reminiscent of the Sermon on the Mount, Paul reminds us that it is better to suffer wrong than to inflict wrong, better to be defrauded than to defraud. The better course would be to accept wrong, if the wrong cannot be amicably settled between brethren. Accepting wrong is a victory, not a loss. It is a victory because in accepting the wrong we conquer the lower nature that seeks revenge and we attain a higher nature that makes us more like Christ.

Conclusion

What then are we to conclude from Paul's instructions on brethren going to law? Some things seem to be clear. **(1)** It is to be expected that problems of the nature discussed will arise among brethren. **(2)** It is wrong for brethren to settle such disputes before courts of law, when such disputes are under their control. **(3)** The occurrence of such matters disgraces the church. **(4)** There are among the brethren at least a few wise men (1 Cor. 1:26) who may be peacemakers between brethren. **(5)** The best solution to quarrels between brethren is the disposition to prefer to suffer than to redress a wrong, if the redressing of it would injure the cause of Christ, bring reproach on God, or harm a brother in the kingdom.

If the Christian has even the remotest tinge of the love of Christ within his heart he will rather suffer insult and loss and injury and damage than try to inflict them on someone else—still more so, if that person is a brother.... A Christian does not order his dealing with others by the desire for recompense and the principles of crude justice. He orders them by the spirit of love; and the spirit of love will insist that he live at peace with his brother, and will forbid him to demean himself by going to law. (Barclay 56)

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IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH

Going To Law, Unrighteousness, Use of Body

1 Corinthians 6:1-20 (NKJV)

¹ Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? ² Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? ³ Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?



Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world?...Do you not know that we will judge angels?

- 1 Corinthians 6:2-3

Meyer's NT Commentary

[1 Corinthians 6:3-4](#). Climactic parallels to [1 Corinthians 6:2](#), [1 Corinthians 6:3](#) corresponding to the first half of the preceding verse, and [1 Corinthians 6:4](#) to the second; hence [1 Corinthians 6:4](#) also should be taken as a *question*.

[ἀγγέλους] *angels*, and that—since no defining epithet is added—in the *good* sense, not as most commentators make it, *demons* ([Judges 1:6](#); [2 Peter 2:4](#)), nor good *and* bad angels; also, as it would appear, Hofmann). That *angels* themselves shall come within the sphere of the judicial activity of glorified believers, is stated here as proposition established to the believing consciousness of readers, a proposition, the ground for which is to be found in the fact that in Christ, whose glorified saints will reign with Him, is given the absolute truth and the absolute right, and, consequently, the highest judicial court of resort, even as regards the world of angels, from the jurisdiction of which not even the loftiest of created beings can be excepted. There is nothing of a more detailed nature on this subject in the N. T.; but in general, [Hebrews 1:14](#), according to which their service must be one for which they are to render an account; and [Galatians 1:8](#), according to which, in a certain supposed case, they would incur an ἀνάθεμα.[898] All modes of explaining away the simple meaning of the words are just as inadmissible as in [1 Corinthians 6:2](#); as, for example, Chrysostom: ὅταν γὰρ αἱ ἀσώματοι δυνάμεις αὐταὶ ἔλαττον ἡμῶν εὐρεθῶσιν ἔχουσαι τῶν σάρκα περιβεβλημένων, χαλεπωτέραν δώσουσι δίκην; Erasmus: “vestra pietas illorum impietatem, vestra innocentia illorum impuritatem condemnabit;” Calovius: the *judicium* is *approbativum*, making manifest, that is to say, before the whole world the victory of the saints already in this life over the devil; Lightfoot: what is meant is, that the influence of the kingdom of Satan is to be destroyed by Christianity; while Nösselt, Ernesti, and Stolz make it *ability* to judge, if an angel were to preach a false gospel ([Galatians 1:8](#)).

Expositor's Greek Testament

[1 Corinthians 6:3](#). The question of [1 Corinthians 6:2](#) urged to its climax: “Know you not that we shall judge *angels?*” Paul already does this, hypothetically, in [Galatians 1:8](#). *Instructed* through the Church ([Ephesians 3:10](#)), the heavenly powers will be subject to final *correction* from the same quarter. The angels were identified, in later Jewish thought, with the forces of nature and the destiny of nations ([Psalm 104:4](#); [Daniel 10:13](#); [Daniel 12:1](#)); they must be affected by any judgment embracing the κόσμος. “There is, it seems, a solidarity between the Princes of the nations (*cf.* Paul’s ἀρχαὶ κ. ἐξουσίαι, [1 Corinthians 15:24](#), etc.) and the nations directed by them; according to *Shir rabba*, 27 *b*, God does not punish a people until He has first humbled its Angel-prince in the higher world, and according to *Tanchuma, Beshallah*, 13, He will hereafter judge the nations only when He has first judged their Angel-princes” (Weber, *Altsynag. paläst. Théologie*, p. 165); Satan is κατ’ ἐξοχήν “the god of this world” ([2 Corinthians 4:4](#); *cf.* [John 14:30](#), [Luke 4:6](#)), and has his “angels” whom P. styles “world-rulers” ([Ephesians 6:12](#), [Matthew 25:41](#)). On the throne of world-judgment Christ will sit ([Acts 17:31](#), [Matthew 25:31](#) f.), and “the saints”—*sc.* after their own acquittal—as His assessors.—κρινούσιν in this context qualifies its objects as *culpable*; *cf.* ἵνα καταργήσῃ in [1 Corinthians 15:24](#); also [1 Corinthians 5:12](#) above, and other parls. The anarthrous ἀγγέλους signifies beings of this order, in contrast with *men* (*cf.* [1 Corinthians 4:9](#); also [Judges 1:6](#)); “Paul does not wish to mark out this or that class of angels, but **to awaken in the Church the sense of its competence and dignity by reminding it that beings of this lofty nature will one day be subject to its jurisdiction**” (Gd[898]; also El[899]).—μήτιγε βιωτικά (*nedum quidem*: not surely a continued interrog., as W.H[900] punctuate)—in sharp contrast to “angels”—“(to say) nothing verily of secular matters!”.—μήτιγε (*sc.* λέγωμεν) is a N.T. *h.l.*[901],—a sound cl[902] idiom (see Lidd[903] on μήτις, also El[904] *ad. loc.*),—negative syn[905] for πόσω μᾶλλον ([Romans 11:12](#); [Romans 11:24](#)); for the γε, *cf.* [1 Corinthians 4:8](#).—βιωτικός, of later Gr[906] (after Aristotle), denotes matters relating to βίος (one’s “living”), which differs from ζωὴ as *vita quam* from *vita qua vivimus*—“quae ad hujus vitae usum pertinent” (Bz[907]), or “ad victum pertinentia” (Cv[908]); see Lt[909] *ad loc*[910], and Trench, *Syn*[911], § 27.

μήτιγε βιωτικά] is not to be included in the question, so that we should have to put only a comma after κρινούμεν. For βιωτικά, things *which belong to the necessities of this life*.



