SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

1 Corinthians 4

Servants, Stewards, and Fools for Christ — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-15 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

A servant of Christ answers to one Judge and is measured by faithfulness, not applause. Everything I have, I received — and the road Christ's servants walk looks like weakness and loss to the world, which is exactly why I should follow it.

00 The Text

1 CORINTHIANS 4 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

3 But to me it is a very small thing that I may be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself.

4 For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord.

5 Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.

7 For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

8 You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and indeed, I wish that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you.

9 For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.

10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are without honor.

11 To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless;

12 and we toil, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure;

13 when we are slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things, even until now.

14 I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children.

15 For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus ☆ I became your father through the gospel.

16 Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me.

17 For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.

18 Now some have become ⟲ arrogant, as though I were not coming to you.

19 But I will come to you soon, △ if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are ⟲ arrogant but their ⟲ power.

20 For △ the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power.

21 What do you desire? Shall I come to you ⚠ with a rod, or with ☆ love and a spirit of gentleness?

Marked in the text

- **v1** “servants of Christ” — God — His character & actions
- **v1** “stewards of the mysteries of God” — God — His character & actions
- **v2** “be found trustworthy” — Command / instruction
- **v4** “I am not by this acquitted” — Time / place / contrast
- **v4** “the one who examines me is the Lord” — God — His character & actions
- **v5** “do not go on passing judgment before the time” — Command / instruction
- **v5** “wait until the Lord comes” — Time / place / contrast
- **v5** “until the Lord come” — Time / place / contrast
- **v5** “disclose the motives of men’s hearts” — God — His character & actions
- **v5** “each man’s praise will come to him from God” — Promise / blessing
- **v6** “not to exceed what is written” — Command / instruction
- **v7** “What do you have that you did not receive?” — God — His character & actions
- **v7** “why do you boast” — Sin / warning
- **v8** “you have become kings without us” — Sin / warning
- **v9** “God has exhibited us apostles last of all” — Time / place / contrast
- **v9** “a spectacle to the world” — Time / place / contrast
- **v10** “We are fools for Christ’s sake” — Time / place / contrast
- **v12** “when we are reviled, we bless” — Command / instruction
- **v13** “the scum of the world” — Sin / warning
- **v15** “I became your father through the gospel” — Promise / blessing
- **v16** “be imitators of me” — Command / instruction
- **v19** “if the Lord wills” — God — His character & actions
- **v19** “if the Lord will” — God — His character & actions
- **v20** “the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power” — God — His character & actions
- **v21** “with a rod” — Sin / warning
- **v21** “love and a spirit of gentleness” — Promise / blessing
- **v3** “examined” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v3** “examine” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v4** “examines” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v6** “arrogant” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v7** “receive” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v7** “received” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v19** “power” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · 1 CORINTHIANS 4:10

"We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are without honor."

FIGURE · KINGS IN CORINTH, FOOLS FOR CHRIST

1 COR 4:8–13	"YOU" — THE CORINTHIANS as they saw themselves	"WE" — THE APOSTLES as God exhibited them
FULLNESS	already filled (v8)	hungry and thirsty (v11)
WEALTH	already become rich (v8)	poorly clothed; homeless (v11)
RANK	kings without us (v8)	last of all, condemned to death (v9)
WISDOM	prudent in Christ (v10)	fools for Christ's sake (v10)
STRENGTH	strong (v10)	weak (v10)
HONOR	distinguished (v10)	without honor (v10)

HOW THE APOSTLES ANSWER (vv12–13)

reviled → we bless | **persecuted → we endure** | **slandered → we try to conciliate**

and so "the scum of the world, the dregs of all things, even until now" (v13)

Read each row across: everything the Corinthians claimed for themselves stands opposite what the apostles were actually living — and the bottom band shows how the apostles answered the abuse.

Setting. The close of Paul's long answer to the factions (chs. 1–4). Chapter 3 told the Corinthians how to regard *themselves* — God's field, building and temple. Chapter 4 tells them how to regard *Paul and Apollos*, then turns the light on the Corinthians' pride before Paul announces that Timothy is coming, and so is he. Paul writes from Ephesus (16:8) to a church he planted (Acts 18).

