**1 Corinthians 4**

*Paul emphasizes the concept of proper place. Christians are to be faithful stewards, and he gives himself as an example. He urges them to imitate him, and like a parent, warns them of the consequences of continuing in their sins. (Synopsis by Stan Cox)*

1. Reported Problems **(1:10-6:20)** *– “For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren…”* **(1:11)**.
   1. Division **(1:10-4:21)**.
      1. The proper view of preachers **(v. 1-5)**.
         1. Preachers are merely servants, and stewards. They serve Christ, and are entrusted with the gospel. God’s requirement is that a steward be faithful **(v. 1-2)**.
         2. The judge of the stewards’ hearts can only be God. The Corinthians were judging that which they were incapable of judging. That judgment belongs to the Lord, and will ensue when He comes **(v. 3-5)**.
      2. A sarcastic response to the Corinthians’ boasting **(v. 6-13)**.
         1. The example Paul gave of Apollos and himself was to influence the Corinthians to not think beyond God’s revelation. Worldly wisdom has been noted as inferior to God’s wisdom, for it cannot reveal God. Thus, there is no just cause for boasting **(v. 6-7)**.
         2. To illustrate the irony of their boasting, and to rebuke them for their arrogance, Paul sarcastically praises their self-proclaimed exalted state by comparing it to the apostles’ humble state **(v. 8-13)**.
      3. A heartfelt and urgent exhortation to repentance **(v. 14-21)**.
         1. Paul did not use such strong language to bring shame to the Corinthians. He was moved by his love for them, and his close relationship to them. He wanted them to repent, and walk righteously, as did he **(v. 14-16)**.
         2. To further encourage and instruct them Paul meant to send Timothy to them. However, this did not mean Paul was afraid, or unwilling to come. He would come, and their reaction to the rebuke would determine the spirit of his coming **(v. 17-21)**.

*Questions on back. 🡪*

**Questions**

1. What does Paul mean by *“puffed up?”* Why were the Corinthians *“puffed up?”* What effect did this have in the congregation? **(v. 6-7)**
2. What tone did Paul use to rebuke the Corinthians for their being *“puffed up?”* Was this done out of spite? If not, what intention did he have, and why would this tone be so effective? **(v. 8-14)**
3. Was Paul’s plea for their imitation of him an encouragement to be *“of Paul,”* and not any other? If not, what was his intention behind this instruction? **(v. 16)**

**Another Question to Consider**

Does Paul’s condemnation of judging include all judging? What kind of judging does Paul condemn? Are Christians supposed to judge? In what way? **(v. 3-6)**