

2/23/97

### 1Corinthias 4

Paul is continuing in his discussion of God's instrument in ministry in order to correct the Corinthians wrong perspective.

He also will deal with the false concept of the present Christian life on earth.

\* I think of the "Faith movement" that is so off quilter to the reality of the present church age, as they arrogantly proclaim the Divine right of all believers to be healthy and wealthy, if they will only believer and sow their "seed faith".

They are modern day Corinthians, pride, arrogant filled with the wisdom of the world, not of the true gospel!

#### 4:1-5 The servants of God are His alone.

**4:1-2** The Corinthians had a wrong concept in their minds about the apostles.

- 1) They were instruments and ministers of Christ, not man or people.
  - a) The word for minister "huperetes" means an under owner, on the 3rd level of a trireme ship who worked the hardest and die first.

b) Some think that this original meaning of the word had been lost by this time and the common idea is of an inferior and subordinate person to one of greater authority.

- 2) They were stewards of Christ not man or people.
  - a) The word stewards "oikonomos" means a manager of a household or estate.
  - b) He was a slave responsible for all yet he owned nothing.
  - c) Their stewardship regarded the mysteries "musterion" of God referring to the Gospel of Jew and Gentile one in Christ, previously hidden now made known. Rom. 16:25; Col. 1:26; Eph. 3:5
    - \* In the kingdom parables a householder is said to bringing forth out of his treasure things new and old. Matt. 13:52
- 3) The quality of the steward is to be faithful which means trustworthy, reliable, dependable and honorable. Church of Smyrna, Be faithful unto death. Rev. 2:1-10

**4:3-4** The judgment of man is not perfect.

- 1) Paul did not esteem their judgment of great importance but a small thing, due to

it's human origin and their carnality being shortsighted, lacking of facts and bias. vs. 3a, 2:15

\* The word judged “anakrino” means a critical examination, preliminary investigation to trial.

2) Paul did not judge himself with the satisfaction of perfect judgment even though he found nothing by his judgment. vs. 3b-4a

\* The context is judgment of his service and stewardship.

3) Yet the failure to find anything did not justify him before God or acquit him. vs. 4b

5) Paul depended on the Lord's judgment of him regarding his service and stewardship. vs. 4c

**4:5** Paul's conclusion is stated.

- 1) No one should judge the service of another till the Lord's coming and He will judge each of us at that time at the Tribunal of Christ. 1Cor. 3:13-15; 2Cor. 5:10
- 2) He will bring to light the hidden things that no one else knows.
- 3) He will reveal the councils or the motives of the heart. Jer. 17:9
- 4) He will praise each one for the work and reward them.

**4:6-13** **The apostle's sharp rebukes for their worldly judgment.**

**4:6** The apostle makes application of the teaching.

- 1) He desired that they apply what he has said about service and stewardship to himself and Apollos.
- 2) The benefit would be that they learn not to think of them beyond what the Scripture teach about a servant of Christ.
- 3) The protection also would be that they not compare themselves to one another through pride. 1Cor. 3: 5-9; 2Cor. 10:12  
\* The word puffed up refers to pride spiritually, appearing 7x's New Testament, 6 x's in the letter. 1Cor. 4:6, 18, 19; 5:2; 8:1; 13:4; Col. 2:18

**4:7** The question that humbled their spiritual pride.

- 1) Who has distinguished you from another, to regard as superior?
- 2) What do you possess that God did not give to you?
- 3) Why are you continuing to boast if you did receive it?  
\* The work, call, enabling and the ability is of God!

**4:8** The rebuke for their arrogant pride.

\* Paul addresses them with strong irony and sarcasm, as a sharp rebuke to their arrogant pride, as if they had arrived to a spiritual state of perfection.

1) You are already full!

\* In the sense of spiritually satisfied or saturated.

2) You are already rich?

\* In the sense of having everything they need!

3) You have reigned as kings without us!

\* In the sense that Christ had returned.

4) The punch line is, “Indeed I could wish you did reign, so that Paul and the other apostle might reign with them!

a) The sarcasm and irony is magnified in the fact that the Corinthians had so many problems due to their carnality!

b) The Christian life is an ongoing race that is pressing towards the mark, the upwards call of God. 1Cor.9:26; Phil. 3:11-14

**4:9** The true perilous reality of an apostle.

1) The word display “apodeiknumi”, means to expose to view or exhibit.