Who: Paul; Apollos (v6); "us apostles" (v9); the Corinthians; "the Lord" who examines and will come (vv4–5); God, who gives praise (v5) and exhibits the apostles (v9); the world, angels and men watching (v9); "countless tutors" vs. a father (v15); Timothy, "my beloved and faithful child in the Lord" (v17); "some" who have become arrogant (v18).

Structure:

- vv1–5 — **servants and stewards:** regard us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God; what is required is that one be found trustworthy (v2). Paul is not finally judged by the Corinthians, by any human

court, or even by himself — "the one who examines me is the Lord" (v4). So do not pass judgment before the time; the Lord will bring hidden things to light, and each man's praise will come from God (v5).

- vv6–7 — **the point of it all:** Paul applied these things to himself and Apollos so that they would learn "not to exceed what is written" and not be arrogant for one against another; three questions (v7).
- vv8–13 — **the irony:** the Corinthians already filled, rich, reigning "without us" (v8), beside the apostles — last of all, condemned to death, a spectacle (v9); fools, weak, without honor (v10); hungry, thirsty, poorly clothed, roughly treated, homeless, toiling (vv11–12); reviled → bless, persecuted → endure, slandered → conciliate; the scum of the world (vv12–13).
- vv14–17 — **a father's warning:** not to shame but to admonish; countless tutors, not many fathers; "be imitators of me" (v16); Timothy sent to remind them of Paul's ways in Christ (v17).
- vv18–21 — **Paul is coming:** some are arrogant as though he were not; he will come, if the Lord wills, and test their power, not their words (v19), "for the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power" (v20); a rod, or love and a spirit of gentleness? (v21).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "you" ×27 — vv3, 6 (×2), 7 (×6), 8 (×4), 10 (×3), 14 (×2), 15 (×2), 16, 17 (×2), 18, 19, 21 (×2); "we" ×13, all in vv8–13 — vv8, 9, 10 (×2), 11, 12 (×5), 13 (×3); "us" ×4 — vv1, 6, 8, 9. The chapter is built on "you" against "we."
- "I" ×17 — vv3 (×2), 4 (×2), 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17 (×2), 18, 19 (×2), 21.
- "Christ" ×6 — vv1, 10 (×2, including "Christ's"), 15 (×2), 17; "in Christ" ×4 — vv10, 15 (×2), 17.
- "Lord" ×4 — vv4, 5, 17, 19; "God" ×4 — vv1, 5, 9, 20.
- "examine / examined / examines" ×3 — vv3 (×2), 4 (Greek *anakrinō*); with "passing judgment" (v5).
- "come / comes / coming" ×5 — vv5 (×2: the Lord comes; praise will come), 18, 19, 21.
- "arrogant" ×3 — vv6, 18, 19 (KJV "puffed up").
- "receive / received" ×3 — all in v7.
- "already" ×2 — v8; "kings / reign" ×3 — v8.
- "stewards" ×2 — vv1, 2; "trustworthy / faithful" ×2 — vv2, 17.
- "world" ×2 — vv9, 13; "men / men's" ×3 — vv5, 9 (×2).
- "but" ×8 — vv4, 5, 10 (×3), 14, 19, 20.
- "words" ×2 and "power" ×2 — vv19, 20.
- "father(s)" ×2 — v15; "children / child" ×2 — vv14, 17.

Contrasts: servants and stewards ⟷ masters and owners (vv1–2). Your court, any human court, my conscience ⟷ the Lord (vv3–4). Before the time ⟷ until the Lord comes (v5). Received ⟷ boast as if not received (v7). Filled, rich, reigning (you) ⟷ last, condemned, a spectacle (us) (vv8–9); prudent ⟷ fools; strong ⟷ weak; distinguished ⟷ without honor (v10). Reviled ⟷ bless; persecuted ⟷ endure; slandered ⟷ conciliate (vv12–13). To shame ⟷ to admonish (v14). Tutors ⟷ father (v15). Words ⟷ power (vv19–20). A rod ⟷ love and a spirit of gentleness (v21).