Judging Angels

“In this section (1 Corinthians 6) Paul is dealing with a problem which specifically affected the Greeks. Jews did not ordinarily go to law in the public law-courts at all; they settled things before the elders of the village or the elders of the Synagogue; to them justice was far more a thing to be settled in a family spirit than in a legal spirit, it was far otherwise with the Greeks; the Greeks were naturally & characteristically litigious people. The law courts were in fact one of their chief amusements and entertainments. Going to law was integrally bound up with Greek life”. (*Barclay, p. 55*)

1 Corinthians 6:2 “Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?”

“That the saints shall judge the world?”: “One view understands that the saint's faith will condemn the unbelief of the world just as the Ninevites will rise in judgment against the generation that rejected the Christ” ([Matthew 12:41](#)). (*Willis, p. 181*) “*I think the world will be judged in light of the choices the saints made.* In choosing Christ the saints have charged the world that it is foolish. They have rejected the world's wisdom as nonsense, its priorities and values as upside down and its goals as madness”. (*McGuiggran, p. 70*) In the final judgment, I find simply one judge before whom both saint and sinner must stand ([2 Corinthians 5:10](#)). Thus, we are not the judge, but rather the fact that we could serve God faithfully *removes all the excuses from those who did not.*

“Are ye unworthy”: “Are you not competent” (NASV). “Are you unfit to try the most trivial cases” (TCNT). **“To judge the smallest matters?”** “The most trivial cases” (TCNT). Compared to other judgments that church members are required to give (like found in chapter 5), if one can correctly judge who Christ is and what one must do to be saved, then one should be able to properly judge all lesser issues.

1 Corinthians 6:3 “Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?”

“We shall judge angels?”: “In choosing Christ the saints have wisely placed themselves under authority to God whereas the angels rebelled and kept not their ‘places of authority’ (NIV on Jude 9). To remain true to Jesus Christ when surrounded by temptations and trials is a standing condemnation against those angels who in the very presence of God, were not subject to earthly temptations and yet did not remain faithful. *It is so easy to downplay faithfulness, but faithfulness will be our greatest accomplishment.*”

1 Corinthians 6:4 “If then ye have to judge things pertaining to this life, do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church?”

“Seeing that Christians demonstrate better judgment than the world and even some angels in very serious matters; now when it comes to lesser matters, do you all of a sudden run to people who are not even members of the church?” A great lesson exists here for us. We did not consult the "world" to decide if God existed or not, if the Bible was the word of God, or if Jesus was the Son of God. Why would we consult the world then for much lesser personal issues?

1 Corinthians 6:5 “I say this to move you to shame. What, cannot there be found among you one wise man who shall be able to decide between his brethren”

“I say this to move you to shame”: “He wants them to feel their shame. They prided themselves as men of critical ability. They were a church blessed with spiritual and miraculous abilities. And now, Paul wants to know, can't there be found a wise man who can give wise counsel to differing brothers? (*McGuiggran, pp. 70-71*) **“One wise man”:** “Are you really unable to find among your number at least one man with enough sense” (*Phi*). “So, utter a lack of men of sense amongst you Corinthians, with all your talent and pretensions? (1:5, 3:18, 4:10)” (*Gr. Ex. N.T. p. 816*). (*Fee, p. 237*)

1 Corinthians 6:6 “but brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?”

“Not only so, but all of this happens right in the open, ‘in front of unbelievers’” (*Fee, p. 237*). **“And that”:** Calling attention *to the worst feature*. “That there should be disputes is bad; that Christian should to go law with Christian is worse; that Christians should do this before unbelievers is worst of all” (*Robertson, pp. 118-119*).

1 Corinthians 6:7 “Nay, already it is altogether a defect in you, that ye have lawsuits one with another. Why not rather take wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?”

“Already it is altogether a defect in you”: “Without going any further, suing one another means you have *utterly failed*” (*Beck*). “Actually, then, it is already a defeat to you” (NASV). **“Already”:** “Before ye even begin civil action” (*McGarvey, p. 75*).

“Why not rather take wrong?”: “Why not, indeed! For one living in the old age, where selfishness in all of its sordid as well as *domesticated* forms still rules, one can give a thousand reasons why not; but they all begin with the word ‘but’ (as in, ‘But you do not know what he did to me’) and are motivated by some form of self-protection or self-gain”. (*Fee, pp. 240-241*)

“Paul now turns his attention directly to the two men involved in the litigation, the actions of both men are a total defeat, shaming both the church and themselves” (Fee). “Verse 7 makes good reading; it's the practice of it that makes it hard. We love to see it in others. Not family members or friends, of course. Is there never a time to turn the other cheek? Is there never a time to take mistreatment with kindness in return? Is it never right to suffer yourself to be defrauded? Is 1 Peter 2:21-23 only for cranks and fanatics? Well? Sometimes when I look within and look around I think we're all dabbling in religion rather than being disciples of Christ. We read truths like verse 7 and line up about 200 reasons why we cannot live that way and 400 occasions when it would be wrong to do so. How, in God's name, did the Church of Christ ever get launched in the world with the amount of success it enjoyed if its early members were as shrewd as we are in avoiding pain and personal loss?” (McGuiggan)

1 Corinthians 6:8 “Nay, but ye yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren”

“But ye yourselves do wrong”: Far from enduring wrong ([Matthew 5:40](#); [1 Peter 2:22](#)), or forfeiting "their rights" for others, they were actually becoming the abusers. In the demand for "justice", they were being unjust to others. The verse contains a valuable truth. When Christians seek revenge, "so-called justice", or "their rights", they often end up walking all over the "rights" of others to get them ([Romans 12:17-21](#)).

Christian Research Journal Investigates Christians in the Courtroom

Author:

James Patrick Holding



America is an increasingly litigious society. According to a July 2012 estimate, over 15 million civil lawsuits are filed in the United States annually.¹ There is a good chance that the average Christian someday will find himself summoned to court, whether it is over a factual tort or a frivolous triviality.

What does the Bible say about Christians in the legal courtroom? Passages relevant to litigation should be applied cautiously to our modern world. In the Old Testament, the “court” consisted of the village elders responsible for weighing evidence and rendering a decision. In the New Testament, courtroom justice was administered primarily by local authorities, who answered only to their Roman overlords when it came to important matters, like capital cases. Attorneys like Tertullus (Acts 24:1–9) existed, but few could afford their services. Most would do as Paul did there in that situation, and defend themselves *pro se* (“on one’s own behalf”). Taking into account today’s different setting, what does the New Testament teach us about Christians in the courtroom?

Quick Settler. One verse often misused is Matthew 5:25: “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison.”²

Critics argue that this verse commands Christians to assent meekly to charges made against them in any lawsuit, such that they should immediately pay a settlement rather than let the matter go to trial. This interpretation may be paired with an equally risible reading of Matthew 5:40: “And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well.” Critics take this to mean we shouldn’t only offer a settlement but also be much more generous than our adversary demands.

Jesus, however, was speaking to an audience of mostly poor agriculturalists. Such people, when they were hauled into court, were usually brought there by the rich, who sought to oppress them (James 2:6). Against an adversary like this one, the poor person was a near-guaranteed loser even if they were in the legal right.

What could the poor person do in this no-win situation? Jesus indicates that they weren’t to do the most obvious and tempting thing, which was to fight back. Instead, Jesus teaches that the poor person, as a citizen of God’s kingdom, was to set an example by settling with the rich person. They might do this, for example, by agreeing to work off the debt.

Does this mean we must do the same thing today? No, because our modern courts are not automatically a no-win situation. Our judicial system is intended to be equitable to all, regardless of financial standing.

