
Short Review of what we've learned so far in 1 Corinthians: (C1): Paul opened his letter commending what God had done in them as a church; how God had enriched them in knowledge and utterance of the truth, and that they were very gifted as a church.

But then Paul began to address their immaturity and their sins, which if not dealt with and repented of, would ruin them as a church. (1:10-12)

The Grecians majored in worldly wisdom and eloquence of speech, the spoken word; but the preaching of the cross (the gospel of Christ) was foolishness to them! (1:17-19)

And YET, it was by what they called foolishness that God determined to save sinners! (1:21)

Knowing this about them, did Paul change his message to gratify their felt needs? Did he become seeker sensitive so as not to offend them? (2:1-5):

We don't speak the wisdom of the world; we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery; this hidden wisdom from God will only be known when revealed by the Spirit of God! If you think to yourself that the gospel is foolishness, God will make you the fool in the end! Matthew 11:25

Paul's first conclusion about the Corinthian Church: You're babes in Christ, carnal, and not spiritual! Instead of having an ardent love for Christ and His Word, you fight over your favorite apostle or minister.

Those whom God calls to the ministry of the Word are servants of Christ, they are all under-rowers or under-oarsmen who must consistently be looking to Christ their Captain and Commander so as to deliver HIS message, not theirs. They are ALL planters in God's field and builders of His church. (3:5-11)

Do NOT to think of men (or gospel ministers) above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one (minister) against another

(V7-13) Paul continued to deal with their pride and the conceited spirit that existed among them. 5-times in 1 Corinthians Paul tells the church ye are PUFFED UP; they suffered from a high and inflated opinion of themselves.

If I could summarize Paul's letter to the Corinthian Church thus far, it would be: You are NOT even close to being a spiritual church that you think you are! Where are we as a church body? (Read: 4:7-21) (Text 14-21)

(4:14-15): I write NOT to shame you, but to WARN you.

The truth is, they should've been ashamed of themselves; but their pride blinded them to their own sins and immaturity. Pride is such a blinding sin; it makes you exalt yourself and look at everyone else's faults and deficiencies not at your own!

But when you walk with Christ by faith, and humble yourself in obedience to His Holy Word, ONLY THEN will you possess spiritual clarity enough to see your own wicked pride; only

then may you learn godly humility.

They were babes in Christ, and in his correction of them, Paul was gentle, calling them his beloved sons; children who were in need of spiritual fathers; role models, mentors. (V15) Paul spoke to and cared for them as their spiritual father. We see this toward all of the churches which Paul was instrumental in planting.

2 Corinthians 6:13, (I speak to you as unto my children), Galatians 4:19, 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12, 1 John 2:1, 3:7, 18, John 13:33

Though you have 10,000 instructors in Christ, yet among you, there are not many spiritual fathers WHO ARE godly-wise who would care for your souls; who would tell you the truth as a father to a son or daughter; who would guide you in your Christian lives, who would admonish and reprove you in those times when you need correction and discipline!

How perfect that, in the providence of God, our message Wednesday from Ecclesiastes was hearing/heeding the rebuke of the wise:

(7:5): It is BETTER to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools

Are you a spiritual (mature) example to younger Christians? Can you say as Paul did, (V16): Wherefore, I beseech you, BE YE FOLLOWERS OF ME:

The word FOLLOWERS here is the Greek word Mimetes meaning to Mimic or IMITATE. Paul was teaching the Corinthian believers to imitate him or follow him as an example of how a believer should behave/live/walk by faith in Christ in the world.

You might say at this point, wait a minute Paul, you rebuked us in the beginning of your letter when some of us said, I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I am of Cephas; now you're telling us to follow you!

But Paul was not telling them to prop him up as their favorite preacher, he was teaching them to follow his example of faith/trust in Christ, humility, meekness, devotion, prayer; THIS begs a question to every one of us who profess to be Christians to ask ourselves daily.

Am I, are you a role model and an example to other Christians? Are you a Biblical example of a child of God? Are you a living example of the Sermon on the Mount?

Is Christ in you in such a way that you are worthy of being emulated and followed? YET, not YOU, but Christ IN YOU? Or would you say, no, don't follow my example.

The truth is, EVERY ONE of us ought to be SPIRITUAL EXAMPLES to both believers and unbelievers. Our lives, our words, and our attitudes, Christians, ought to be pointing others to Christ!

1 Corinthians 11:1, 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-9, 1 Timothy 4:12, 1 Peter 5:1-3

Christ taught us to be good spiritual examples: Matthew 5:14-16. And then Christ taught us by His example: John 13:15, 1

Peter 2:18-23

Timotheus was therefore sent, who was Paul's beloved spiritual son, faithful in the Lord and trusted by Paul.

What was Timothy to do? And here we see Paul's apostolic authority laying the foundation stone as a wise master builder.

Timothy shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, (NOTE) as I teach everywhere in EVERY church

NT churches were to be established upon apostolic doctrine which was given to the apostles by Christ Himself! Acts 2:41-42, Ephesians 2:19-20

Understand here, Paul's apostolic authority. BTW, there are NO present-day apostles.

(4:18-19 Read): Some of you are puffed up, (thinking since I have sent Timothy) that I am, perhaps, afraid to come.

When we read passages like this and SEE the pride and arrogance that existed in one of the FIRST NT churches, and a church that had the Apostles of Christ as preachers!

Let it awaken us to the depth of our own depravity; TO NOT look down upon the Corinthian Church as if they were SO sinful and immature, and to look upon ourselves as if, we are of full age and mature in Christ!

No beloved! But let us LEARN from what God has written for us in His Word about the Corinthian Church, be fully aware of the Biblical truth that we are NOTHING, and we have NOTHING apart from Christ, who gives us all things that pertain unto life and godliness!

1 Corinthians 8:2, Galatians 6:3

Are you a spiritual example to other Christians?

Are you worthy of being FOLLOWED? Imitated? Emulated?

Titus 2:1-10