

INTRODUCTION

1. Pride has to be crushed or it will crush you.
2. It has to be destroyed in the church or it will destroy the church.
3. It must be dealt with sternly but also carefully.
4. As we lead up to 1 Corinthians 5 with the close of chapter 4, we see how important correction is in the church.
5. Many today don't want to be corrected.
6. They want to do as they please.

7. But as Scripture teaches, we all are subject to correction because all of us are sinners.
8. As sinners, we have the propensity to sin.
9. And regardless of what the sin is, it must be corrected.
10. In our last study of 1 Corinthians chapter 4, we looked at verses 8-13 and heard how Paul rebuked the Corinthians prideful behavior.
11. Now Paul gives his reason for this in the verses that follow.
12. In verses 14-21, you're going to hear the heart of a father.
13. Listen to what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4:14-21.

14. There are 4 things we need to see this morning in these 8 verses.
15. Paul gives why he is writing to them, who he is, what they need to do and what they need to stop presuming.
16. First he says in verse 14...

LESSON

I. Why I Am Writing These Things (v.14)

“I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children.”

“Write” (grapho), pres.act.ind.

Paul is saying, “I am not constantly writing”

In other words, everything I have written thus far either referring to what he has just written in 4:6-13 or all the way back to 1:10, which would be “regarding their [factions which were] a result of their devotion to human wisdom rather than God’s wisdom.”¹

I’m not writing all these things to “shame you”

A. Not to Shame You (v.14a)

The word “Shame” (entrepo, pres.act.part.) is also in the present tense indicating ongoing action. The word itself means “To dishonor--to bring shame or dishonor upon or fail to respect”

I’m not trying to “shame you” but...

¹ Taylor, Mark. [1 Corinthians](#). Ed. E. Ray Clendenen. Vol. 28. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2014. Print. The New American Commentary.

B. To Admonish You (v.14b)

1. His purpose is to correct their behavior, not put them to shame
2. There are occasions when shame is appropriate
 - a) In the next chapter Paul boldly confronts scandalous behavior occurring in the community (5:1–13)
 - b) He specifically indicates his intent to shame in 6:5 and 15:34.²
3. The word "admonish" is defined in our English dictionary as "to reprove gently but earnestly;" "to counsel (another) against something to be avoided; caution;" "To remind of something

² Ibid., Taylor.

forgotten or disregarded, as an obligation or a responsibility"³

4. The Greek word for "admonish" is *noutheteo*, which is where we get the English word *nouthetic*. It means, "to impart understanding, to set right, to lay on the heart" (Kittel).
5. "The stress is on influencing not merely the intellect but the will and disposition" (Kittel)
6. "It means to warn people of the consequences of their behavior"
7. It refers not merely to academic data imparted impersonally but to instruction for the purpose of correcting and changing people.

³ The American Heritage Dictionary

8. It is teaching with an element of warning, designed to direct the sheep to holy living”.⁴
9. Teaching is the impartation of positive truth. Admonishing is the negative side of teaching.⁵
10. Paul said to the elders at Ephesus in Acts 20:31 (NASB) Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.
11. He told the Colossians in Colossians 1:28 (NASB) We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present

⁴ John MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, p.170

⁵ Ibid., MacArthur.

every man complete in Christ.

12. He told the Thessalonians in 1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NASB) We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

Paul refers back to his relationship with the Corinthians in the next verse, verse 15 and points out...

II. Who I Am (v.15)

He says, “For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.”

He says, “I’m not...

A. Not a Slave Guardian (v.15a)

“Tutor” (paidagoges), A

παλιδαγωγός is a slave who has charge of the son of a wealthy family, leads him to school, and sees to it that the son conducts himself properly; hence not “instructor” (A. V.), or “tutor” (R. V.), but “slave guardian.”⁶

I’m not your slave guardian,

I am...

B. Your Spiritual Father (v.15b)

“In Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel”

⁶ Lenski, R. C. H. The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistle to the Corinthians. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1963. Print.

The mention of their birth through the “gospel” recalls yet again Paul’s apostolic call (1:17) and his role in the founding of the church (2:1–5; 3:10) and thus his unique relationship to the Corinthian Christians.⁷

According to Sanhedrin 19 b, If a man teaches his neighbour’s son Torah, Scripture counts it to him as if he had begotten him.⁸

Paul was the “wise master builder” who “[laid] a foundation” (1 Cor.3:10).

He did that by “proclaiming to [them] the testimony of God” (1 Cor.2:1).

⁷ Ibid., Taylor.

⁸ Barrett, C. K. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. London: Continuum, 1968. Print. Black’s New Testament Commentary.

He said in 1 Corinthians 2:2 that he “determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.” His message therefore was “in demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (1 Cor.2:4) not in human wisdom.

So the Corinthians were begotten by the gospel of Jesus Christ by Paul and therefore were his spiritual children.

This was true of others that he led to the Lord Jesus with the Gospel.

1. Paul referred to Timothy in verse 17 as his “beloved and faithful child in the Lord” and in 1 Timothy 1:2 as his “true child in the faith”

2. He said in Titus 1:4 that Titus was his
“true child in a common faith”

Since he is their spiritual father he exhorts them in
verse 16 of...