It is easy to come to grips with a judicial adversary in a way that brings honor to God — by admitting guilt where required, or, if we are not guilty, by answering false charges straightforwardly. That places us within the bounds of Paul's admonition to obey those in authority (Rom. 13).

The command to hand over your coat, in contrast, was an act of subversion, not an act of surrender. As the biblical scholar Craig S. Keener points out, this verse offers a “shockingly graphic, almost humorous, illustration of what [Jesus] means by nonresistance to force his hearers to consider their values.”³ Giving away both garments would have resulted in total nudity, an “intolerable dishonor” in ancient Palestine. The wealthy adversary, furthermore, was compelled by biblical law to return a garment taken as pledge (Exod. 22:26–7), and risked the displeasure of God if they did not do so.

In light of contextual realities that informed these verses, there is little application for them today, at least in the modern West. Our courts are not, at least in theory, predisposed to assist the rich & it's possible for a poor person to get equitable justice. The context within which this teaching was applied virtually has vanished from our legal landscape.

Can You Sue a Christian Brother? In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul admonishes that troubled church by saying, “Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? But instead, one brother takes another to court — and this in front of unbelievers! The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already” (6:5b–7a). Does this passage read today still admonish us to keep our internecine conflicts out of the courtroom?

The answer is found when we once more consider the historical context of this passage.⁴ The early Christian church taught that all Christians were equal in Christ (Gal. 3:28). People who lived in the New Testament world, and who were social equals, did not consider it honorable to take each other to court. It was thought better for equal parties to resolve the issue themselves. However, when social equals did go to court, it made public a dispute between two people who should have been able to resolve the issue among themselves. Then, once the matter was decided, **the loser lost honor and reputation, while the winner gained honor at the loser’s expense, which incurred even more ill will between parties.** This is why Jesus refused to arbitrate a dispute between two brothers (Luke 12:13–14). Christ was being asked to take part in what would end up being that of a no-win situation.

This is the problem that faced Paul. Christianity was supposed to make every convert equal in status. If a Christian took another Christian to court, it was an effective denial of equality before Christ. This would make the Christian faith, in general, look bad; pagans would not fail to miss that believers taking each other to court stood square against Christian professions of equality in Christ.

Does this passage apply to Christians today? Yes and no. Paul's reasons for this admonition (the social code of honor) do not apply to twenty-first-century America. Yet it hardly can be ignored that Christians taking each other to court is a poor witness.

Working out the matter within the confines of the church body may be practicable for simple disputes between Christian neighbors arguing over, say, damage done to one person's property by the other person's pet; but that kind of resolution might not be practicable concerning complex litigation issues, such as when two Christian owned businesses have a dispute. Indeed, Christians who take complex matters into their own hands may even find themselves at odds with the law.

For the modern Christian going on the other side of a complex dispute, our best option is to take advantage of court-sanctioned methods of alternative dispute resolution. This can include *mediation* negotiation or case determined third party authorized *arbitration*.

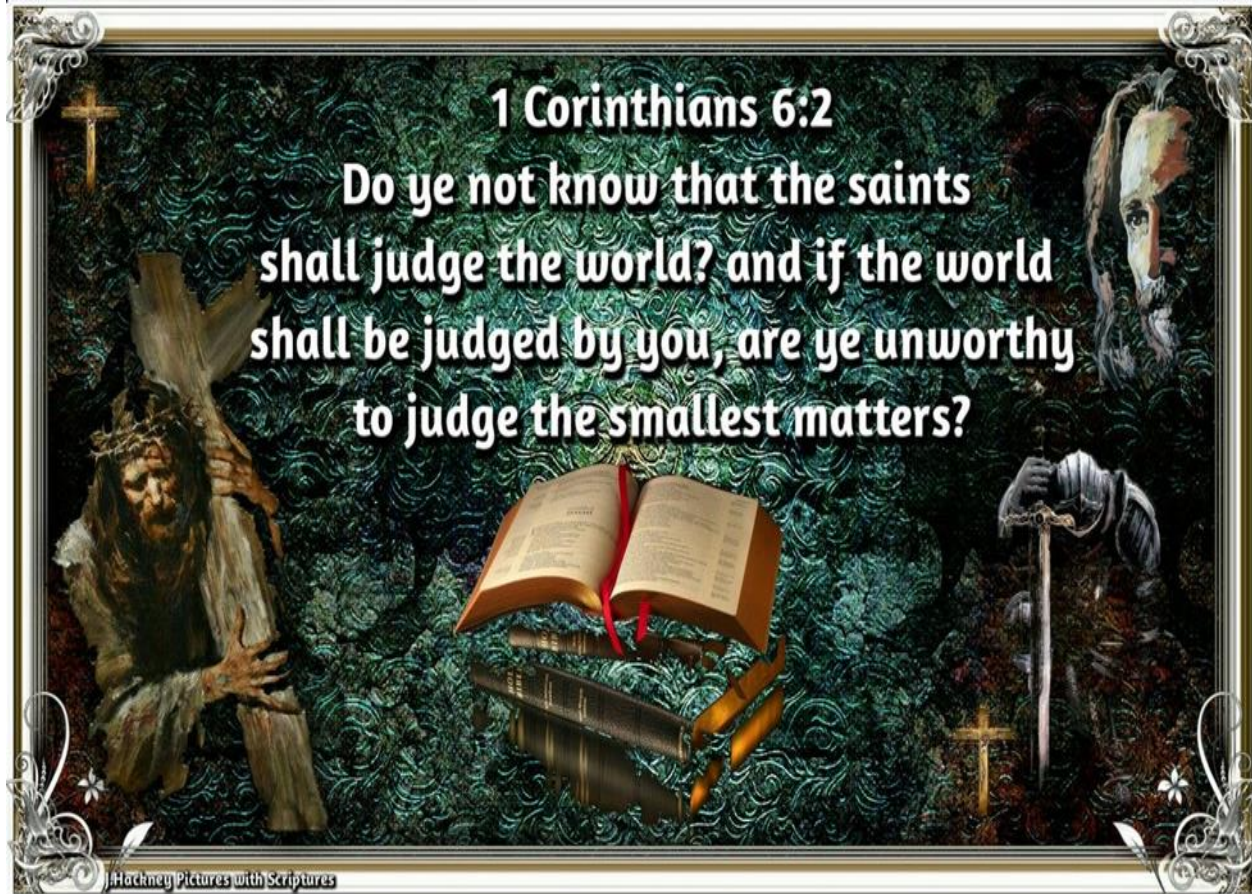
These methods will be less likely to take the dispute public, and so would be more in the spirit Paul intended than taking a fellow Christian to court all the way to the point of trial.⁵

Can We Judge Those Outside? The final passage we are to consider is 1 Corinthians 5:12–13a: “What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside.”

As in the prior instances, however, context limits the application of this passage. Here, Paul is addressing a problem involving a man who violated the church’s moral code and needed to be expelled from the group (5:13). This is a judicial process *within the church*, not in the legal system of the day.⁶

In that light, Paul’s meaning is that, once the man had been expelled, judgment on the man was over, and it was time to move on. In all likelihood, as was normal in that social world, people continued to condemn the man and also continued to berate him even after he was gone for his continued actions. By analogy, it would be foolish to go to a meeting of atheists and try to get an atheist, who used to be a church member, judged for being a sinner. Once we expel someone, for immorality or for another reason, we also should cease with the internal judicial process of the church. There is no need to “collect more evidence” or continuing to condemn.