Lists: the apostles' hardships (vv11–13) — hungry, thirsty, poorly clothed, roughly treated, homeless, toiling with their own hands; their three answers (vv12–13); the six claims of Corinth and their opposites (vv8–10).

Questions: three in v7 ("who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? … why do you boast…?") and two in v21 ("What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love…?").

Time words: “before the time … until the Lord comes … then” (v5); “already” (v8, twice); “to this present hour” (v11); “even until now” (v13); “soon, if the Lord wills” (v19).

Terms of conclusion: “Therefore do not go on passing judgment” (v5); “Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me” (v16); “For this reason I have sent to you Timothy” (v17).

Shape of the chapter: a job description (1–2), a courtroom (3–5), a mirror (6–7), a parade into the arena (8–13), a family (14–17), and a choice at the door (18–21). It begins with “servants of Christ” and ends with a father who would rather come in gentleness.

Chapter theme (my words): A servant of Christ answers to one Judge and is measured by faithfulness, not applause — and the path he walks looks like weakness and loss to the world, which is exactly why I should follow it.

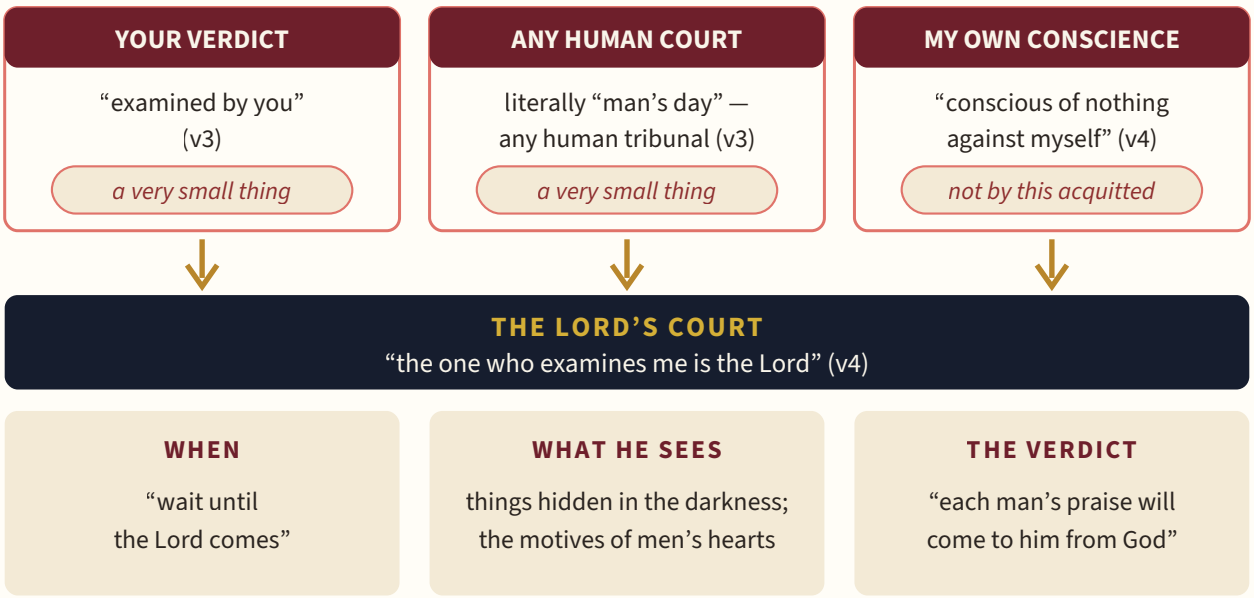
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · 1 CORINTHIANS 4:5

"Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God."

FIGURE · THREE COURTS AND THE ONE THAT COUNTS



Paul sets aside the Corinthians' verdict, every human court and even his own clear conscience — only the Lord's examination at His coming is final, and it ends in praise from God.

FIGURE · LAST IN THE PROCESSION



Verse 9 pictures the apostles at the very back of a Roman parade or arena show — the men condemned to die — and Paul says God Himself put them there, in full view of the world, angels and men.

