

Priorities of Fearful Pastors

Priorities of Fearful Pastors

Paul's Warning to Pastors
to Carefully Guard their Emphasis
to Exalt Jesus Christ and Grow Hearers

Today Has Features to Be Appreciated

God's grace drastically saved us to meet today.

God's providence movingly invited each person.

Our relationship is even against my or our wills.

Our truth and conviction are incredibly unique.

But now hath God set the members
every one of them in the body,
as it hath pleased him.

I Corinthians 12:18

Today Should Be a Special Church Day

We want our church on Jesus Christ's trajectory.

Will you do your part by hearing the preaching?

I will do my part to preach the Pauline warning.

Let us soberly rejoice together to restate goals.

Our Relationship Is By Divine Providence

I never wanted to be a pastor ... and still do not!

I submitted to the apostolic pattern to be here.

We covenanted together twice (1984 and 2000).

Jesus Christ and Paul have detailed our duties.

Be ye followers of me,
even as I also am of Christ.

I Corinthians 11:1

Where Did this Sermon Topic Come From?

Constantly assessing our church and my ministry.

The Bible passage for the Summer Spectacular.

God's glorious, personal conviction from it.

Shocking compromise of most churches.

Why Am I Preaching This Subject?

To share with you my conviction, fear, purpose.

For you to understand more why I do what I do.

For you to appreciate my disregard of criticism.

For us to press forward as one as Paul ordered.

Serious Students May Review More

<https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/index/year-2004/first-corinthians-3/>

<https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/index/year-2004/first-corinthians-4/>

Many More Outlines Will Be Indexed on the Last Slide

My Job Description ... Preach the Word!

I will read the 44 verses of the chapters distinctly.

I will give the sense and then apply them to us.

You will learn the Bible and your pastor's goal.

You will be reminded to exalt godly priorities.

First Corinthians 3-4 is Quite Ministerial

Corinth had carnal and compromising teachers.

The members foolishly had preacher factions.

Paul warned haughty teachers about error.

Chapters 2 and 5 have different topics.

First Corinthians 3-4 is Quite Ministerial

This context or framework will help you grasp it.

Paul got more specific later (I Cor 9; II Cor 3,10-12).

Some inferior teachers envied or resented Paul.

But there is much for you ... to whole church.

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

I Corinthians 3:5-6

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

I Corinthians 3:10

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

I Corinthians 3:12-13

1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

I Corinthians 4:1-2

And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

I Corinthians 4:6

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.

I Corinthians 4:15

Should Pastors Be Afraid or Concerned?

If you read chapters 3-4 carefully, yes indeed!

Paul described coming judgment for errors.

It is similar to other ministerial warnings.

How many pastors know the chapters?

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

I Corinthians 3:8-9

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

I Corinthians 3:10

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

I Corinthians 3:13-15

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

I Corinthians 3:16-17

1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

I Corinthians 4:1-2

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

I Corinthians 4:5

14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.

I Corinthians 4:14

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.

I Corinthians 4:19

Why Does Your Pastor Do What He Does?

He chooses to promote some things over others.

He ignores some things or may avoid them.

He may not get excited at your activities.

He may not leap for joy at your ideas.

He Is Accountable In Ways You Are Not

There is a separate judgment for pastoral works.

Bible wisdom warns against authoritative offices.

Pastors have greater consequences for choices.

Their perspective is quite different from yours.

We Recently Reviewed Holy Differences

Remember conflicts between blood and blood?

Remember conflicts between law and precept?

Paul charged him to be picky for Jesus Christ.

He must differentiate holy from profane.

Good Reasons for Pastors to Fear

Authority or leadership brings condemnation.

God's judgment will be hard on church leaders.

Their purpose in life is different from yours.

Their choices will affect many people.

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

James 3:1

Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base
before all the people, according as ye have not kept my
ways, but have been partial in the law.

Malachi 2:9

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

Hebrews 13:7

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

I Timothy 4:16

Are You Going to Be Hard On Us?

Only in the kind ways Paul was, for you are far better of a church than Corinth could imagine.

I write not these things to shame you,
but as my beloved sons I warn you.

I Corinthians 4:14

21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;

22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

I Corinthians 3:21-23

What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love,
and in the spirit of meekness?