By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.

— Hosea 4:2 (KJV)

Often Quoted By
Randal McCoy To
"Devil" Hatfield

WATER IS THICKER THAN BLOOD

DOCTRINAL MATTERS DAVE MILLER, Ph.D.

The human relationships that exist between individuals who are physically kin to each other can, indeed, be precious and beautiful. In fact, God was responsible for creating the family framework (Genesis 2:24). Ideally, He intends for people to experience the warm, tender ties of blood kin & the multiple blessings associated with such ties.

Perspective is lost, however, when physical ties are permitted to interfere with obedience to God. God's point is missed when a higher premium is placed on **physical** family than on **spiritual** family, when a Christian fails to relish to a greater degree association with the family of God—the church. The Bible teaches that Christians should not hesitate for a moment to relinquish fleshly relationships if it becomes necessary to do so in order to put God first (Luke 14:20,24).

Commenting on the status of His own blood relatives, Jesus declared: “Whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother” (Matthew 12:50). He recognized that the stringency of His teaching would disrupt family relationships, and so He stated that “a man's foes will be those of his own household” (Matthew 10:36). He even went so far as to relegate physical ties to the comparative level of hatred when contrasted to the priority of spiritual ties: “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” (Lk 14:26).

Such explains why, during the Mosaic period of Bible history, Aaron was not permitted to mourn the deaths of his two sons (Leviticus 10:6). Such explains why the wives, and even some children, perished along with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, as they apparently were unwilling to oppose the blood ties of kinfolk who sinned (Numbers 16:27,32-33). Such explains why the people were to show no pity for their relatives who promoted false teaching, but were to **lead the way** in the execution process (Deuteronomy 13:6-11).

Yes, the family ties of blood kin can be extremely wonderful, providing unending security and acceptance, and frequently fulfill an important, divinely intended function. But these same blood ties can be the very thing that diverts a Christian from the strait and narrow, discouraging one from standing strongly and firmly on the solid bedrock of truth and right. It is imperative that God's church be put **first**—even above family (Matthew 6:33). **First** allegiance and loyalty must be given to those who have been cleansed by the blood of Christ by passing through the waters of baptism (Ephesians 5:6; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 10:22). For with God, **water** is thicker than **blood**.

The Local Spiritual Family of God



DAVE MILLER, Ph.D.

If you have been blessed with a good family, you understand that family relationships can, indeed, be precious and beautiful. In fact, God invented the family (Genesis 2:24). He wants people to experience the warm, tender ties of a physical family and its blessings.

But far more important than even our **physical** family - is God's **spiritual** family. When a person becomes a Christian, he or she has a greater, deeper relationship with the family of God—the church. In fact, the Bible teaches that Christians shouldn't hesitate for a moment to give up fleshly family ties if it becomes necessary to do so in order to put God first (Luke 14:20,24).

Commenting on His relationship with His own blood relatives, Jesus stated: "Whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother" (Matthew 12:50). He realized that His teachings would sometimes disrupt family relationships, and that's why He said "a man's foes will be those of his own household" (Matthew 10:36).

That explains why, during the Mosaic period of Bible history, Aaron was not permitted to mourn the deaths of his two sons (Leviticus 10:6). And it also explains why the people were to show no pity for their relatives who promoted false teaching, but instead were to **lead the way** in their execution (Deuteronomy 13:6-11).

Yes, the family ties of blood kin can be extremely wonderful. They can provide unending security and acceptance. When it's working properly, a physical family fulfills an important job that God intended. But these same blood ties can be the very thing that keeps a Christian from following the strait and narrow, discouraging one from standing strongly and firmly for truth and right. Each person must put God's church **first**—even above physical family (Matthew 6:33).

A Family

Who has God as their Father? Who has an inheritance that will last forever? Who have brothers and sisters yet they have different last names? Who can receive forgiveness of sins? Christians have all of these things. We have Christ as Older Brother, we have different parents yet we are brothers and sisters, an inheritance that will last forever and the Creator as our Father. What more can we ask for? What more can a person ask for than adoption into such a family?

Natural Families

In human family relationships, the family will vary in as many different ways as there are families. One obvious fact is that in any family all the members will eventually die and the family will cease to exist except through the children of the children. How many people do you know whose parents are dead and whose brothers and sisters are all dead?

Fathers vary from family to family. They are all susceptible to death and sickness. In many families the fathers have left (some through divorce, some through neglect).

Discipline varies from father to father and between father and mother. Things the child has done against his father are many times remembered by that father even though the sin is over, the child disciplined and forgiven.

The human family, for all of its frailties, is the God-decreed institution for bringing children into the world and for man and woman to live together. The world is dependent upon the family unit for its future and its stability, however, the human family functions for a short time (if at all) on this earth before it is terminated by disease, death or divorce.

God's Family

“Household of Faith” (Gal. 6:10) and “Household of God” (Eph. 2:19; Heb. 3:6) are used in reference to God’s family. God’s family also is established by its components: Father (Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3-4; 11:31; Eph: 1:3-5), Christ the firstborn son (John. 1:18; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 1:6) and adopted children (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5) of God who receive an inheritance (Eph. 1:11,14,18; 5:5; Col. 1:12).

What sort of family is this? How does it compare with the human family? What advantages are there in the family of God? In this family God is the only parent. Jesus the Christ is His only begotten Son and Christians are adopted children. In this family there is only one center of all authority (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Eph. 1:15-23); there is no doubt as to who is in charge. God’s commandments apply to all equally (Acts 11:1-18; 17:23-31; Rom. 2:1-16; Eph: 2:11-16). God is eternal (Gen. 21:33; Deut. 33:27; Isa. 40:28) and there is no sickness in Him (1 Tim. 6:16; Jas. 1:13,17) and with one parent there is no divorce. There is no earthly family that has this sort of stability in its parents. God has shown no neglect, He has demonstrated His concern by fulfilling His plans (Eph. 1:1-14; Rom. 8:18-30). He not only forgives His erring children, but He remembers their sins no more (Jer. 31:34).

Christ is our Older Brother. He is God and was with man in human form for about 33 years (Lk. 3:23). He was tempted in all ways (Matt. 4:lff; Lk. 4:2; Heb. 4:15), yet He overcame & was sinless (Isa. 53:9; 2 Cor 5:21); thus being the perfect sacrifice (Heb. 10:1-12) and the perfect example (John 14:6,7). He has received all authority from His Father & does only the will of His Father (Mark 14:36; Luke22:42; John 3:34; 15:10). Like all older children, He sympathizes with His brothers and sisters, mediating-interceding-reconciling them with the Father (Heb. 8:6; 7:25; Rom. 5:10-11). Children talk about the things their brothers or sisters have done. Who can claim a nobler Brother who has had more of a good effect on the world, who has shown such a good example to His brethren and has such great authority?

The other children are adopted. This shows the concern of God the Father to mankind. The children aren't only adopted, but they receive an inheritance that is eternal and good. No other children receive forgiveness of their sins which weigh as millstones around their necks (Acts 2:38; 1 John 1:5-10). A person who has no living family has, in Christ, a complete, eternal family. The Father has told His children how they are to treat each other (Rom. 12:9-21; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 5:15-21), their natural family (Eph. 5:22-33; 6:1-4), the state (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17), and non-Christians (Rom. 12:9-21; Gal. 6:11). What other child can say he has such clear, such complete, such uplifting instructions from his father; that he has forgiveness of sins; that he has such a great inheritance and closeness to other children?