Servants and stewards (vv1–2). Paul picks two pictures. The first, *hypēretēs*, Guzik explains as an "under-rower" — a man at the oar on the lower deck of a ship — and notes Paul did not use *doulos*, the ordinary word for slave. Morgan (in Guzik): one who "acts under direction, and asks no questions." The second is the **steward** (*oikonomos*), the household manager: a slave to his master and a master to the other servants, owning nothing, giving account for everything. Sproul (on Luke 12): "The steward did not own the house." These stewards hold "the mysteries of God" — truth once hidden, now revealed. So the one question to ask of a minister is whether he faithfully gave out the truth (Guzik: "Did I give you the truth?"). And what is required is not brilliance or results but faithfulness (v2). Spurgeon: "You are responsible, not for the result of what you do."

Three courts (vv3–5). Paul names three judges and sets them all aside. The Corinthians' verdict is "a very small thing." A human court is no better. Even his own conscience is not final: "I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted" (v4). A clear conscience is not the same as being declared righteous (Guzik: "Paul knew his righteousness came from Jesus"). Henry: "It is a comfort that men are not to be our final judges."

Does verse 5 forbid all judging? No. Guzik balances it: Paul will still correct them as their father — and in 5:12 Paul himself tells the church to judge those within it. Henry draws the line exactly: not lawful judgment by those in office, nor "facts that are notorious," but judging "the secret springs and principles" of others' actions — that "is to assume the seat of God." Sproul, preaching Luke 6:37, says the same: Jesus did not abolish discernment, but forbade the censorious spirit, and asks of us the "judgment of charity" — "the benefit of the doubt," but not naïveté. What verse 5 forbids is ranking and condemning God's servants on our own scale, ahead of His. When the Lord comes, He will judge motives, and "each man's praise will come to him from God."

Not beyond what is written (v6). Paul used himself and Apollos as the example so the Corinthians would learn not to go past Scripture's measure of a man. The exact meaning of the phrase is debated — it may be a slogan, a pointer to the Old Testament passages Paul has just quoted (1:19, 31; 3:19–20), or Scripture in general — but the direction is clear: don't add your own standards and then puff yourselves up over them. Guzik applies it to the way

churches still rate preachers by "humor … entertainment value … appearance, or … skill at marketing and sales." Henry: "The word of God is the best rule by which to judge concerning men."

Three questions (v7). Who makes you different? What do you have that you did not receive? If you received it, why boast? Guzik: the root problem in Corinth was not the factions but the pride beneath them. Augustine used this verse against the Pelagians — every good thing in us, faith included, is received. Spurgeon preached it twice (1859, 1876): "Grace has done it all"; "every particle of praise we take for ourselves is so much stolen." Sproul (on Rom 3:27): "If my salvation rests completely on the grace of God, I have nothing of which to boast in myself."

The irony (vv8–13). Guzik calls Paul's sarcasm "holy laughter" (Morgan's phrase) — meant to wake them, not wound them. The Corinthians acted as though the kingdom had fully come and they were already reigning; the apostles, meanwhile, looked like the losers. For v9 Guzik pictures a Roman triumph or the coliseum, where the condemned came *last*; Henry the amphitheatre, where the *epithanatioi* fought at the end of the day. "Spectacle" is *theatron*. Guzik notes the Greek world despised manual labor and despised a man who would not retaliate — and Paul did both. On "scum" and "dregs" (v13), both Guzik and Henry mention a Greek custom of casting out a despised person in time of plague as a kind of cleansing offering; if Paul has it in mind, he is both despised and spent for others. Sproul (on chs 1–2): "Nobody wants to be considered a fool" — "what would you rather be than a fool for Christ?"

A father, not a tutor (vv14–17). The tone turns tender: not to shame but to admonish, as beloved children. The *paidagōgos* ("tutor," v15) was the household slave who walked a boy to school and watched his behavior — a guardian, not a father. Corinth could have ten thousand of those, but Paul was the one who "became your father through the gospel." Guzik: this gives a spiritual father "a special relationship," though not an apostle's authority. Henry: "not with the gall of an enemy, but the bowels of a father." "Be imitators of me" (v16) is limited by 11:1 — "just as I also am of Christ"; Henry: "Follow me as far as I follow Christ." In a world without printed Bibles in every home, people learned the faith by watching lives. Timothy, Paul's troubleshooter, is sent to remind them of those ways.

