

PENINSULA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Encouragement or Correction?

I Corinthians 4:1-21

Vs. 1, Let a man **so consider us**, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

- *What is "so"? As was just stated in chapter 3*
- *Judge/evaluate us in the light of how I told you to judge yourselves*

.....
Not as the person: Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or any others

- **3:7**, So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.
- *And not as **what that person does***

.....
Last Week: Comparing ourselves to each other is a deception

- *We should each evaluate ministry on its origins; either human or the Lord's*

.....
3:12, Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw

.....
Remember – Paul is writing to them about their reasons for dividing from each other

.....
II Corinthians 10:12, For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

Our service, either of our own initiative or the Lord's...

- *Will be tested by **the fire of who He is***
- *On who's origin will we serve? His, or ours?*

.....
Paul places his service in the light of Christ's fire.

.....
Vs. 2, Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

- **Luke 16:1-13**

.....
Do we serve for earthly or eternal recognition?

- *For our own gain, or **Christ's gain in the lives of others?***

.....
Philippians 2:3-5, Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind **let each esteem others better than himself**. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus**

.....
Vs. 3-5, *I care nothing for the standards you have demonstrated. (1:11-12)*

- *I will give myself according to the Lord's standards*
- *And reserve my judgement for **the Day of His return***

.....
I Thessalonians 4:15-18

.....
*Are we living **together** in His name, **for His return?***

- *For His approval, both **now & then***

Vs. 6, I declare these things in our behalf *for your sakes*

- Hoping you will discard the arrogance you've demonstrated

Vs. 7, The things you boast about to separate from each other...

- **Where did you get them?**
- And why do you act as if you obtained them on your own?
- ..

Vs. 8, It appears Paul engages in some sarcasm here

- You already act **as if you are in charge** of God's church
- I wish you had invited us to be in charge with you

Matthew recounted six times that Jesus asked the Pharisees, Sadducees & Chief Priests, "Have you never read?" Referring to the scriptures

Vs. 9, He could have been alluding to the Roman games in the arena

- Those who were appointed to die were brought out last
- The final spectacle of the bloody contest of human life

Most of the apostles are believed to have been martyred

- Viewed now on earth, heaven & hell
- Who willingly followed Christ in death, as well as life

Vs. 10, We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored!

Compared to the human wisdom you have embraced, we are fools.

- You want to be well thought of by the worldly standards you are living by
- "You are distinguished, but we are dishonored!"

Vs. 11, To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless.

- Not exactly health, wealth & prosperity

Paul has repeatedly affirmed that worldly wisdom is foolishness to God

- Accommodating the gospel to the culture **compromises the gospel**
- Bringing the gospel into the midst of the culture **changes the world**

We're not here to improve on how Christ changed the world.

- **HE DID...** and He still does.

Matt. 13:33, "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

Jesus is **always** contemporary and **always** relevant

- Because humanity is **always sinful** and in need of **The Savior**

Romans 3:23 & 6:23, For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- **Everyone** has the same need
- **Only Jesus** meets that need

Vs. 12-13, And we labor, working with our own hands. **Being reviled**, we bless; **being persecuted**, we endure; **being defamed**, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.

.....
Acts 9:15-16, But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

.....
*This was Paul's calling... **What is ours?***
- *What was Jesus's first ever public teaching?*

.....
Matthew 5:3-12, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (*What Paul is doing in I Corinthians*)

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

We've been praying for these promised blessings on the 4th Sunday every month

- *For ourselves, PCF & The Church in Gig Harbor*

.....
Vs. 14-15, He drops the sarcasm for **more parental counsel**

.....
Vs. 16, Therefore I urge you, imitate me. (*He's going to repeat that more than once*)

.....
I Corinthians 11:1, Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

.....
Philippians 4:9, The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

.....
Should we live so people could follow our example?

- *It's been said you're either a good example, or a warning*
- *Why is Paul writing to these people?*
- *They're being **a bad example** in Christ's name*

.....
*What did Jesus say right after the eight promised blessing in **Matthew 5?***

- **"You are the light of the world.** A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."**

What is the last thing He said as He was ascending to heaven?

- “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be witnesses to Me** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
- *From wherever we live, to as far as we can go*

.....
Vs. 17, *As Timothy will remind you, this is nothing new*

- *It’s the same truths I teach in all churches, everywhere*

.....
Vs. 18-21, *How shall I come to you?*

- *With loving encouragement?*
- *Or with a rod of correction?*
- *God has given shepherds two tools*