Life in the Family

Now that you are a Christian, let us look at life in the family. Through His word God has revealed His will to us that we will be pleasing to Him if we obey Him (Heb. 5:9). Part of His will is that we are to do good to all men, especially to the household of faith (Gal. 6:10). We are to bear each others burdens (Gal. 6:2), strengthen each other (Rom. 14:17-19) and not tear each other down (Gal. 5:15; Jas. 3:14; 4:11). These commands are given to us as individuals. This individual responsibility isn't so surprising, for in our physical families, if a brother or sister needs help we help them directly, we do not set-up a committee or any organization to help them. By these commands being our individual responsibilities, each member of the family should be attuned and responsive to the needs of his brothers and sisters (organizations have no such love or understanding).

Being close to each other has many effects: (1) People who see the closeness of this family relationship want to be a member of it. (2) Brethren who miss services are not alone in their problems. They have brethren, who will help and strengthen them. (3) Brethren when they are together are more likely to act like Christians and are not so easily tempted. (4) Brethren see how each other live as Christians and thus by example strengthen each other. (5) When brethren are close to each other they want to work together to do Gods' will TOGETHER and to do things that are necessary in supporting the work of the local congregation to the glory of their Father. (6) When brethren are close the attendance of the assembly goes up followed by an increase in new brethren.

A Family In Unity

True Christian fellowship must be based on one thing, the active desire to do the will of God (1 John 1:7). If we do not agree to do His will we are not acting like true children of God and divisions are caused among brothers and sisters and thus children of God are separated from each other and from their Father (Isaiah 59:2). In effect, not doing the will of the Father is saying, *“not Thy will Father, but mine be done.”*

Understanding the kingdom and church in the family sense will help us to understand the way Christ prayed to His Father (John. 17:20-23; Mk. 14:36), why we should be emotionally close to Christ and our Father (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6) and to each other.

Understanding the local church as a family unit gives greater dimension to our life in Christ. This true closeness shown by our obedience to our Father's older Brother and our concern for each other is true fellowship in unity, based on our older Brother's example, *“not my will but, Thine be done.”*

Conclusion

The church looked upon in the family sense is a magnet to Christians and non-Christians. To the non-Christian, he sees a closeness not achieved in his own family. The family of God is the only family organization through which eternal life is offered (Eph. 1:3-14). How can we neglect such a great family salvation and how can those who are not Christians keep their eyes and hearts away from such a desirable family-salvation?

The Church at Corinth: A Case Study of Division in the Local Church

Because churches of Christ have a propensity to divide, I have been writing on the causes of division in local churches, using the text of 1 Corinthians as our guide. The issues that most frequently divide churches are problems that could and should be worked through in order to maintain unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rather than doctrinally different mind sets that inevitably take brethren in opposite directions (Ephesians 4:3). Sometimes the tensions in local churches are created by brethren committing sins against one another. The church at Corinth was certainly troubled by these, as an examination of First Corinthians Chapter Six amply demonstrates. 1 Corinthians begins by addressing a case in which one brother was taking another brother to court over some unknown problem. He wrote,

'Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are the least esteemed by the church to judge? I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goes to law against brother, and before unbelievers! Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated? No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren!' (1 Corinthians 6:18).

One can only imagine the tension that was in the church when one brother went to worship and sat across the aisle from another brother whom he was suing before the civil courts. When he departed, did he say, "I will see you in court tomorrow" or did he just refuse to speak to his brother? Were their families (or the entire family clan) alienated from each other to the point that, when the final "amen" was said, one family clique gathered in one corner of the building chatting with each other and other family cliques in other parts of the building speaking to each other, but no one from either group making any effort in order to intermingle with the other? The brotherly love that is the evidence that one is a child of God undoubtedly was absent. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35). Wonder what one would conclude based on what he saw at Corinth?

What should have been done in Corinth? **The Lord's apostle indicates that the church should have gotten involved in the conflict. The brethren should have selected the wise ones among them and intervened to settle the problem among the members rather than letting matters deteriorate to the point that one brother was suing the other in the civil courts.**

The problem at Corinth sometimes repeats itself today in that personal offences are not addressed by the local church. Jesus instructs, “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he will hear you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses - every word may be established.’ **And if he then refuses to hear them, tell it to the church.** But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector” (Matthew 18:15-17).

When a brother confronts his brother who has sinned against him, the two usually can work out differences. If the brother denies committing the sin of which he is charged, the brother is to bring two or three witnesses to the offence to support what he is charging his brother with committing.

Sometimes brethren have misunderstood the text to say that he is to take two or three who will watch the two disagreeing brothers argue about the issue. The text states that he is bringing two or three witnesses (brethren who can confirm that the offence occurred.) When the brother refuses to correct his sin, **the innocent party should “tell it to the church.”**

This step apparently was not taken at Corinth, or if it were taken, the church did not follow through with its obligation to discipline the erring brother. Too often brethren don't want to get involved in such conflicts and, as a result, the problem grows, creates tension in the local church, and may even eventually lead to factions and division. When the problem is addressed, the sinful exhorted to repent, and the impenitent withdrawn from, the congregation can work through such problems as that which threatened the church at Corinth.

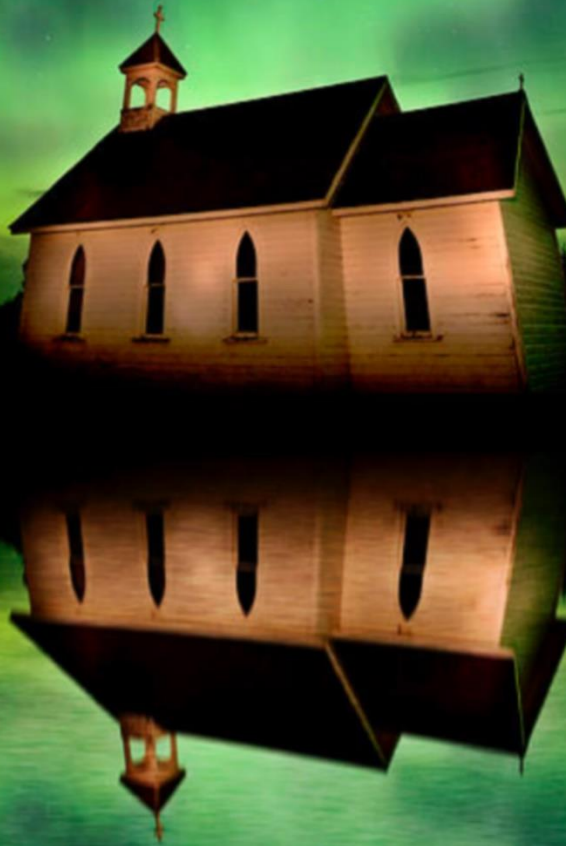
Local churches have frequently been torn apart by ungodly conduct by one brother against another that is never addressed by the congregation. **The problem is allowed to fester and grow until, what was a small problem, threatens to divide the entire congregation.**

For the health and welfare of the local church, let each of us resolve to handle matters of personal offence as Matthew 18:15-17 demands. And, **if the ones involved are too immature to follow Matthew 18:15-17, let the spiritually minded in the local church get involved to prevent their personal problems from creating congregational problems.** – Truth Magazine

TAKE IT TO THE CHURCH!



