

PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

LEARNING HOW TO BE A HEAVENLY CHURCH IN A GODLESS WORLD

1 CORINTHIANS 4:1-14

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THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU – PART 2

HOW TO BE A CHURCH THAT'S OUT OF THIS WORLD

SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

Maturity, Servanthood, Leadership, Discipleship

1 Corinthians 4:1-14

Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. :2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. :3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. :4 For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord. :5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God. :6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other. :7 For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? :8 You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us—and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you. 9 For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. :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! :11 To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. :12 And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; :13 being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now. :14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you.

1 Corinthians 4:1

“Let a man so **consider** us, as (**hupe-retes**) **servants** of Christ and **stewards** of the **mysteries** of God.”

servants uJphre÷thß **hupe-retes**, *hoop-ay-ret'-ace*;

A lower level oarsmen. One condemned. The sub-ordinate slave of a roman galley, the lower level oarsman. One who serves the progress of the ship by being under the ship.

HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU

WHAT MAKES YOU A TRUE BELIEVER

1.) We serve you best by being faithful

v.2-5

1a.) Faithful to the Commitment

:2 Moreover it is **required** in stewards that one be found **faithful**. :3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a **human court**. In fact, I do not even judge myself.

But with me it is a **very small thing** that **#1 - I should be judged by you** or **#2 - by a human court**. In fact, **#3 - I do not even judge myself**.

Galatians 1:10

For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a **bondservant** of Christ.

1b.) Faithful to the Confidence

1c.) Faithful to the Calling

:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the **hidden things** of darkness and **reveal the counsels of the hearts**. Then each one's praise will come from God.

HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU

WHAT MAKES YOU A TRUE BELIEVER!

2.) We serve you best by being humble

v.6-8

2a.) Humble – knowing who we are in Jesus

:6 Now these things, brethren, I have **figuratively transferred** (*used as an example*) to myself and Apollos for your sakes, **that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.**

Paul is Saying:

“I’ve used Apollos and myself to illustrate to you Corinthians that If you obey God’s word, you won’t be bragging about any one of us or any one of your Pastors, Ministers or Under oarsmen – Your Servant-Leaders.

Is God Really Using You?

The More God uses a Man or Woman;
The lower they become – the lesser they are – the more invisible

The Forgotten Words of John the Baptist (this should be a college course)

John 3:30

He must **increase**, but I must **decrease**.

Christianity Is Made Known to the World

When We Act Like Jesus Christ.

The Bible Reveals “Who” Jesus Christ is

(How **Did** Jesus Act and How **Is** He Acting in Lives of His True Followers)

1 Corinthians 15:9a

For I am **the least of the apostles**, who am not worthy to be called an apostle...

1 Timothy 1:12

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because **He counted me faithful**, putting me into the ministry,

Keep Yourself Usable, Sharpened, Ready,

BY BEING HUMBLE

2b.) Humble – knowing what we have from Jesus

:7 For who makes you differ from another? (*GOD DOES*) And **what do you have that you did not receive?** (*GOD GIVES*) Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? (*ARROGANCE*)

“Please pray for me that I might remain humble” – said a man to his friend to which his friend replied, “what on earth do you have to be proud about?”

- J. Allen Blair

“As Pastors and Christian Servants, We Labor Under The Eye of God”

Jeremiah 3:15

And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Hebrews 13:7

Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.

Hebrews 13:17

Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

Hebrews 13:24

Greet those who rule over you,

BY BEING HUMBLE

2c.) Humble – knowing why it’s all about Jesus

8 You are **already full!** You are **already rich!** You have reigned **as kings** without us - and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you!

**Paul is About to Release Some Gas from Their Inflated Heads
SO YOU GUYS HAVE ARRIVED – HOW DOES THAT FEEL?**

COMPLACENCY WAS THEIR COMFORT-ZONE

They were impressed with themselves – smug and self-dependent.

“I’ve arrived and you all should be like me”

You have reigned **as kings** without us

You don’t need us or anyone – you’ve arrived. You’re the ones. You are the super-church.

We need to be cautious at this church.

(the Lord has blessed us in so many areas)

and He will so long as we keep Jesus, The Bible, and His Gospel Foremost

Revelation 3:14-16

“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: **:15** “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. **:16** So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

Luke 6:25-26

Woe to you who are full, For you shall hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, For you shall mourn and weep. **:26** Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

“LOOK HERE PAUL – WE WANT OUR CORINTHIAN PASTORS TO ENTERTAIN US. TO MAKE US HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE.”

It’s not about us guys – it’s about Jesus!

Biblical Humility Is not being Weak, Frail, or Wimpy.

