

The Church at Corinth - 1 Corinthians

Chapter 4

Perspective on Ministers (Vs. 1-2)

- Paul instructs everyone to look upon him and the others as ministers of Christ
 - Minister: *hupēretēs*: *subordinate (assistant, sexton, constable)*: - minister, officer, servant
 - They were to be regarded as servants, not masters (1 Cor. 3:5)
 - They don't own their followers as false teachings would have many to believe; but, they are owned by their Master
 - In this perspective, the minister of Christ is an attendant of Christ who takes orders and executes them.
 - It is never the minister's message, but Christ's Message that is crucial
- Minister is a steward of the mysteries
 - Meant they were given the authority to act on behalf of their Master
 - Focus never to please men, but please God – Gal. 1:10
- Are you faithful? Why?
 - Ministers are appointed by Jesus Christ
 - Ministers must answer to Christ
 - The honor of and welfare of Christ's Kingdom are entrusted to the minister
 - What is committed to the minister's care will have eternal ramifications

Real Judgement (Vs. 3-5)

- In these verses, Paul addresses a key issue that can hinder one's effectiveness in ministry. He says that he is not concerned about how the people judge him. In fact, he says he doesn't even try to judge himself.
 - Judge: investigated, examined, or approved
- Paul is honest enough to admit that if he alone could examine himself, he would probably be biased. Therefore, he leaves his judgement to the Lord (vs. 4).
- When we let God do the final judging, everything will be set in order – John 5:22; John 5:27; Acts 10:42, 17:31
- Only God can make manifest the true condition of the heart – 1 Cor. 3:13; 1 Sam. 16:7

Don't Lose Your Focus (Vs. 6-16)

- The Church's problem was that they were putting leaders against each other instead of respecting and submitting to the authority of them all – Vs. 6-7
 - All of the leaders received what they have from God and should boast in Him and not men – Psa. 34:2; Psa. 111:9; Eph. 4:8-13
- The Corinthians were stuck on themselves and acted as if they had already "arrived" – vs. 8
 - Note they acted like they were already there while the apostles realized they had so far to go
 - ==> **WE MUST NEVER LOSE SIGHT THAT WE WILL REIGN AT CHRIST'S RETURN – NOW WE MAKE PREPARATION FOR IT!**
 - Note that the Church people were on the throne while the Apostles were being persecuted and neglected.
- Notice the contrast in how the apostles were being treated as compared to the people – vs.9-16
 - What does the Bible say about taking care of the ministers of God?
 - 1 Thes. 5:12;
 - 1 Tim. 5:17: **rule** (*proistēmi*: preside, oversee); **double** (*diplous*: double, 2-fold more); **honor** (time: a *value*, that is, *money* paid, or (concretely and collectively) *valuables*; by analogy *esteem* (especially of the highest degree), or the *dignity* itself: - honour, precious, price, some) ; **labor** (*kopiaō*: to *feel fatigue*; by implication to *work hard*: - (bestow) labour, toil, be wearied) ; **word** (*logos*: spoken word (preaching)); **doctrine** (*didaskalia*: instruction, learning, teaching)

Don't Lose Your Focus (Vs. 18-21)

- Paul realizes their need for pastoral leadership and is sending Timothy – vs. 17
- He also leaves them with a warning to not make his next visit one of stern correction – vs. 18-21