AND IF HE SHALL NEGLECT TO HEAR
THEM, TELL IT UNTO
THE CHURCH: _____ BUT IF
HE NEGLECT TO HEAR THE CHURCH,



———— LET HIM BE ————

UNTO THEE AS AN HEATHEN MAN AND A PUBLICAN.

MATTHEW 18:17 KJV

Pulpit Commentary

Verse 17. - **Tell it unto the Church** (τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ). This is the third step to take. Our Lord is contemplating a visible society, possessed of certain powers of discipline and correction, such as we find in the history of the apostolic Church (see [1 Corinthians 5:1](#), etc.; [1 Corinthians 6:1](#), etc.; [1 Timothy 1:20](#)). Christ had already spoken of his Ecclesia in his commendation of Peter's great confession ([Matthew 16:18](#)); so, the twelve were prepared for this use of the word, and wouldn't confound the body here signified with the Jewish synagogue. To the latter the expressions in verses 18-20 could not apply. The custom and order of procedure in the synagogue would afford an idea of what the Lord meant; but the congregation intended was to be composed of obeying Christians, followers of Christ, who were delivered from narrowness of rabbinical rules/definitions. The institution of ecclesiastical tribunals has been referred to this passage, but, as understood by the apostles, it would denote, not so much ecclesiastical rulers as the particular congregation to which the delinquent belonged; and the offence for which he is denounced is some private scandal or quarrel. The course of proceeding enjoined would be impracticable in a large and widely extended community. **If he neglect to hear the Church**. Now comes the final stage in corrective discipline.

An heathen man (ὁ ἔθνικὸς, **the Gentile**) and **publican** (ὁ τελώνης, **the publican**). The class, not the individual, is meant. If he turns a deaf ear to the authoritative reproof of the Church, let him be regarded no longer as a brother, but as a heathen and an outcast. Christ, without endorsing the Jews' treatment of publicans, acknowledges the fact, and uses it as an illustration. The obdurate offender must be deprived of Church membership, and treated as those without the Jewish pale were commonly treated. The traditional law enjoined that a Hebrew might not associate, eat, or travel with a heathen, and that if any Jew took the office of **publicans**, he was to be virtually excommunicated.

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers

(17) **If he shall neglect(Refuse)to hear them—Tell it unto the church—**

Here, and here only in our Lord's teaching after the promise to Peter ([Matthew 16:18](#)), we have the word *Ecclesia* repeated. The passage takes its place among the most conspicuous instances of the power of a word.

So, understood, the words point to the final measures for the reformation of the offender, and the vindication of the divine law of righteousness. When the two forms of private remonstrance have failed, the case is to be brought before the society at large. The appeal is to be made not to the rulers of the congregation, but to the congregation itself, and the public opinion of the *Ecclesia* is to be brought to bear upon the offender. Should he defy that opinion and persist in his evil doing, he practically excommunicates himself. All societies are justified in excluding from their communion one who repudiates the very conditions of membership; and his being regarded as "a heathen and a publican" is but the legitimate consequence of his own act. Even here, however, we can hardly think of our Lord as holding up the Pharisees' way of acting towards "the heathen and the publican" as a pattern for imitation. They were to be made to feel that they were no longer within the inner circle of brotherhood, but they were still men.

It is obvious that the rule, as such, presupposes a small society, in the midst of a greater outside world, able to deal thus minutely with the offences of individual members. With the extension of the society, so that the church and the world became conterminous and hardly distinguishable, it was natural, perhaps, that it should follow the course of other human societies, and transfer its jurisdiction from the "congregation," or "assembly," to individual judges as its representatives. And so it was that, in the long-run, the bishops took the place of the congregation, and exercised its functions. So long as they were really in harmony with the mind of the church at large, this might work well enough, but there was the risk of their "lording it over God's heritage" ([1Peter 5:3](#)); and, in any case, there was the loss of that activity of the reason and conscience of the society which the original form of polity implied, and of which St. Paul's appeal to its judgment as against the inconsistency of the chief of the Apostles, is a very striking instance ([Galatians 2:11](#)). How far that can be revived is one of the hard questions of our own time and, perhaps, of all times. The end may have to be attained by very different means. We cannot inform the Universal Church of the misdeeds of each individual member. Practically, to submit them formally to the judgments even of the smaller society of the town or village to which the offender belonged, would not be workable.

Matthew Poole's Commentary

Verses 15-17. Our Savior very appositely addeth this to his former discourse concerning avoiding offences, that none might think that by the former doctrine he had made void the law, [Leviticus 19:17](#), which commanded all *in any wise to rebuke their neighbor, and not to suffer sin upon him*. Only in these reproofs we must keep an order, which order he here prescribes.

1. Doing it privately, between them and him alone.
2. If that had not its effect, then taking two or three with them.
3. If that also proved ineffectual, then telling it to the church.
4. If that he would not **hear the church, then, let him be unto thee** (saith Christ) **as an heathen and a publican.**

If thy brother shall trespass against thee. By *brother* here he meaneth any Christian; for what hath the church to do to judge those that are without? [1 Corinthians 5:12](#).

Trespass against thee. Some interpret this of offences done so privately, that none else knoweth them but one single person; but it is objected, that then there needed no going to him, much less were there need of any witnesses, for they could prove nothing. Others therefore understand the precept of private injuries, which are in man's power to forgive, [Luke 17:3](#). Others think such injuries are primarily intended, but yet the precept is not to be restrained to them, but to be understood of all offences, whether against God, ourselves, or our neighbors; and our Savior useth this term *against thee* only to distinguish the offences he is here speaking of from public scandals; for, [1 Timothy 5:20](#), it appeareth to be the will of God, that public & open sinners should be rebuked *before all, that others may fear*. The rule therefore seemeth to be given concerning private miscarriages; not such only as are done in the sight or hearing of a single person, but such as are not the matter of public fame, nor openly committed before a multitude, but being committed more secretly, are come only to the knowledge of some particular person or persons.

In such cases it is the will of God, not that we should blazon and publish them, but, being certain that any Christian hath so offended, it is our duty first to go to him, and tell him of it; that is, not only tell him what thou knowest, or hast heard in matter of fact, that he hath spoken or done, but show him also the sinfulness of it.

If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; that is, if he should confess the sin, and be brought to a sight of it, a sorrow for it, and a resolution against it for the time to come, thou hast gained the soul of thy brother.

But if he will not hear thee, if he either denieth the matter of fact, that he did such a thing, or (admitting that) standeth to justify the fact, as what he might do, *then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word be established:* one or two more, either such as may be of more authority with him, whose words may probably be of more weight than thine with him, or who may witness the matter of fact if it be denied, or at least witness by charitable admonition of him, and his contumacy, if he refuseth to hearken to thee, and to repent and reform. What was the law of God in civil and judicial causes, [Deu 19:15](#),

God would have observed in ecclesiastical causes: *One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.* And so the words in Matthew should be translated, or at least understood; *every word*, that is, every matter, be confirmed.

And if he shall neglect to hear them; either refuse to speak with them, or to suffer them to speak with him; or, hearing them with his ears, **if he persists to deny the fact, or to justify the fact, as if it were no sin, or go on still in the same course; (all these things are to be understood by the term of not hearing);** if he shall not hear them, *tell it to the church.* That the term church is a noun of multitude is evident and therefore cannot be understood of any particular person.



