

INTRODUCTION

1. There is coming a day when Jesus will reign on the earth for 1000 years and we will reign with him.
2. Revelation 20 says this day is after Satan is bound in the abyss.
3. But after a 1000 years he will be “released for a short time” (v.3) “from his prison” (v.7) and will “come out to deceive the nations...to gather them together for the war” (v.8) but “fire” will come “down from heaven and [devour] them” (v.9).
4. Verse 10 says “the devil who deceived them [will be] thrown into the lake of fire and

brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

5. That is the glorious future that awaits us.
6. That is also the doom that awaits Satan.
7. But before he is cast into the lake of fire, the millennial kingdom of peace and righteousness will be established.
8. The supreme ruler will be the Lord Jesus Christ.
9. He alone is “King of kings, and Lord of lords” (19:16), and “the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David” (Lk.1:32).

10. Yet He has graciously promised that His saints will reign with Him.
11. They will rule subordinately over every aspect of life in the kingdom, and being glorified and perfected, they will perfectly carry out His will.¹
12. Jesus promised His apostles that they would “sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Mat.19:28).
13. In the New Testament, Scripture also promises that all believers will reign with Him.
14. Paul said to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 6:2, “Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world?”

¹ John MacArthur, Revelation 12-22, p.237

15. He said to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:12 (NASB) If we endure, we will also reign with Him.”
16. Jesus promised the church at Thyatira in Revelation 2:26-27 (NASB) He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; 27 and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father.
17. He said to the church at Laodicea in Revelation 3:21 (NASB) He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.
18. But the Corinthians were acting like the Millennium was already here and they were

already reigning.

19. Their pride had run amok.
20. So from straight forward argumentation, Paul now turns to irony in verses 8-13.
21. Listen to what he says.
22. Read 1 Corinthians 4:8-13.
23. The Corinthians were guilty of a lot of things as we're learning in 1 Corinthians.
24. But there were two things they were guilty of as a result of their pride.

LESSON

I. **They Were Guilty of Reigning Without Christ and the Apostles (v.8)**

In sarcasm Paul said...

A. You Are Already Filled (v.8)

“Filled” (korennymi), “to be satisfied”

The Corinthians think that they have filled their spiritual and material demands; they have no need of anything or anyone else.²

They were truly puffed up with pride.

The true reality was...

² Kistemaker, Simon J., and William Hendriksen. Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. Vol. 18. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953–2001. Print. New Testament Commentary.

1. They did have Everything (3:22-23)

But it's one thing to have everything and to be puffed up with everything.

They were acting like they arrived; they were perfect.

Paul already noted what they had been given:

- a) Sanctification (1:2)
- b) The title of "saints" (1:2)
- c) Grace (1:3-4)
- d) All the gifts (1:5, 7; 12:7-11)
- e) The Holy Spirit (2:12; 3:16)
- f) Paul as spiritual father (4:15)

2. But instead of being humbled by God's gifts, they were acting like the

Laodiceans who were “rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing” (Rev.3:17).

3. What they needed to realize is they were “wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked” (Rev.3:17).
4. They were boasting of their gifts falsely and thinking more of themselves than they should have and not giving heed to the warnings of Scripture, the Holy Spirit or the Apostle Paul
 - a) Isaiah 5:21 (NASB) Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight!
 - b) Galatians 6:3 (NASB) For if anyone thinks he is something when he is

nothing, he deceives himself.

c) Romans 12:3 (NASB) For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

5. They were “like clouds and wind without rain is a man who boasts of his gifts falsely” (Prov.25:14)

John Gill says, “They were not full of God, and divine things; nor of Christ, and of grace out of his fulness; nor of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, as Stephen and Barnabas are said to be; nor of joy and peace in believing; nor of goodness and spiritual knowledge; but they were full of

themselves, and were puffed up in their fleshly minds with an opinion of their abilities, learning, oratory, and eloquence, of their ministers, and of their own great improvements in knowledge under their ministrations. They fancied they had got to a perfection in knowledge, and were brimful of it; and as the full stomach, from which the metaphor is taken, loathes the honeycomb, so these persons loathed the apostle's ministry, and the pure preaching of the Gospel; imagining that they had attained to something above it, and stood in no need of it; when, alas! they were but babes, children in understanding, and needed milk instead of strong meat; so far were they from being what they thought themselves to be."³

³ Gill, John. An Exposition of the New Testament. Vol. 2. London: Mathews and Leigh, 1809. Print. The Baptist Commentary Series.

