

Luke 12:42-48: “The Lord answered, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time?”⁴³ It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns.⁴⁴ I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.⁴⁵ “But suppose the servant says to himself, ‘My master is taking a long time in coming,’ and he then begins to beat the menservants and maidservants and to eat and drink and get drunk.⁴⁶ The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers.”⁴⁷ “That servant who knows his master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows.⁴⁸ But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”

➤ **Leaders will be _____ by God alone, not man (v.3-5).**

1 Corinthians 4:3-5: “I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself.”⁴ My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men’s hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.”

2. Church Leaders should be _____ and not seek _____ treatment (4:6-13).

1 Corinthians 4:6-13: “Now, brothers, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, “Do not go beyond what is written.” Then you will not take pride in one man over against another.”⁷ For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?⁸ Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have become kings—and that without us! How I wish that you really had become kings so that we might be kings with you!⁹ For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men.”¹⁰ We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are

honored, we are dishonored!¹¹ To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless.¹² We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it;¹³ when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world.”

MODERN DAY T.V PREACHERS VS. THE APOSTLE PAUL

“Start your day with faith and expectancy, and then go out anticipating good things. Expect circumstances to change in your favor. Expect people to go out of their way to help you. Expect to be at the right place at the right time.”
Joel Osteen, Your Best Life Now, 13.

“God wants to make your life easier. He wants to assist you, to promote you, to give you advantages. He wants you to have preferential treatment. But if we’re going to experience more of God’s favor, we must live more ‘favor-minded.’ To be favor-minded means we expect God’s special help... Consequently – and I say this humbly – I’ve come to expect to be treated differently. I’ve learned to expect people to want to help me. My attitude is: I’m a child of the Most High God. My Father created the whole universe. He has crowned me with favor, therefore, I can expect preferential treatment. I can expect people to go out of their way to want to help me.”
Joel Osteen, Your Best Life Now, 38-39.

3. Church Leaders have God-given _____ to _____ those in error (4:14-21).

1 Corinthians 4:14-21: “I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children.¹⁵ Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.¹⁶ Therefore I urge you to imitate me.”¹⁷ For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.¹⁸ Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you.¹⁹ But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have.²⁰ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.²¹ What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a whip, or in love and with a gentle spirit?”

FINAL THOUGHTS

As managers of God's household, Church leaders are called by God to be faithful, humble, self-sacrificing and fatherly in their comfort and correction of the family. **As members of God's family** we are to abstain from judging, criticizing and rejecting the men God has placed in authority as watchmen over our souls (Hebrews 13:7,17).

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Take time for prayer requests

1. Take time to read 1 Corinthians 4:1-5 and compare it with Luke 12:35-48. What do you find that is similar in both passages? How does this passage apply to all Christians, not just leaders?

2. What does Paul mean in 1 Corinthians 4:3-5 when he says that he does not care if he is judged by the Corinthians and that he does not even judge himself? How does this passage relate to the truth that Paul is a 'household servant' (1 Cor.4:1-2)?

3. Paul was being criticized by the Corinthians (judged by them – See 4:3). What do you think God thinks of us when we criticize our leaders (See Numbers 12-14; Hebrews 13:7,17)? In light of this, what do we do if we disagree with our leaders? How do we handle it? What should you do if you hear someone being critical of your leaders?

4. Take time to read the following passages in the N.T regarding Paul's lifestyle (1 Corinthians 4:6-13; 2 Corinthians 6:3-10; 11:22-29; Philippians 4:10-20). How did he live? How would his lifestyle compare with those who teach that it is God's will for everyone to be healthy and wealthy? How does his lifestyle compare with the modern day T.V preachers?

5. 1 Corinthians 4:14-21 gives us insight into the authority that all Pastors are given to correct, warn and discipline. How does Ezekiel 34:1-10 relate to the role of a Pastor? How do you respond to authority? If you wandered from the truth, would you want your shepherd coming after you?

Prayer

SERIES: "Life in the Father's House"
MESSAGE: "The Bible and Church Leaders"
1 Corinthians 4:1-21 / Pastor Cory Anderson / SMC / 01.17.10

INTRODUCTION:

1. Church Leaders are God's _____ _____ (1 Corinthians 4:1-5).

1 Corinthians 4:1-2: "So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

- Leaders are _____ of Christ (v.1).
- Leaders are _____ with the secret things of God (v.1-2).

"Those entrusted with translates *oikonomoi*, a term which refers to the person who supervised a large estate...Unless he was to be a slave to his slaves, a rich landowner had to find someone to do the routine work of running the estate. This deputy was called an *oikonomos* (cf. Luke 16:1). He held a responsible position; he was set over others and directed the day-to-day affairs. But he was subject to a master and was often a slave. Then in relation to the master he was a slave, but in relation to the slaves he was the master." **Leon Morris, 1 Corinthians, 72.**

"Servants or slaves of powerful masters often enjoyed positions of considerable delegated authority, being charged with major administrative responsibility for affairs of the household. Paul's image of the steward (*oikonomos*, 4:1) evokes this picture of the slave-in-charge. (In a world where there are no longer slaves in charge of big households, we might think analogically of the foreman in charge of a construction crew or the chief of staff in the White House.)...To be a 'Servant of Christ' (1 Cor. 4:1) is, in Paul's symbolic world, a position of privilege and authority. Thus, Paul uses this image to assert his independence from the Corinthians' judgments of him and his exclusive accountability to the Lord." **Richard B. Hays, 1 Corinthians, 65.**

- Leaders are to be _____ (v.2).

1 Corinthians 4:2: "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."