Words or power (vv18–21). Some assumed Paul was afraid to come. He will come "if the Lord wills" — Henry: "All our purposes must be formed with a dependence on Providence" (Jas 4:15) — and he will test the boasters not by their talk but by their power, because the kingdom of God is not a matter of words. This reaches back to 2:4–5: Paul's own preaching came "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." The "rod" is a shepherd's or father's rod of discipline (Guzik). The choice is theirs. Henry: "It is a happy temper in a minister to have the spirit of love and meekness predominant, and yet to maintain his just authority."

Word study (Greek):

- **servants — *hypēretēs* (G5257):** an under-oarsman; an assistant acting under orders (v1). Not *doulos* (G1401), slave.
- **stewards — *oikonomos* (G3623):** household manager over another's goods (vv1–2; Luke 12:42; 1 Pet 4:10).
- **mysteries — *mystērion* (G3466):** truth once hidden, now revealed by God (v1; 2:7).
- **trustworthy / faithful — *pistos* (G4103):** dependable; also of Timothy (vv2, 17).
- **examine — *anakrinō* (G350):** to investigate, cross-examine — three times in vv3–4; ten times in 1 Corinthians.
- **conscious — *synoida* (G4894):** to know with oneself; kin to *syneidēsis*, conscience (v4).
- **acquitted — *dikaioō* (G1344):** declared righteous (v4).
- **arrogant / puffed up — *physioō* (G5448):** to inflate like bellows; six of its seven NT uses are in 1 Corinthians (4:6, 18, 19; 5:2; 8:1; 13:4).

- **regards you as superior — *diakrinō* (G1252):** to separate, make a distinction (v7; KJV "maketh thee to differ").
- **boast — *kauchaomai* (G2744):** to boast, glory (v7; 1:29, 31; 3:21).
- **condemned to death — *epithanatios* (G1935):** sentenced to die; only here (v9).
- **spectacle — *theatron* (G2302):** a show, the theater (v9; Acts 19:29, 31).
- **fools — *mōros* (G3474):** foolish — the word of 1:18–27, now worn by the apostles (v10).
- **reviled — *loidoreō* (G3058):** to abuse verbally (v12; 1 Pet 2:23).
- **conciliate / exhort — *parakaleō* (G3870):** to call alongside, appeal (vv13, 16).
- **scum — *perikatharma* (G4027); dregs — *peripsēma* (G4067):** the sweepings and scrapings; each only here (v13).
- **admonish — *noutheteō* (G3560):** to put in mind, warn (v14).
- **tutors — *paidagōgos* (G3807):** the slave-guardian of a boy (v15; Gal 3:24–25).
- **became your father — *gennaō* (G1080):** to beget (v15).
- **imitators — *mimētēs* (G3402):** one who copies; "mimic" (v16; 11:1; Eph 5:1).
- **power — *dynamis* (G1411):** God's working might, not human talk (vv19–20; 2:4–5).
- **rod — *rhabdos* (G4464):** staff, rod of discipline (v21).
- **gentleness — *praütēs* (G4236):** meekness, strength under control (v21; Gal 5:23).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **An under-rower, not a celebrity** — the preacher is at an oar; the Ship belongs to Christ.
2. **Faithful, not impressive** — the one requirement of a steward (v2).
3. **A clear conscience is not a verdict** — even my own court is not final (v4).
4. **Don't hand out the trophies before the race is over** (Guzik) — the Lord judges motives at His coming (v5).
5. **The judgment of charity** (Sproul) — discernment yes, censoriousness no.
6. **Everything is received** — "those who receive all should be proud of nothing" (Henry).
7. **Puffed up is Corinth's word** — six of seven NT uses; love is never puffed up (13:4).
8. **God put the apostles at the back of the parade** (v9) — on display before the world, angels and men.
9. **Rather a fool for Christ** (Sproul) — the desire to be acceptable is the church's great threat.
10. **Many tutors, few fathers** — a father begets, loves, models, sends and comes.