Not only did they see themselves as “already full” but Paul says...

B. You Are Already Rich (v.8)

Self-sufficient people delude themselves, for they believe that they are rich when they are poverty-stricken.⁴

Proverbs 13:7 (NASB) There is one who pretends to be rich, but has nothing; Another pretends to be poor, but has great wealth.

They have come to fit Philo’s description of the proud (Greek: *hybris*), thinking of themselves “as the most wealthy, the most distinguished, the most beautiful, the strongest, the wisest, the most prudent, the most righteous, the most rational, and the

⁴ Ibid., Kistemaker, Simon J., and William Hendriksen.

most learned of all men,” looking upon “all the rest of mankind as poor, of no reputation, dishonoured, foolish, unjust, ignorant, mere dregs of mankind, entitled to no consideration.”⁵

Not only full and rich but Paul says...

C. You Have Become Kings Without Us (v.8)

1. This was the climax to the previous two statements: fully satisfied, rich needing nothing and now reigning as kings
2. But they were doing so without the apostles and without Christ
3. While Christ and the apostles were suffering, they had arrived and were

⁵ Philo, *Virt.* 174 (Yonge, *Works*, 657). Vang, Preben. [1 Corinthians](#). Ed. Mark L. Strauss. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2014. Print. Teach the Text Commentary Series.

reigning by themselves

4. Paul says in verse 8 that he wished that the time to reign had already come so that he might reign with them!⁶
5. Instead they should have conducted themselves worthy of the Gospel and of Christ - Philippians 1:27 (NASB) Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.
6. Whether Paul was with them or not they were, according to Philippians 2:12

⁶ MacDonald, William. [*Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*](#). Ed. Arthur Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995. Print.

(NASB), to “work out [their] salvation with fear and trembling.”

John Gill again says, “The saints, in the best sense, are kings, made so by Christ; and have not only the name, and the ensigns of royalty, as crowns and thrones prepared for them, but kingdoms also: they have a kingdom of grace, which they enjoy now, and shall never be removed; in which they reign as kings under the influence of the spirit of God, over the corruptions of their own hearts, which are laid under the restraints of mighty grace; and over the world, which they have under their feet; and over Satan, who is dethroned and cast out of them; and they shall inherit the kingdom of glory hereafter; but nothing of this kind is here intended. The sense of the words is, that these persons imagined that they had arrived to such a pitch of knowledge, as to be independent of the apostles; needed no instructions and directions

from them, and were in great tranquillity and ease of mind, and attended with outward prosperity, so that they lived, as kings, the most happy life that could be desired.”⁷

Not only were they guilty of reigning without Christ and the apostles but...

II. They Were Guilty of Acting More Superior Than the Apostles (vv.9-13)

Paul contrast 3 things: their treatment (vv.9-11) and attitude (vv.2-13) versus the Corinthians behavior (v.10):

Notice first...

A. The Apostles' Treatment (vv.9-11)

Paul says in verse 9, “For, I think, God has

⁷ Ibid., John Gill.

exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.”

In other words, God has exalted you but for us He has treated us as...

1. Last of all, as men condemned to death (v.9)

They were “the least in the esteem of men; and were treated as the most mean, vile, and abject of creatures; were set or shewed forth to public view, and made a gazing-stock by reproaches and afflictions.”⁸

To the world they were worthless teachers teaching worthless ideas,

⁸ Ibid., John Gill.

contributing nothing to mankind. The only thing they deserved was death.⁹

The imagery is of condemned prisoners brought into a Roman arena to fight and die; the last ones brought out for slaughter were the grand finale.¹⁰

They were nothing more but...

2. A spectacle to the world and angels (v.9)

They were ridiculed, spit upon, imprisoned, beaten, mocked, and generally treated like criminals. Then they were last; but in Christ's coming kingdom they will be first.¹¹

By *angels* may be meant the demons,

⁹ Ibid., MacArthur, John. 1 Corinthians.

¹⁰ MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. [The MacArthur Study Bible](#). electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.

¹¹ Ibid., MacArthur, John. 1 Corinthians.

who are fallen angels, “who stirred up the princes of this world against the apostles, to persecute and afflict them”¹² or it may mean the good angels who were “witnesses of the faith, courage, and constancy of the saints, and as comforters of them in all their tribulations.”¹³

Paul says in verse 10, “we are...