Biblical Humility is Following Jesus.

Matthew 8:19-22

Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, “Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.” **:20** And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head.” **:21** Then another of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” **:22** But Jesus said to him, “Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU

WHAT MAKES YOU A TRUE BELIEVER!

3.) We serve you best by being Dead

v.9-14

Romans 14:7-8

For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. :8 For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

Time is Running Out for Us in This World

Take a field trip to your refrigerator or pantry.
You'll see suggestions or recommendations by the company.

“For freshness use by...”

Or “for maximum effectiveness use at bed time”

Or “do not take on an empty stomach”

BY BEING DEAD

3a.) Dead men have no plans

:9 For I think that God has **(#1) displayed us**, the apostles, **last**, as men **(#2) condemned to death**; for we have been made a **(#3) spectacle** to the world, both to angels and to men.

MEN SENTENCED TO DEATH HAVE PRIORITIES.
THERE'S NO SECURITY IN GOLD / OR THE LAKERS GAME / OR THAT SALE AT
NORDSTROMS – *it's hard get a dead man excited!!!*

A term from the Gladiatorial games:

Paul no doubt had this in mind as the gladiators who appear before the emperor and give him their last words; *“we who are about to die salute you”*

It's hard get a dead man excited!!!

Have you ever talked to a dead man?

((I mean a man who's received his death-orders?))

No longer is he concerned about his favorite store and his golf clubs.
His car no longer takes up two parking spaces at the mall.
He's more concerned now about his family & relationships.
He cares more now about how his family will turn out.
He surveys his life and makes things ready for the ending.

Listen – each of us should be living and thinking and ordering our lives as though we will be leaving next week or next month.

Romans 8:36-37

(Even the Scriptures say, “For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.”) :37 No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

J. Vernon McGee

"As a Christian, I get so tired of being treated like the village idiot every time I try to say something about the Bible. Now, that is the treatment you will get, and it will hinder your Christian witness **unless** you're **willing** to be called the village idiot for Jesus' sake."

All three of these word usages are roman terms for acting, a show, or for entertainment

displayed ἀποδείκνυμι *apodeiknumi*, *ap-od-ike'-noo-mee*;

To show off as on exhibit; to use for a demonstration.

condemned to death ἐπιθανάτιος *epithanatos*, *ep-ee-than-at'-ee-os*;

From a written off as dead. Status: - dead. Man that has been sentenced to death or is as good as dead.

spectacle θέατρον *theatron*, *theh'-at-ron*; a theater.

The place of public display or entertainment. An exhibit.

**At the Time of This Writing of Paul's
The Great Coliseum in Rome Had Not Yet Been Built.
But There Were “Mini” Coliseums Throughout The Empire**

There would be 3 “episodes” to the **spectacle**.

Episode one was ‘The Hunt

(The Romans would bring out such animals like giraffes, monkeys, and hippos and would chain them to the “arena” – the sand. Then they would release lions, bears, wolves, and alligators)

Episode two was “The Gladiatorial”

(This was the highlight of the day – manslaughter)

Episode three was “The Conclusion”

(The release of prisoners and criminals and the poor of the empire with a promise of freedom to the last man standing)

BY BEING DEAD

3b.) Dead men get no respect

: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!** :11 To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. :12 And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; :13 being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the **filth of the world**, the **offscouring** of all things until now.

The world loved the Corinthian church because it was just like the world

They never **addressed sinfulness** and never **confronted the culture**. They were loved and noticed by the world so long as it didn’t upset the world. – “**keep the peace**” or the “**don’t get controversial**” or “**don’t make any waves**”

This was and is a curse – an unwillingness to be laughed at, rejected, hated by the world and to avoid reproach - is killing the church today

It’s through the “sacrifice of self”

fools *mwro/β moros, mo-ros’;*

Dull, shut up, absurd, a blockhead

Sermons, messages, teaching, and preaching
is never for listening enjoyment – it’s for your spiritual development.

Matthew 5:11-12

“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. :12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

dishonored ἀτίμοβ **atimos**, at'-ee-mos;
Despised, without respect or honor, the least of all.

The Corinthians had become accustomed

to receiving praise and recognition and honor from human courts and human opinions.
The Christian sees past that.

If you really want to be of Paul or Apollos or Peter

Then you had better count the cost – we are rejects in this world

2 Corinthians 4:6-7

For it is God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

BY BEING DEAD

3c.) Dead men tell no tales

14 I do not write these things to shame you,
but as **my beloved children** - I **warn** you.

warn νουqete÷w **noutheteo**, noo-thet-eh'-o;
To caution or reprove firmly and gently: — admonish, warn.

_____ *End of Study* _____