Cross-references: Gen 39:4; Ps 23:4; Prov 13:24; Isa 22:20–22; Jer 9:23–24; 17:10; Matt 23:8–10; 25:21; Luke 6:37–42; 9:58; 12:42–48; John 3:27; Acts 18:1–11; 19:29; Rom 2:16; 3:27; 14:10–12; 1 Cor 1:18–31; 2:1–5; 3:5–9, 21; 5:12; 11:1; 13:4; 2 Cor 4:7–12; 5:10; 6:4–10; 10:1, 18; 11:23–28; 12:10; Gal 3:24; 4:19; 5:23; Eph 5:1; Phil 3:17; Col 1:24; 1 Thess 1:5–6; 2:7–12; Jas 4:15; 1 Pet 2:21–23; 4:10; Rev 2:23.

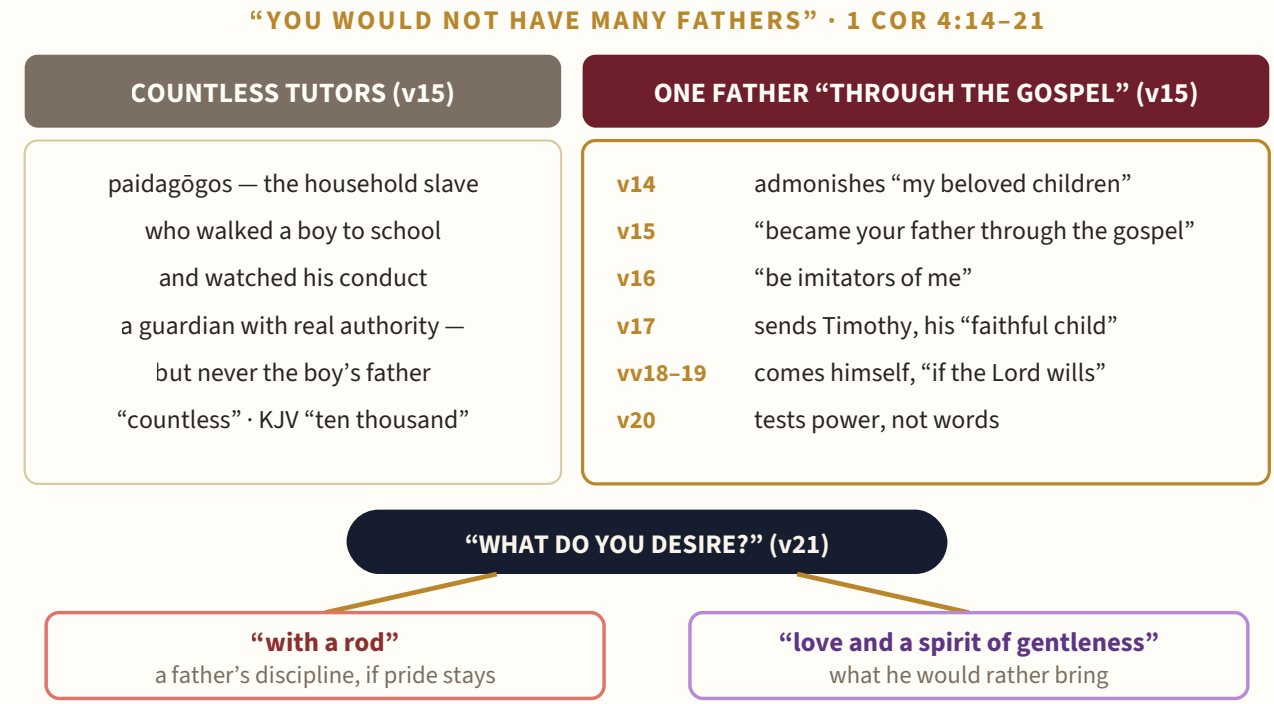
03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · 1 CORINTHIANS 4:7

"For who regards you as superior? △What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, ⚠why do you boast as if you had not received it?"