2) The apostles last.

3) As men condemned “epithanatos” to death, a picture of condemned criminals paraded as the victor’s spoils to die at the

Coliseum to fight with the animals. 1Cor. 15:32; Col. 2:15

3) Made a spectacle “theatron”, means a public exhibit, we get our word theater from it.

a) The display is two-fold, to the word and to angels. 1Pet. 1:12

b) Paul rebukes them for their self-righteous pride!

**4:10** The apostle Paul mocks them once again by extreme contrasts that are obviously ridiculous, in order to show their foolishness.

1) Fool versus wise.

2) Weak versus strong.

3) Distinguished versus dishonored.

**4:11-13** The present difficult reality of life for apostles. 2Cor. 4:7-12; 11:22-28

1) They hunger and thirst in the present. vs. 11

2) They are poorly clothed. vs. 11

3) They are beaten “kolophize” refers to with a fist or lash with a whip. vs. 11

4) They were homeless “astateo”, to wonder about without a settled abode. vs. 11

5) The word labor “Kopiao” means to work to point of exhaustion, the Greek despised manual labor. vs. 12

\* Working with their own hands, Paul was a tent makers. Acts 18:3; 20:34; 1Thess. 2:9; 2Thess. 3:8; 1Co.r 9:15

- 6) They being reviled, blessed instead and being persecuted, they endured, constantly. vs. 12
- 7) They being defamed “blasphemeo” reproached, slandering them, but they entreated. vs. 13
  - \* We get our word blasphemy.
- 8) They were made as the filth of the word and the offscouring of all things until now. vs. 13
  - a) The word filth “perikatharma”, means that which comes forth from rinsing and offscouring “peripsema”, means what is scraped off. vs. 13, Matt. 5:11-12
  - b) The rubbish and refuse of humanity. 1Cor. 1:27-28
  - c) Jesus had no where to lay his head

#### **4:14-21     The apostle’s fatherly love and concern.**

- 4:14**     The explanation of the strong rebuke.
- 1) The purpose for all this was not to shame them, but rather to wan them of their carnal condition that would only hinder them more.

- 2) The action was out of love as their spiritual father.
- 3) The word warn “noutheteo”, means to admonish. Col. 1:28

**4:15**     The apostle Paul claims his place over the teachers at Corinth.

- 1) The many instructors “paidagogos” were those who were teaching and overseeing the church.
  - \* We get our word pedagogue, one who directed and supervised the conduct of a child as he tutored him both in moral and social training, looking after him. Gal. 3:24-25
- 2) They had only one spiritual father, he claimed to be the one who begot them through the gospel, the word of truth. Ja. 1:18

**4:16**     The plead as a father is to imitate him.

- 1) So they could manifest the family resemblance. 1Cor. 11:1; Gal. 4:12; Eph. 5:1; 1Thess. 1:6; 2Thess. 3:9
- 2) Paul urged “parakaleo”, entreated, coming alongside and entreating them.

**4:17**     The love of Paul is expressed in a tangible way.

- 1) Paul was sending Timothy, in fact he was already on his way. 1Cor. 16:10; Acts 19:22
- 2) Timothy would give evidence of a beloved and faithful son by reminding them of his ways in Christ. 1Tim. 1:2
- 3) Timothy would be an example of a servant of Christ and steward of the mysteries of God. 1Cor. 4:1-2

**4:18** The apostle Paul addressed those who were puffed up and have come against Paul.

- 1) Some “eis”, certain ones, is the phrase he uses for them.
- 2) These individuals were puffed up “phusioo”, inflate with swelled head of pride, saying that he would not come to Corinth. 1Cor. 9:1-3; 10:10

**4:19-20** The apostle Paul would come to them shortly.

- 1) If the Lord willed.
- 2) They would know not prideful power of man, but the power of an apostle of Jesus Christ by Holy Spirit.
- 3) The Kingdom of God was present by the gospel and transforming power, present and yet to come.

**4:21** The apostle Paul asks them as his children the way they wanted him to come to them?

- 1) With a rod to discipline and correct?
- 2) With love and a spirit of gentleness?