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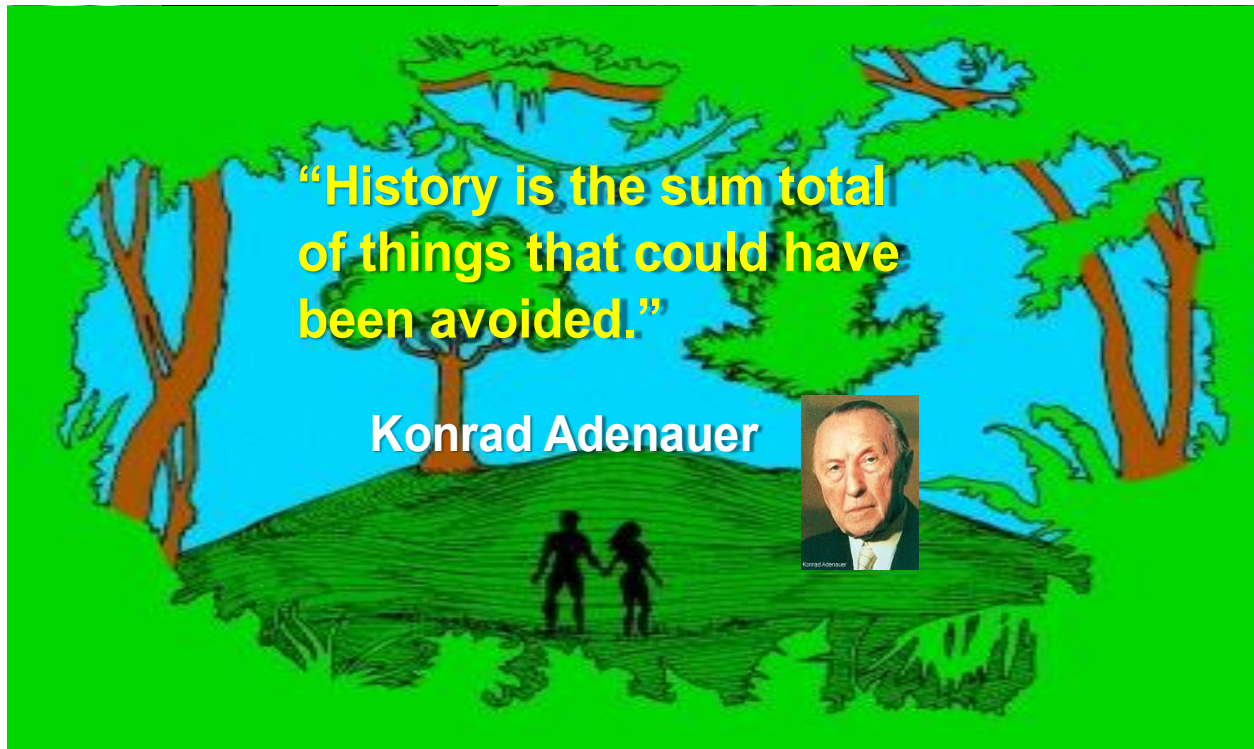


— LET HIM BE —

UNTO THEE AS AN HEATHEN MAN AND A PUBLICAN.
MATTHEW 18:17 KJV

“History is the sum total
of things that could have
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Konrad Adenauer



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OF THE FEUD. MORE THAN 100 MEN,
women and children of the two fami-
lies were slain in the battles which
raged in Logan and Mingo Counties,
West Virginia, and Pike County,
Kentucky.

It was said in those days that
whenever a McCoy head showed out
out of a window a Hatfield gun
would bark; whenever a Hatfield
gazed from his home at the sur-
rounding hill country a McCoy gun
would bark. Before the Civil War
the two families, large landowners—
the McCoy in Kentucky and the
Hatfields in West Virginia—were
friendly. They had been brought
together by business and intermar-
riage. The sons of both families
joined the home guards and took
part in raids into the bordering
States. Thus their relations became
strained.

Trouble Began Over Stolen Hogs.

In 1863, the year of the Battle of
Gettysburg, according to the McCoy
story, the McCoy turned loose some
hogs which were stolen by the Hat-
fields. The Hatfields indignantly
denied the allegation and a trial fol-
lowed. Whatever its outcome, it
was unsatisfactory to both sides.
The first bloodshed occurred soon
after, when Devil Anse killed Har-
mon McCoy.

Occasional killings followed, and
in 1882 began a romance which
fanned the quiescent embers of the
feudists' hates. Jonce Hatfield and
Rosanna McCoy fell in love! She
was a daughter of Randolph McCoy,
the chieftain of the McCoy clan, and
Jonce had already been married.
They lived together and their fami-
lies became increasingly embittered,
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hood. These six were Valentine, Anderson (they call me Anse), Ellison, Elias, Smith, Patterson, Martha, Elizabeth, Emma and Biddy.

"I was born September 9, 1838, and married Lavisa Chapin, April 18, 1861. Twelve children were born to us, viz: Johnson, William A., usually called "Cap;" which nick name was given him when a small boy and has hung to him ever since; Robert E. Lee, Elliott, Elias, Detroit, Joseph, Willis Wilson. The daughters are Nancy B., who was captured by John T. Vance May 16, 1889—the only one of my family ever captured by anybody dead or aliye (He meant she married Vance), Mary, Elizabeth and Rosada.

"I served in the militia in 1861, and regularly enlisted in 1862 in the Confederate army, as First Lieutenant in the Forty-fifth Virginia Infantry. I resigned in 1863, and then recruited a company which was kept in service in Wayne, Cabell and other border counties of West Virginia and Kentucky.

"Jones, Marion and Tom McCoy (who are now trying to kill me), were members of my company during the war.

ORIGIN OF THE FEUD.

"When the war ended we all went home and were goods friends, until in 1873 or '74, when a difficulty arose between my cousin, Floyd Hatfield, and Randolph McCoy, who had married sisters, over a sow and pigs. A lawsuit followed. McCoy was loser, and accused his brother-in-law of swearing falsely,