III. What You Need to Do (vv.16-17)

“Be imitators of me”

A. Imitate Me (v.16)

“Imitators” (mimetes) means to “mimic,
copy”

1. Spiritual leaders must set an example of
Christlikeness to follow
 - a) 1 Timothy 4:12 (NASB) Let no one
look down on your youthfulness, but

rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

b) Hebrews 13:7 (NASB) Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

2. Often the hardest place to disciple is in the home

John MacArthur writes, “When we disciple those outside our families, they often see us only in ideal situations, where it is easy to act spiritual and mature. But our children see us in all of our moods, in all of our attitudes and actions. They know firsthand if we are

living up to what we are trying to teach them. If we are not, most of our instruction and admonition will fall on deaf ears. Even if we sincerely love them, our children are more likely to follow what we do than what we say.

Discipling is more than teaching right principles; it is also living those principles before the ones being disciplined (cf. 1 Tim. 4:12).⁹

Not only were they to imitate Paul but they were also to...

B. Listen to Timothy (v.17)

Paul says in verse 17, “For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and

⁹ MacArthur, John F., Jr. [1 Corinthians](#). Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.”

1. He is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord
2. He will remind you of my ways
 - a) Which are in Christ

Timothy was so like Paul that he could be sent as a Pauline model.

The apostle had done such a complete work as a spiritual father to Timothy that he could send Timothy to continue discipling the Corinthians on his behalf.

He was a replica.

That is the epitome of raising spiritual children: being able to send them to work in our place.

When we are Christlike, those we disciple will be more likely to become Christlike and be able to help others become Christlike.

This obviously provides a potentially great multiplication of ministry.

Paul loved Timothy and commended him as a faithful child who would bring back to mind the Christlike life pattern of Paul, because it was also his own life pattern.¹⁰

¹⁰ Ibid., MacArthur. 1 Corinthians.

b) As I teach everywhere in every church

Paul had already taught them carefully for eighteen months (Acts 18:11).

They had been thoroughly grounded in the Word.

Timothy's job was to remind them of what Paul had taught and of the way he had lived among them.

His discipling was a follow-up of the apostle's.

Paul had taught the same truths everywhere in every church, indicating that he is referring to doctrine rather than some specific

advice, and Timothy's job was to reinforce those great eternal truths by his own teaching and his own example.¹¹

Not only did they need to imitate Paul and listen to Timothy but there were also things they needed to stop doing.

IV. What You Need to Stop Presuming (vv.18-21)

A. That I'm Not Coming to You (v.18)

Paul says in verse 18, "Now some have become arrogant, as though I were not coming to you."

They were thinking they would never see Paul face to face and could do whatever they pleased

¹¹ Ibid., MacArthur. 1 Corinthians.

But Paul says in verse 19...

B. I Will Come to You if the Lord Wills (v.19)

1. Paul was not about to presume on the Lord's will knowing he may never get to go back to Corinth if the Lord had other plans
2. But if he did go back, he would not let their sinning go unchallenged
3. For their sake, as well as the gospel, he could not fail to discipline them

Paul knew...

C. The Kingdom of God Does Not Consist in Words but in Power (v.20)

Wherever the kingdom of God reaches down among men it is accompanied, not merely by words (like the science and the wisdom of men), but by power from on high, the power of divine grace, and by that power we may also “know” and recognize it.

For this reason Paul intends to look for this “power” among these proud people (“some”) in Corinth when he arrives among them.¹²

1. The power wasn't there
2. Whatever power they claimed to have was human not spiritual. It was carnal and manifested itself in carnality

¹² Ibid., Lenski.

3. The church was not founded by empty boasting; by pompous pretensions [or] by confident assertions.¹³
4. It wasn't the power of the gospel or of the Holy Spirit
5. The church was founded on the power of the gospel
6. Paul said in Romans 1:16 (NASB) For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
7. The power of God rests in the gospel of God

¹³ Barnes, Albert. [*Notes on the New Testament: I Corinthians*](#). Ed. Robert Frew. London: Blackie & Son, 1884–1885. Print.

Paul concludes with a question in verse 21?

D. What do you desire?

In other words...

How do you want me to come to you?

1. A rod?

The rod that Paul threatens to brandish reluctantly is what Old Testament wisdom believed a father should use to drive out folly from the heart of his children (Prov. 22:15; 23:13–14; see 1 Cor. 4:15: “in Christ Jesus I became your father”).¹⁴

He does not have in mind a literal stick

¹⁴ Ciampa, Roy E., and Brian S. Rosner. *The First Letter to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010. Print. The Pillar New Testament Commentary.

to beat them with, but an attitude and spirit of strong, painful discipline.

He would deal sternly with their pride, the sin God hates most. But if they responded favorably to his letter, he would treat them with restrained, patient kindness.¹⁵

2. Love and a spirit of gentleness?

Galatians 6:1 (NASB) Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

Whether he comes to Corinth boldly or gently, Paul expects his future

¹⁵ Ibid., MacArthur. 1 Corinthians.

face-to-face contact with the Corinthians to involve some form of correction.

The choice is not between discipline or no discipline, but between harsh and gentle discipline.

The “gentleness” Paul hopes to employ is one commonly utilized in the context of correction.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

1. Sometimes we may need to be shamed if we were persistent in not repenting of our sin.
2. That was not Paul’s desire.
3. Nor was it his desire to come to them stern discipline but the gentleness of a father

¹⁶ Ibid., Ciampa

correcting his wayward child.

4. Thank God when He does that to us.
5. Hebrews 12:5-6 (NASB) says, “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprovved by Him; 6 For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives.”
6. He says in verse 8 that “if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.”
7. Which describes you?
8. Gospel
9. Let’s pray