

Groups Discussion Guide
Sermon: 1 Corinthians 4:1-21
Pastor David Uth
The Church United: Week 8

Passage: 1 Corinthians 4:1-21 - "This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. **2** Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. **3** But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. **4** For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. **5** Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

6 I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers,^[a] that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another. **7** For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

8 Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you! **9** For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. **10** We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. **11** To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, **12** and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; **13** when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.

14 I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. **15** For though you have countless^[b] guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. **16** I urge you, then, be imitators of me. **17** That is why I sent^[c] you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ,^[d] as I teach them everywhere in every church. **18** Some are arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. **19** But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power. **20** For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but

in power. **21** What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?"

Introduction - 1 Corinthians Week 7 Recap:

Last week Pastor Doug Hankins shared about his time at the Asbury Revival and taught from 1 Corinthians 3:10-23. Doug reminded us that growing up requires effort, the right materials, and the solid foundation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This week, Pastor David continues our study of 1 Corinthians and looks at 1 Corinthians 4.

Instructions: This discussion guide serves as a conversation starter for your small group. Every week we will feature an icebreaker question in the **Getting Started** section. Your main discussion will be centered around the **Big Idea** section where you will read the key passage and answer suggested questions based on the sermon. Feel free to use some or all of these questions or add your own. Finally, in the **My Life** section we will give you a couple of ways to practically apply what we have learned together and a closing suggested prayer to pray.

Getting Started: Who is someone you look up to and want to imitate? What about when you were a child? Did you want to imitate someone you knew or someone famous?

Big Idea:

Read 1 Cor 4:1-2 - What is the difference between a servant and steward? What does Paul say is important? Do you agree? Why or why not?

Read: 1 Corinthians 4:6 - What does Paul mean when he says not to go beyond what is written? What does that tell you about what is written?

CR: Hebrews 4:12, Isaiah 55:11, 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Read 1 Corinthians 4:9-13 - If we live in the way Paul describes, what should we anticipate? How does the world view those who have become fools for Christ's sake? When have you had to endure a time of suffering like Paul describes? How did it change you?

CR: 2 Corinthians 4:8-10

Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-16 What position is Paul taking? Do you think he has the right to address them in this way? Paul tells them to imitate him. Why do you think he is able to say this to the Corinthians church?

Read 1 Corinthians 4:19-20 At every turn of events, what is Paul always seeking? What enables him to follow this plan?

My Life: It is healthy for us to consider who we are being influenced by as well as who we are in turn passing along our influence to on a daily basis. This is especially true in our spiritual lives. Are your leaders *servants* and stewards? If so, are you imitating them? This week, take some time to reflect on your circle of influence and read through this passage one more time. Make a list of qualities that you see in your leaders that reflect Christ and ask God to produce those same qualities in your life as well.

Conclusion: Lord, thank you for the servants and stewards that have faithfully pointed us to your Word, your way, and your power. We desire to be people who are faithful to your truth and seek your will, even when we are hard-pressed by the trials of life.