a day to die

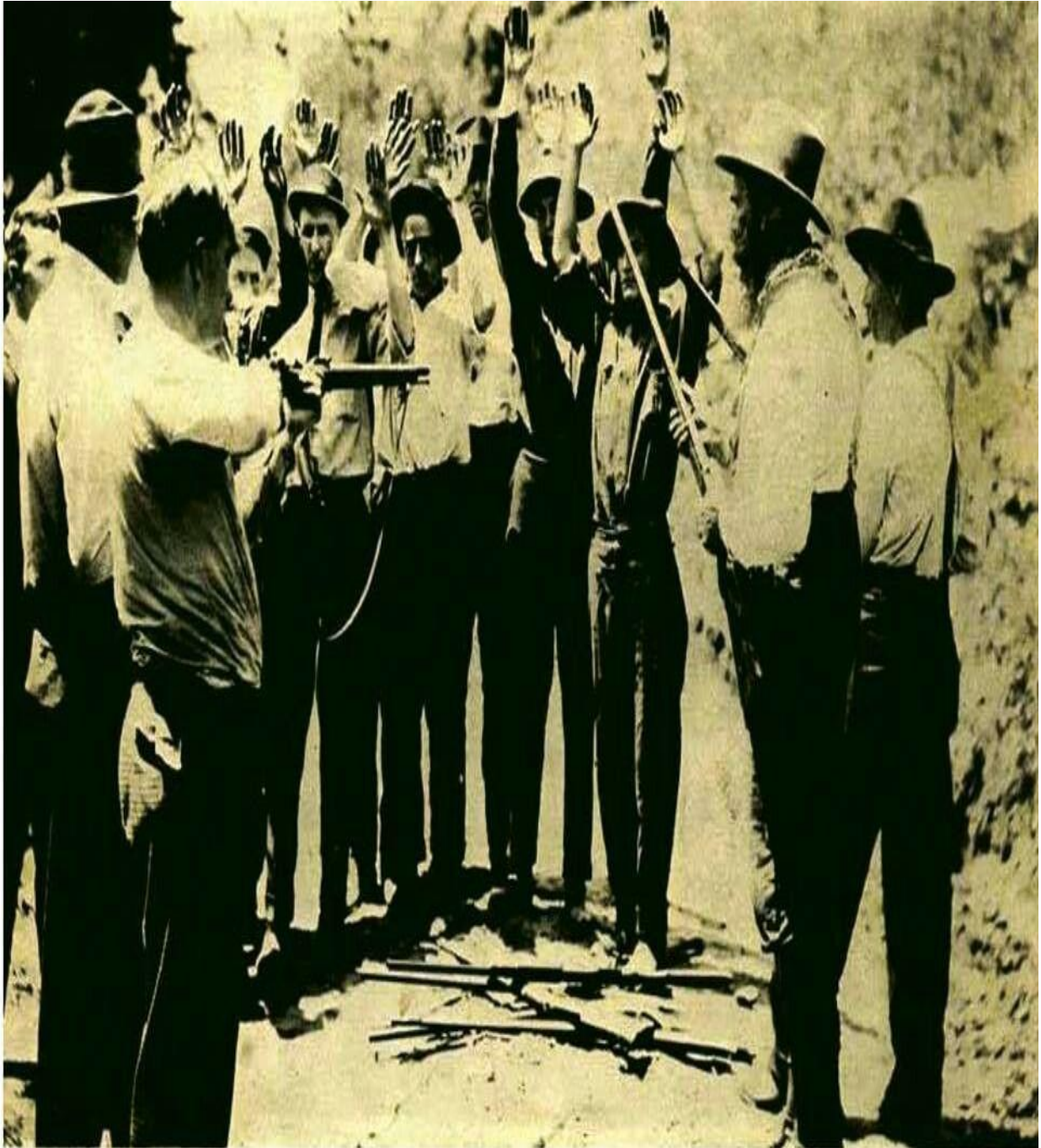
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This rare photo, published in the December 1957 issue of GUNS magazine, claims to be a picture of Devil Anse Hatfield (second from right) with friends and supporters rescuing George Hatfield from McCoys. Anse is shown holding a single-barreled shotgun, while the man (with pipe) at Anse's right has a lever action rifle, likely a Winchester. The man at left has leveled a .45-70 Springfield rifle at the McCoys.



McCoy Family @ Cottontop Hatfield's Hanging
Hatfield & McCoy Bloodfeud Made It All The Way To The U.S. Supreme Court

In 1888 several Hatfields were arrested and stood trial for the murder of two of Randall McCoy's children. West Virginia sued for the men's release, arguing that they had been illegally extradited across state lines. The Supreme Court eventually became involved in the case, known as Mahon v. Justice. In its 7-2 decision, the court ruled in favor of Kentucky, allowing for the trials and subsequent convictions of all the Hatfield men. Seven of them received life sentences, and one, Ellison "Cotton Top" Mounts, was executed for his crimes.

to THE NEW YORK TIMES,
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of his faction with the Hatfields and
 as a deputy sheriff of Pike County
 arrested several of the foe during
 the feud. But they did not stay in
 jail long.

The fighting started in a quarrel
 over a sow and pigs and formally
 ended in a peace agreement twenty-
 five years ago when representatives
 of both sides met at the suggestion
 of a mountain minister.

Tennis Hatfield, grandson of "Devil
 Anse," went to "Uncle Jim" McCoy
 last Summer and offered his hand
 in friendship. The two men walked
 about town with arms entwined.

"Uncle Jim" McCoy's life was em-
 bittered, it is said, by the murder of
 his 8-year-old sister Alaphare during
 a raid by Hatfield henchmen while
 the feud was at its height.

"Devil Anse" Hatfield, long head of
 his faction, died several years ago
 and a life-sized marble statue of him
 stands in a mountain graveyard in
 West Virginia near here.

MATHIAS GINDELE DIES.

Clifton (Ct.)

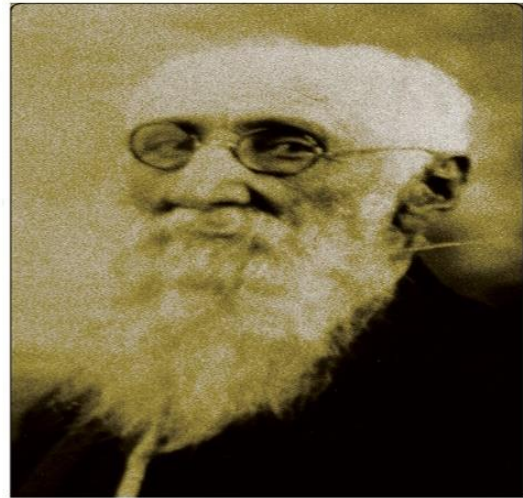
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FAITH

IN THE LOGAN COUNTY MOUNTAINS

**Evangelist, Circuit-Ridin' Preacher, Church Planter;
Friend and Spiritual Mentor to Devil Anse Hatfield**



Uncle William Dyke "Uncle Dyke" Garrett
December 1841 - May 1938





Clergyman William Dyke “Uncle Dyke” Garrett (December 10, 1841-May 29, 1938) was Logan County’s most famous preacher for the Church of Christ. He was born on Big Creek, the son of John and Eliza Godby Garrett. He enlisted on the side of the Confederacy in the [Logan Wildcats](#) (Company D 36th Virginia Infantry) at the start of the Civil War but was made the company’s informal chaplain when it was found he was deaf in one ear. He deplored the war, denouncing it as being against God’s will, having evidently come to that conclusion after witnessing execution of Southern deserters.

Previously unordained, Garrett began thinking seriously about Christianity after the war and was converted by Alexander M. Lunsford, who preached in Mingo and Logan counties. **In 1878, Garrett became a circuit rider, preaching all throughout Logan County the rest of his life.** He was the inspiration for the construction of the Crooked Creek Church of Christ and helped establish a sister church in Logan Courthouse, now Logan.

Garrett married Sallie Smith in 1867, and he and “Aunt Sallie” remained married for 71 years. **He was a friend of feudist Anderson “Devil Anse” Hatfield from at least the late 1860s onward, and his greatest fame was for converting Hatfield and baptizing him in Main Island Creek.** Anse Hatfield and Dyke Garrett were members of the Camp Straton United Confederate Veterans, the social organization that controlled Logan County politics between 1870 and 1915, with Garrett serving as the group’s spiritual leader. **Storied together till the end - Garrett conducted the funeral for Brother “Devil.”**



Funeral of Devil Anse in January 1921