I Corinthians 4:21

So Let's Get Going with Two Chapters

See what convicted and scared your pastor.

Be excited to embrace greater zeal to guard.

Join with him hating any wood, hay, stubble.

Together let's make this temple holy for God.

So they read in the book
in the law of God distinctly,
and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading.

Nehemiah 8:8

3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

- He had just concluded how spiritual men can learn the deep things of God.
- There are incredible wonders in knowledge and wisdom for ready hearers.
- But inspite of having the greatest apostle, this church in sin city did not grow.
- Carnal = related to the body or flesh, natural or worldly, not spiritual.
- Let us not forfeit by carnality, but learn the Spirit's revelation by preaching.

Do Not Let These Bible Slides Bore You

They start with the inspired words of Jehovah.

Then follows the sense or meaning clearly given.

All Israel stood for hours to hear O.T. from Ezra.

Nothing you do is more important than right now.

3:2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

- They had been carnal when he was there and continued so without growth.
- Notice the perfect tense, two periods compared, and “yet” in two verses.
- These “Charismatics” had more noise in services than any, but were infants.
- We must as a church grow spiritually for the deeper things of God and life.
- You individually cannot stay the same. He has given us everything for growth.

3:3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

- Corinth had not advanced, even under Paul's efforts, due to worldly carnality.
- They could not realize the "meat" of the gospel due to their foolish conduct
- These "Charismatics" had more noise in services than any, but were infants.
- Recall how Paul taught men to help pastors – *be at peace among yourselves*.
- Earlier today I asked if you had left all member differences in the parking lot.

3:4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

- Trust Paul's inspired judgment – preacher cults or factions are not spiritual.
- Divisions based on spiritual gifts, opportunities, marginal efforts are wrong.
- Paul mentions himself and Apollos repeatedly, but intends all others as well.
- Paul's focus on two great apostles for Corinth left inferior teachers exposed.
- No minister can do anything without God ... all ministers are gifts from God.

3:5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

- Paul dulled any personal appeal he or Apollos had in the church at Corinth.
- Faithful pastors preach constantly, but know God must open hearts for faith.
- Paul mentions himself and Apollos repeatedly, but intends all others as well.
- Faith and conversion – great gifts of grace – are by the Lord blessing pastors.
- If any man has success, for the sake of this lesson, it is God's sovereign work.

3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

- Paul first visited Corinth and spent a couple years there to establish a church.
- Aquila and Priscilla converted Apollos at Ephesus, then sent him to Corinth.
- Paul mentions himself and Apollos repeatedly, but intends all others as well.
- All real, spiritual growth in a church is by God's glorious grace blessing effort.
- Cooperation of united ministers is a wonderful thing. We pray for the future.

3:7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

- Paul continued using himself and Apollos as figures to gently rebuke others.
- All ministerial work, no matter how perfect, requires God giving repentance.
- Love Paul's extreme terminology – this is typical – and accept your pastor's.
- Hopefully you have heard ... *the least and worst ... am but a little child ... etc.*
- Paul with point after point destroys the preacher cults existing at Corinth.

3:8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

- There is no great pastoral difference between evangelism and maintenance.
- The distinction Paul made here was his initial work and Apollos's followup.
- Each pastor has one Master, and He will personally honor him for good work.
- There is no bluffing or influencing this paymaster but by diligent faithfulness.
- Hard work works, and it works for pastors, and Paul worked harder than any.

3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

- Ministers are servants with God for the benefit of God's chosen congregants.
- The church is God's vineyard and temple ... ministers help Him build/grow it.
- The church is always more important than the pastor or any teachers in it.
- The work a minister does for you is precious. Yours did not choose the work.
- The church is never a pastor's ... he is entrusted to oversee God's vineyard.

3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

- The greatest ministerial combination ever was God and the apostle Paul.
- Paul was the best church builder, and he showed all ministers how to do it.
- He laid the foundation at Corinth, and Apollos and others built on his work.
- However, he warned every pastor about building on his perfect foundation.
- Here again is another warning to pastors to make sure they only follow Paul.

