

First Baptist Church of Progress Village
Wednesday Bible Study
1 Corinthians Chapter 4
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I. Leaders are servants of Christ

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 (KJV) *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*

A. Leaders manage what we do not own and must be trustworthy.

- 1) Ministers = hypēretēs (hoop-ay-ret'-ace) = servant = under oarsman
- 2) Stewards = oikonomos (oy-kno-om'-os) = servant = house manager

B. Leaders face three kinds of judgment.

- 1) Other people's judgment - **1 Corinthians 4:3 (KJV)** *But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.*
- 2) Self judgment - **1 Corinthians 4:3 (KJV)** *But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.*
- 3) God's judgment - **1 Corinthians 4:5 (KJV)** *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.*

1 Corinthians 4:6 (KJV) *And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.*

C. No one should be prideful when we realize leaders are servants too.

1 Corinthians 4:7 (NLT2) *For what gives you the right to make such a judgment? What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if everything you have is from God, why boast as though it were not a gift?*

D. We are all recipients of gifts from God and cannot rank ourselves by them.

II. The sacrifice of Leadership

1 Corinthians 4:8 (NLT2) *You think you already have everything you need. You think you are already rich. You have begun to reign in God's kingdom without us! I wish you really were reigning already, for then we would be reigning with you.*

A. Believers should not behave as if they have achieved the **pinnacle** of spirituality.

1 Corinthians 4:9 (NLT2) *Instead, I sometimes think God has put us apostles on display, like prisoners of war at the end of a victor's parade, condemned to die. We have become a spectacle to the entire world—to people and angels alike.*

B. Apostles were God's public display to **remind** and **prove** the lengths he would die for those who believe.

1 Corinthians 4:10-13 (NLT2) *Our dedication to Christ makes us look like fools, but you claim to be so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are so powerful! You are honored, but we are ridiculed. Even now we go hungry and thirsty, and we don't have enough clothes to keep warm. We are often beaten and have no home. We work wearily with our own hands to earn our living. We bless those who curse us. We are patient with those who abuse us. We appeal gently when evil things are said about us. Yet we are treated like the world's garbage, like everybody's trash—right up to the present moment.*

C. You'll know who has a servant's **heart** by how they **respond** when people treat them like one.

1 Corinthians 4:14-17 (NLT2) *I am not writing these things to shame you, but to warn you as my beloved children. For even if you had ten thousand others to teach you about Christ, you have only one spiritual father. For I became your father in Christ Jesus when I preached the Good News to you. So I urge you to imitate me. That's why I have sent Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you of how I follow Christ Jesus, just as I teach in all the churches wherever I go.*

D. Paul is not asking the church to rank him higher than Apollos or Peter, but to follow his example of valuing the **Gospel** over the **gossip**!

1 Corinthians 4:18-21 (NLT2) *Some of you have become arrogant, thinking I will not visit you again. But I will come—and soon—if the Lord lets me, and then I'll find out whether these arrogant people just give pretentious speeches or whether they really have God's power. For the Kingdom of God is not just a lot of talk; it is living by God's power. Which do you choose? Should I come with a rod to punish you, or should I come with love and a gentle spirit?*

E. Strong Spiritual leadership is revealed in the fruit it bears, not the talk. The deeper the roots the sweeter the fruits.

This ends the first section about Division.

Next Week Read Chapter 5