
Opening reading: 1 Corinthians 4:14-15; 18-20 will help us understand the whole of (C4) in what Paul wrote to the Corinthian church.

Paul was reproving/warning the Church at Corinth because of their religious arrogance and conceit. They were an immature church!

GFBC: All of us need of growing in grace, (and in love, kindness, patience, meekness); there are areas of immaturity in all of us!

You might have 10,000 instructors in Christ, yet, you do not have many spiritual fathers to be examples to you, to guide and help you with your own spiritual growth in the Lord, and to teach you that Christians are to be Christ-Like; not arrogant and full of pride, but meek and humble!

There were still factions among them; for they were puffed up against each other and thought themselves TO HAVE ARRIVED as a church, and to be at the pinnacle of spiritual wisdom. They had much to learn!

Instead of casting off their worldly wisdom for the wisdom of Christ, they brought it into the church. This only exacerbated the blindness of their hearts. Obadiah 3: The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee

Paul had his work cut out for him in Corinth: Don't forget the context; there were factions in the church who exalted one preacher over another preacher; and, they were puffed up against each other. (Read 4:1-13)

1 Corinthians 4:6: 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 the other

These things refers to what Paul had just written to the Corinthians in regard to pastors and gospel ministers; that they were servants of Christ; under-rowers and under-oarsmen who in all of their ministry for Christ they must have their eyes on their Captain/Commander - Christ; for it is His church which we build; it is His field which we plant; Christ is the Absolute Authority in His church, not the pastor.

And so, THESE THINGS I have transferred, or I apply to myself and to Apollos; and to EVERY gospel minister and teacher. I WRITE THIS:

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 the other

You must NOT idolize or inordinately exalt pastors and/or gospel preachers in the church; you are not to glorify/boast in men, but in God!

So, how are you to think of pastors/gospel ministers? AS WE ARE TAUGHT to think of them from the Word!

They are to be respected & honored in their work and labors for the Lord; they are to be submitted to and obeyed by the

believers under their care; but they are ONLY under-shepherds/ under-rowers in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ; they are NEVER to be exalted to the place of being lords over God's heritage.

That no one of you be puffed up for one against the other

The Corinthians had arrogant & inflated opinions of themselves. They viewed any gifts or abilities in men (or their own gifts or abilities) as inherently theirs and not given by God. And so, they were full of pride:

Paul had already dealt with their pride over preachers!

(3:7)

(V7): For who maketh thee to differ from another?

Who gave you the grace, the understanding, the ability, and/or the spiritual gifts that you do possess in Christ? God did! Who gave you your natural abilities? Once again, God did! And what do you have that you did not receive from God?

What spiritual or natural talent or ability do you possess that God did not give you?

Now if you did receive it, (I.e. FROM GOD); why do you glory or boast as if you got it all by yourself; and you didn't receive it FROM GOD!

If anyone could boast in himself and in his credentials, it was Paul, but he didn't do that, he gave the glory to God for who and what he was.

1 Corinthians 15:9-10, 1 Peter 4:10-11

Now we come to (V8): READ: This was meant as a rebuke!

Paul was not commending them for being full of the Word and rich in faith; he was rebuking them for being full of pride and puffed up against each other in the church. He was telling them plainly; you're very impressed with yourselves, aren't you?

(V8): Ye have arrogantly reigned as kings WITHOUT US

We don't need anything or anyone. What the Apostle John wrote of the Laodicean Church could most certainly be applied to the Church at Corinth: *Revelation 3:14-22*

The Corinthians were FULL of themselves, not FULL of the Holy Spirit; (as they may have thought); they were FULL of pride, but they possessed no humility or meekness.

Perhaps they knew much of the Word and they were FULL of knowledge, but they had not the love of Christ to accompany that knowledge!

Knowledge puffeth up, but charity (love) edifieth

They had much of the Word in their minds, but what they did have of the Word did not dwell in them RICHLY in all wisdom!

You think you have reached the pinnacle of spiritual perfection, but you have not. I would that you did reign as kings, that we might also reign with you!

(V9-13): Note the stark contrast in how the apostles were treated in the world, and how the Corinthians were treated:

The first thing to see (V9) is that God put the Apostles on

display) before the world, as men appointed and condemned to die for His Name! We are continually being exposed to afflictions, persecutions, beatings, and threats of death. Jesus told His apostles that it would be like this for them in the world as servants and apostles of Christ. John 15:18-21 This is the Christian life! What will YOU (Christian); what will I DO when we are threatened and persecuted because we believe in Christ? Or, are we stealth believers? That is, we don't want anyone to know that we follow Christ because we are afraid of the dishonor, rejection, or persecution that might accompany our faith in Christ? Do we love our lives in this world more than we love Christ? John 12:25

It is written of the glorified saints in heaven that they loved not their lives unto death. Paul: Acts 20:22-24

YES! Corinthian Church, you live like Rich and Honorable Kings while we, the Apostles of Christ are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. Hebrews 10:32-33 We are made a spectacle or gazing stock to the world, as in a theatre, or like the games of the colosseum in Rome, where men were cast into the middle of the colosseum and put on display to be hunted and killed by Gladiators and wild beasts.

(V10-13): Paul wrote that he and his co-laborers were regarded as fools for Christ's sake; also, weak and despised. 1 Corinthians 1:17-25, 3:18

Even today, you will be regarded fools and weak for following Christ; and you will be despised by the world.

How are you with that thought? How are you with that life? What life is more important to you? This life? Or eternal life (and no more sin, sorrow, crying, or pain) in the presence of Christ for all eternity?

Again, the Apostles were regarded as fools; in contrast, the Corinthians regarded themselves as wise in Christ; strong and honorable; but they were in reality behaving foolishly! The Apostles were the true representation of Christianity/the Christian life. (V11-13): Explain.

This is how we've lived and been treated in the world for being disciples of Christ! Remember the Words of Christ: John 15:18-21

We do well to remember that this is the way the world views our Christ and our Christianity!

And so, Paul continued his care and discipline of the church at Corinth as their spiritual father. (V14-16)

The Corinthians were still very immature as a church body; Paul is about to move on from the contentions and pride that existed among them in regard to preachers, to sexual sins in the church and lawsuits between brethren. There was a lot of work to be done in the church at Corinth!

What work is there that needs to be done in you and me, here at GFBC?