3. Fools for Christ’s sake (v.10)

When Paul was giving his defence before King Agrippa, The governor Festus said in Acts 26:24 (NASB) “Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad.”

¹² Ibid., John Gill.

¹³ Ibid., John Gill.

When he was before the Epicurean and stoic philosophers, they said in Acts 17:18 (NASB) “What would this idle babbler wish to say?” Others, “He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,” —because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

Christians have always been treated as “fools” for their close attachment to a crucified Christ; and for preaching the doctrine of salvation by him; and for enduring so much reproach, affliction, and persecution, for his sake and the Gospel’s.¹⁴

The Corinthians treated Paul and Apollos as “unworthy of confidence, and unfit to instruct.”¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid., John Gill.

¹⁵ Barnes, Albert. [Notes on the New Testament: I Corinthians](#). Ed. Robert Frew. London: Blackie & Son, 1884–1885. Print.

Before we hear the contrasts in verse 10, note what else Paul says about himself and the rest of the apostles.

He says, “we are...

4. Weak (v.10)

“...but scarcely in a physical sense but rather in the sense of the unimpressive, negligible because we scorn to use the cheap means which impress men and win their admiration and their applause but are content for our success to rely only on the hidden power of the gospel.”¹⁶

They are fools, weak and...

¹⁶ Lenski, R. C. H. [*The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistle to the Corinthians*](#). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1963. Print.

5. Without honor (v.10)

Now in verse 11, Paul drops the irony, and begins a serious recapitulation of his actual sufferings and trials. The phrase here used “unto this present hour” denotes that these things had been incessant through all their ministry. They were not merely at the commencement of their work, but they had continued and attended them everywhere. And even then they were experiencing the same thing. These privations and trials were still continued, and were to be regarded as a part of the apostolic condition.¹⁷

Paul continues in verse 11 saying, “we are both...

6. Hungry and thirsty (v.11)

7. Poorly clothed (v.11)

¹⁷ Ibid., Barnes, Albert.

8. Roughly treated (v.11)

9. Homeless (v.11)

They were stoned at Lystra (Acts 14:19), beaten and imprisoned at Philippi (Acts 16:23). He was struck in the mouth before Ananias the High Priest (Acts 23:2).

He said in 2 Corinthians 4:8-11 (NASB) we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

He said in 2 Corinthians 6:3-5 (NASB) giving no cause for offense in anything, so that the ministry will not be discredited, 4 but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, 5 in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger.

He said in 2 Corinthians 11:23-27 (NASB) Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. 26 I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers

from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; 27 I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

We are nothing more but the...

10. Scum of the world (v.13)

11. Dregs of all things (v.13)

The scum and dregs scraped from a dirty dish or garbage pot, figuratively used of the lowest, most degraded criminals who were often sacrificed in pagan ceremonies.¹⁸

¹⁸ MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. [The MacArthur Study Bible](#). electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.

It would not be possible to employ stronger expressions to denote the contempt and scorn with which they were every where regarded.¹⁹

B. The Apostle's Attitude (vv.12-13)

1. We toil working with our own hands (v.12)

Paul told the Thessalonians in 1 Thessalonians 2:9-12 (NASB) For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. 10 You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; 11 just as you know how we were

¹⁹ Ibid, Barnes, Albert.

exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, 12 so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

2. We bless when reviled (v.12)
3. We endure when persecuted (v.12)
4. We encourage when slandered (v.13)

That was their true behavior but the Corinthians were too proud to see it. Instead as Paul says in verse 10 they were...

C. The Corinthians' Behavior (v.10)

1. You are prudent (v.10)
2. You are strong (v.10)
3. You are distinguished (v.10)

The Corinthians still loved human wisdom. They were still tempted to look on preachers of the gospel as babblers. They could not bear to be fools for Christ's sake...

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CONCLUSION

1. What irony!
2. What a rebuke!

²⁰ Ibid., MacArthur, John. 1 Corinthians.

3. What pride that existed in the Corinthian church!
4. I pray that it never happens here!
5. But we are vulnerable to it too if we're not careful.
6. We must remain humble!
7. We must root out every sin in our lives!
8. We must live by the Spirit and His Word!
9. You can only do this by being in Christ.
10. You cannot do this on your own.
11. If you have never repented and come to Jesus, come now and confess Him as Lord, believing

in your heart that God raised Him from the dead and you'll be saved.

12. Let's pray.