

1 CORINTHIANS

SEEING EVERY PART OF LIFE THROUGH THE GOSPEL

7 Feb 2021

Chapter 4

Verse of the Day:

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. (1 Cor 4:1).

Reflection Questions from last week:

Reflect on your own spiritual growth. In what areas do you need most to grow through a more intensive use of the Word in your daily life? In what areas do you feel you have grown the most? How can you grow spiritually?

Consider your own role in God's kingdom. What specific tasks has God assigned to you?

Examine your own priorities in life. How are you spending your time, talents, and treasure in ways that will endure beyond this life into heaven? Are any changes of priorities in order? Explain.

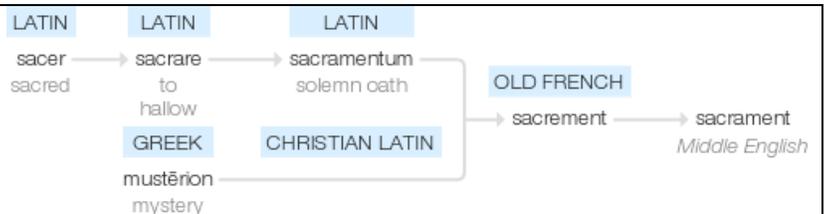
Review: Who, What, When, Where, Why?

What's Going On Here?

With chapter 4 Paul concludes his counsel to the factions in the Corinthian congregation. In this chapter he refers to himself and Apollos as servants and stewards who are accountable only to God. To the Corinthians, who in pride had set themselves up as critics of one another and of God's servants in their midst, such faithfulness and humility may well serve as an example. In relation to his Lord, Paul thinks of himself as a steward subject only to God's judgment. In relation to the Christians in Corinth, he is as a father to children. Whether he is present or absent, whether he speaks words of correction or of comfort, he always has their spiritual welfare at heart.¹

The Ministry of Apostles

4 This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ²Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. ³But 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. ⁴For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. *It is the Lord who judges me.* ⁵Therefore 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.



How does God reveal His “mysteries” to us? (c.f. Romans 16:25-27)

v 2: “be found faithful” to what or to whom? How is faithfulness determined? (c.f. Acts 17:11; 1 Tim 3:1-7)

¹ Engfehr, Lois M. (1997). *God's Word for Today: 1 Corinthians* (p. 22). St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House. Reproducible by purchaser only. © 2009 Concordia Publishing House.

⁶ I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, 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 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 you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, *to remind you of my ways* in Christ, 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?

Lutheran ≠ enthusiasts ([Smalcald: III, art. viii, par. 3](#) & [Formula: Ep, art. ii, par. 13](#))

v 8: spoken with an ironic tone

v 9: exhibited ... last: What type of exhibition would this be considering the culture and the context?

What is Paul's point in vs 10-13? (c.f. 1 Cor 1:17-2:5)

vs 14-21: In what ways does Paul serve as a father to the Corinthians?

v 15: countless = ten thousand, myriad, innumerable

v 17: How would you characterize the relationship between Paul and Timothy? (c.f. Acts 16:1-3; 2 Tim 1:3-9)