

I Corinthians 4:14-5:1

A. I Corinthians 4:14- I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn *you*.

1. Remember, the issue is not the messenger (who is most popular), but the message (what is being taught). Man himself, as the grass, will fade off the scene, but the **Word** of God and it's message will **al**ways stand.

*So stick by the stuff, God says, and do not allow the other stuff to be the issue.

2. Paul warns them because they were allowing **per**sonalities to draw them after themselves. This goes on in many churches today across America.

B. I Corinthians 4:15- For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

1. Paul tells them that they had many teachers wanting to tell them something. However, Paul tells them not to forget that it was **he** who was their spiritual father.

*Paul was the one who had preached the grace gospel to them and whereby they became believers in Christ.

The reason you are even in the spiritual position you are in right now is because of the **gospel.

2. Since Paul (the message deliverer) had, with the gospel, regenerated - given them a new birth, he should be regarded as their **family** leader.

*They were dear to him.

C. I Corinthians 4:16 - Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

1. Since Paul was the original one telling the gospel to the Corinthians, it is natural for him to want them to follow him. Paul tells them to follow - **imitate** the standard of their spiritual father.

2. There is only one way we can follow the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Dispensation of Grace, and that is by following the ministry He gives to us through our (Body) **Apostle** Paul.

Romans 11:13 - For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

I Corinthians 11:1 - Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ.

I Corinthians 14:37 - If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

D. I Corinthians 4:17 - For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

1. Paul is not wanting them to follow his personality, but he himself, being the prime example of **sal**vation by grace and godly **be**havior by grace.

2. Paul says for them to understand that he was sending Timothy to Corinth to teach them how he **lived** and how he **taught**.

a. II Timothy 1:13-15 - Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. II Tim. 1:14 - That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. II Tim. 1:15 - This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

*Some will follow Paul, but it seemed like **most** will not. Today most have forgotten how God **laid** out the books of the Bible. It is amazing!

b. Remember, Paul had spent **18** months in Corinth some **3** years earlier. Now Timothy is to refresh their memories pertaining to what he taught and how he lived in their midst then and always.

Note: Timothy, being a convert of Paul's gospel, was the **perfect** person to confirm Paul's "follow me as I follow Christ."

E. I Corinthians 4:18 - Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

It has been nearly three years since Paul was there. This was plenty of time for some puffed-up believers to get the Corinthians **off** course. This did not involve the whole church, but certain individuals. Whoever they were, they were puffed up, big egos, proud and arrogant. That is a fleshly-mind of sin-to-think you are something special, when you are **not**!

1. They were not grieving over their sins or divisions they were creating. They were using their education, their knowledge to excuse sin, and felt they had **outgrown** Paul's ministry. They said, "Paul, who are we that we have to follow you?"

2. Young people are particularly **susceptible** in wanting to leave any authority over them. The higher the IQ, the greater the susceptibility in life, ministry, and in Biblical knowledge. Plus, they did not think Paul would come.

I Timothy 3:6 - Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil

F. I Corinthians 4:19 - But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

Paul is bringing instructive correction to them, but they were not listening very well. Paul was telling them when he comes to them (God willing), he is going to set things in **order** according to truth. He was not going to just stand by and allow them to wrongly continue. Paul is saying, since he wrote them a letter, they did not think Paul would come there because he was scared to! Wrong! Paul says by the time he was done with them, they would **know** his authority. The believers at Corinth would not be listening to them anymore and they will probably choose to leave.

*Paul hopes **not**, for he wants **for** them to be faithful following Christ's new message. Would not it be better if you got things straightened out **before** I get there?!

G. I Corinthians 4:20 - For the kingdom of God *is* not in word, but in power.

1. Paul uses the phrase "the kingdom of God." This is not a reference to Israel's literal Messianic Kingdom on earth called the thousand year reign. Here it is referring to God's spiritual rule over the **Body** Church. The context will always determine which one it is referring to.

Romans 14:17 - For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Colossians 1:13 - Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

II Thessalonians 1:4-5 - So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: II Thes. 1:5 - *Which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

2. [in power] is directed at those who talked big, but did not back up their words with a true demonstration of God's power. Paul did and **will** (apostle).

II Corinthians 12:12 - Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

* | So the question to them was: "will your lives match your speaking?" or

II Timothy 3:5 - Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

H. I Corinthians 4:21 - What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and *in* the spirit of meekness?

1. Paul asks them **how** they want him to come? Answer: It would be determined by how they would respond to his **letter** (I Corinthians) and to Timothy's edifying.
2. Paul asks them, "When I come, will it be with a 'rod', a rebuking tongue, in correction, in **pun**ishment, in a disciplining way; or come with a warm, kind, humble, **em**bracing manner?"
 - a. Of course, if these leaders were to repent, submit to the Word's authority, Paul would come with love and gentleness (Galatians 5:22-23).
 - b. Remember, as an Apostle, Paul had God's approval to **chastise** **dis**obedient believers.

I Corinthians 5:3-5 - For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed, I Cor. 5:4 - In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, I Cor. 5:5 - To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

I. I Corinthians 5:1 - It is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

1. Paul is now going to deal with their open immorality. **Pay**day someday shows up concerning a couple in the church who blatantly, openly were committing fornication.
 - a. It seems that everyone was talking about it, making it not a rumor but a **fact**. It was not a secret, suspicion, because most in the church were aware of what was happening. Also, Paul would never make this accusation without **proof**.
 - b. The sin is called fornication which is **illicit** sex. It was even a worse sin because it was an incestuous sin of a son with his father's **wife** (step-mother).

*The word "**have**" is a verb meaning continuously, also meaning living with her.

c. Evidently it was a scandal or well-known. While these Corinthians were complacent, the unbelievers stood against this kind of action with laws prohibiting **incest**.

*| **Un**believers watch believers and do **expect** believers to display a certain amount of godly living.

2. The offender was **fortunate** that they lived in the Dispensation of Grace! Under the Law:

Leviticus 20:11 - And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them.

Deuteronomy 27:20 - Cursed *be* he that lieth with his father's wife; because he uncovereth his father's skirt. And all the people shall say, Amen.

3. No doubt this sin was dividing the church which, in turn, **dis**credits the church. As a believer, we cannot sin unto ourselves because it affects **oth**ers.