**"THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS"**

**Chapter Four**

**OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER**

**This Chapter is actually a continuation of chapter 3 of Paul speaking about Those who called themselves Preachers Teachers……**

1) To learn further how we should regard preachers and teachers

2) To learn a lesson in humility by observing the examples of the

apostles

**SUMMARY**

With this chapter Paul brings to a conclusion his treatment of the

problem of division as it existed in the church at Corinth. He

describes the proper estimate one should have of those who serve God,

and why we should leave the ultimate evaluation of such men to God

(**1-5**). Having already used himself and Apollos as examples to help

them see the errors of their arrogance (cf. "puffed up"), Paul also

uses the example of the apostles in a passage filled with irony (**6-13**).

His purpose is not to shame them, but to warn them, for he is sending

Timothy to remind them of what is proper, and he himself is coming to

deal with those who are "puffed up", if necessary (**14-21**).

**OUTLINE**

**I. THE PROPER ESTIMATE OF PAUL & OTHERS as God’s Stewards… (1-5)**

**A. SERVANTS & STEWARDS (1-2)**

1. Servants of Christ, stewards of the mysteries of God (**1**)  Let a man so account of us ,(or recognize us).. as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2. Their chief responsibility: faithfulness (**2**) Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful !!

**B. THE PROPER JUDGE OF SUCH THINGS (3-5)**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.4For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.5Therefore 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.

Paul is saying here that ministers are not to be judged…….

1. Not by Christians, or any human court (**3a**)

2. Not even one's own self, but rather, the Lord is the only one!!!(**3b-4**)

3. Therefore leave it up to Him (**5**)

**II. LESSONS IN HUMILITY (6-13)**

1. **PAUL & APOLLOS ALREADY USED AS EXAMPLES (6)**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.

1. To learn in them not to think beyond what is written (**6a**)

2. That none be "puffed up" on behalf of one against the other

(**6b**)

1. **REBUKE IN THE FORM OF IRONY (7-8)**

7For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?8Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

1. For they act as though they were the fountain of source of what they had

(**7**)

2. With irony, Paul rebukes them (8)

**C. THE EXAMPLE OF THE APOSTLES (9-13)**

1. Made a "spectacle" to the world (**9**

9.For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.10We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.

2. Contrasted with the pride of the Corinthians, using more irony

(**10**)

As if that weren’t enough Paul uses

3. The plight of the apostles TO REMIND THEM OF WHAT IT TAKES TO FOLLOW CHRIST!!!!

(**11-13**) 11Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace;12And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:13Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

BELOVED HERE IS THE TRUE CRUX OF THE MATTER….

A true saint of God who understands that it’s not about human wisdom OR of about themselves will acknowledge that it’s not about himself but of what God will bring him through that no man should glory in his presence.

**III. PAUL'S HAD A PURPOSE IN WRITING THESE THINGS TO THE CORINTHIAN MINISTERS….14-21)**

14I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.15For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.16Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

1. **NOT TO SHAME THEM, BUT TO WARN THEM**

**Them who?????(14-16)**

1. Those whom he considers as beloved children (**14**)

2. Those whom he has begotten through the gospel (**15**)

3. Those whom he charges to imitate him (**16**)

He does the following….

17For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.18Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.19But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.20For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.21What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?

Paul said I will recognize immediately those who are speaking words of wisdom of self and those who speak by their actions….FOR ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS!!!!

1. He is sending Timothy to remind them (**17**)

2. He himself will soon come, Lord willing, to deal with those who

are "puffed up" (**18-21**)

**END CHAPTER 4**