

Paul realizes that spiritual **pride** was the cause of the Corinthians' dissension and lack of unity.

Verses 1-5 teaches us how the Corinthians are to treat all believers, not just Paul and Apollos.

<sup>1</sup> *Servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

<sup>2</sup> *it is required of stewards that one be found faithful.*

<sup>3</sup> *but the one who examines me is the Lord.*

<sup>5</sup> *do not go on passing judgment before the time,*

## *1 Corinthians 4:6 (NLT2)*

***<sup>6</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, I have used Apollos and myself to illustrate what I've been saying. If you pay attention to what I have quoted from the Scriptures, you won't (go beyond scripture) and be proud of one of your leaders at the expense of another.***

- ❑ Paul applies a principle to himself and to Apollos, which he meant for others to see, in order that the saints might be profited.
- ❑ A standard, which the saints could easily use for others whose pretenses were as high and unfounded as the services of Paul and Apollos were real and of God.
- ❑ These principles as to service and faithfulness applied to himself and to Apollos to expose the abuse of gifted brothers in their church without actually mentioning any names.

## What is the Standard of Christian living?

It is the objective Word of God.

❑ We are **not to exceed or go beyond** the Word of God.

❑ 1 Cor.1:19, 31; 3:19-20

❑ 1Cor. 15:3-4; <sup>3</sup> *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received:.....*

❑ 11:23<sup>23</sup> *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you:.....*

## Have you ever noticed how doctrine divides?

*1 Timothy 6:3-6 (NASB)*

*3 If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,*

*4 he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,*

*5 and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.*

*6 But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.*

- If the Corinthians avoided this pitfall, they would not take pride in one of their teachers over another.

The frequent use of this word: *phusis*

“**puff up, pride, arrogant**” identifies one of the Corinthians' main problems.

**Their attitude was wrong because their viewpoint of Scripture was wrong or inadequate.**

*2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV)*

*<sup>15</sup> Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

***7 For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?***

- ❑ He reminded the Corinthians that they were not naturally superior to anyone else, and an attitude that judging others presupposes.
- ❑ God had given them everything they had.
- ❑ Consequently, they should be grateful, not boastful.

**What, however, if someone answers that they are superior?**

If so, the next question will settle the issue.

## “What do you have that you did not receive?”

- ❑ If, because of a gift, the servant did in anyway differ from others, he had nothing but that which he had received.
- ❑ If a gift, it was given and not acquired by any merit.
- ❑ Even if one has a gift that elevates them above others, that gift is not natural but rather supplied by God’s grace.
- ❑ **All gifts** are for the service of others in the body.

Darby

*"Who maketh thee to differ?" For who regards you as superior?*

If anyone has more gift than another, where does it come from?

It all came from God.

One was saying, I am of Paul, and another, I of Apollos, but the apostle says to such, It is all yours; and if one is greater than another, who made him to differ? Just as John says, *"A man can receive nothing except it be given him from above."*

<sup>8</sup> *You are already filled, you **have already** become rich, you have become kings **without us**; and indeed, I wish that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you.*

- The Corinthians were behaving as though they **had already** received their reward at the judgment seat of Christ.

Paul says, it is “**without us.**”

- He wished that the reigning time had come, but we are all still in the world.
- The world from which Christ has been rejected, and nailed to a Cross.
- Therefore, it is neither the time nor the place for the followers of Christ to reign as kings.

The “**now**” of verse 8 is in contrast to the “**then**” of verse 5.

***1 Corinthians 4:8 (KJV)***

*<sup>8</sup> **Now** 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 Corinthians 4:5 (NKJV)***

*<sup>5</sup> 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.*

Ironically, Paul wished the time for rewards had arrived so he could enjoy reigning with his readers. Unfortunately, suffering must precede glory.

The apostle notices sarcastically.

- **When Christ does reign**, we shall indeed be at ease, and in the fullest satisfaction;
- and He will drink the new wine with us in the kingdom of His Father — and He will gird Himself, and make us recline at table,
- and He will come and serve us as He in His grace stooped to assure us,
- When Christ will also set the faithful servant over all that He has.

**But now is the** time to deny self, to take up one's cross, and follow Him, who suffered all things here below. Kelly