FIGURE · TUTORS OR A FATHER



A tutor supervises; a father begets, loves, models, sends and comes — and the chapter ends by leaving the Corinthians to choose which kind of visit they will get.

Command to obey — be found faithful. "It is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy" (v2). Not successful. Not impressive. Faithful. What God has put in my hands — the Word, my family, the men He sends me, this ministry, even my illness or my limits — isn't mine. I manage it for Him. Today's question is simply: did I handle His things His way?

Promise to trust — one Judge. "The one who examines me is the Lord" (v4). For the man who has been judged by a court, by a family that gave up on him, by a church that whispered — and for the man whose own mind will not stop condemning him — this is freedom. Other people's verdicts are "a very small thing." Even my own verdict isn't final. The Lord's is, and for those in Christ His last word is "praise ... from God" (v5).

Warning to heed — don't hand out medals before the race is over. "Do not go on passing judgment before the time" (v5). I don't know the motives of a man's heart; God does. That goes both ways — I should not write off the

man who just relapsed, and I should not crown the man who has it all together on Sunday. I can give the judgment of charity without being naïve. Wait for the Lord.

Sin to confess — pride over what I was given. "What do you have that you did not receive?" (v7). My sobriety, my freedom, my gifts, my years of study, my salvation itself — all received. Lord, forgive me for every time I've talked like I earned what You gave. Every particle of praise I take for myself is stolen.

Example to follow — the low road. "When we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure" (v12). Paul worked with his hands, went hungry, got cursed — and blessed back. For men coming out of prison with a record that follows them, men in recovery who get treated as their worst day: this is not a lesser path. It is the apostles' path, and it is Christ's (1 Pet 2:23). The world calls it being a fool; Paul called it being "fools for Christ's sake" (v10). I'd rather be that than anything else.

For the men I walk with — you need fathers, not just tutors. "You would not have many fathers" (v15). Plenty of people will instruct a man; few will father him — walk with him, stay with him, let him watch their life up close. I want to be the second kind. And "be imitators of me" (v16) is a scary sentence for any of us to say. It means my life has to be worth copying — not perfect, but honest, repentant and following Christ.

Warning to heed — words are cheap. "The kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power" (v20). Recovery talk, prison-yard testimony, church vocabulary — none of it is the kingdom. The kingdom is God's power actually changing how a man lives. I want less talk and more of His power in me.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. What has God put in my hands to manage for Him this week — and if He audited it today, would He find me trustworthy? (4:1–2; Luke 12:42) *A steward owns nothing; the one requirement is faithfulness, not results.*
2. Whose verdict do I live under — a judge, an ex, a family, the men on the yard, my own 3 a.m. voice? What does "the one who examines me is the Lord" do to it? (4:3–5) *Other courts are "a very small thing"; only the Lord's is final, and for His own it ends in praise.*
3. Who have I written off — or crowned — before the race is over? What would the judgment of charity look like toward him? (4:5; Luke 6:37) *Leave hidden motives to the Lord; give the benefit of the doubt without naïveté.*
4. Name one thing I have talked about as if I earned it — my sobriety, my gifts, my knowledge, my standing at church. Where did it come from? (4:7; John 3:27) *"What do you have that you did not receive?"*
5. Where am I trying to have the respect of the world and the power of God at the same time? (4:9–13; 1 Pet 2:23) *Guzik: "We want the power without the cost." Paul was a fool for Christ's sake.*
6. Who is my spiritual father — and whose father am I becoming? Could I honestly say to a younger man, "imitate me"? (4:15–17; 11:1) *Not perfect, but following Christ: "just as I also am of Christ."*

Worship. The Judge who sees what is hidden in the darkness still gives praise to His servants. Everything I have came from His hand — and Christ walked the low road first.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, I am Your servant and the steward of what is Yours. Make me faithful. Free me from living for other people's verdicts — and from my own. Humble me with the truth that everything I have, I received. Give me grace to bless when I'm cursed, to be a fool for Your sake, and to father the men You send me, so that they can follow me as I follow You. Let my life show Your power, not just my words. Amen.

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