3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

- Here is the one and only true foundation, emphasis, and goal for a church.
- Paul laid the perfect, Spirit-directed, God-approved emphasis on Jesus Christ.
- No pastor can ever allow any alteration to this preeminence of Jesus Christ.
- This verse is not for church members. This is Paul's warning to all pastors.
- The Bible makes perfect sense only when its context is considered perfectly.

How Is Jesus Christ Our Foundation?

Jesus is Jehovah Creator God and Ruler of All.
His identity as the Son of God is our bedrock.
He gets supreme preeminence in everything.
His crucifixion death is the most glorious gift.
He gave His apostles all rules for all churches.
He is the One Mediator between God and us.
He gave us wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit.
He presently rules the universe beside God.
He is coming again to gather us all to God.
He will soon judge the universe for sin.

Etc., Etc., Etc.

3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

- Here again is another warning to pastors to make sure they only follow Paul.
- Only some pastoral goals, emphases, events, efforts match the foundation.
- While you may think in terms of this warning, it is given for pastoral goals.
- Paul warned any and all ministers ... the men who build churches with God.
- Paul gave six building materials – three valuable/lasting – three combustible.

This Is No Sound Bite to Your Pastor

Since his ordination he sought God, Christ, truth.

He knows the *perilous times prophecy* fits today.

He sees the religious world and its inventions.

He hates any doctrine/practice not apostolic.

He Has Taught and Warned Often

Can ancients recall ... *So You Really Want a Pastor?*

Remember ... *Character Without Christ* ... 2021.

Remember ... *Perilous Times* ... many times.

Remember ... *Building on Christ* ... 2016.

Remember ... *Higher Ground* ... 2015.

What Is a Great Church? ... 2014.

(Reviewed with every new member)

CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANITY ... Preached in 2000

Numbers Driven	Personality Cult	Social Do-Gooders	Babel Restored	Silent Suggestion
Entertainment Driven	Cathedral Complex	Child Worship	Will Worship	Popularity Party
Smooth Talkers	Political Agenda	Universal Church	Feeling Fantastic	Bedside Bishops
Everyman Ministries	Activity Calendar	Decisional Regeneration	Japanese Management	Fundamentalists
Salvation Business	Market Segment	Charismatic Pride	Fire Walkers	Etc.
Dual Citizenship	Organization / Organism	Women's Liberation	Convenience Catering	Etc.

No Wood, Hay, or Stubble

Personalities

Philosophy

Masons

Gifts

Politics

Jewish Fables

Stars

Conspiracies

Occult

Speculations

O.T. Feasts

Nephilim

Socialism

Health

Wealth

Patriotism

Only Gold, Silver, Precious Stones

Christ-centered

Heaven

Facets

Holiness

Holy Spirit

Brotherly love

Prayer

Body Life

Worship

Spirit fruit

Self-exam

Thanksgiving

Relationships

Growth

Revival

Soul-winning

Junk is intriguing ...

Entertaining

Carnality-approving

Pride-producing

Man-promoting

Lustful ear itching

Crowd drawing

Book selling

Goals for a Church to Reach ... HIGHER GROUND ... in 2015

Christ-Centered	Relationship Emphasis	Soul Winning	Liberal Giving	Hospitality & Entertain
Holy Spirit	Personal Holiness	Place for Revival	Self-Examination	Doctrinal Steadfastness
More Prayer	Personal Devotions	Reverent Worship	Right Relationships	Expository Preaching
Spiritually Minded	Spiritual Warfare	Church Attendance	Forgiveness & Mercy	Help your Pastor
Eternal Perspective	Fruit of the Spirit	Grow in Service	Peace & Unity	Love is the Greatest

3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

- Jesus Christ will examine, expose, and judge every pastor's church priorities.
- I have taught you what *manifest* means – to discover and expose to full view.
- What day will declare it? The day of judgment before the throne of Christ.
- Fire ... a perfect metaphor for Paul's materials ... will try all pastors and me.
- What have I done to build on Paul's foundation? What materials have I used?



3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

- If my pastoral labors pass Christ's refining trial, He will kindly reward me (3:8).
- Please remember that these chapters are mainly builders – Jesus' ministers.
- This is fair. A pastor must keep Paul's foundation and use only best materials.
- His metaphor of three refined items and three combustible items is perfect.
- If God offers a reward, pastors must win it! And it is not a popularity contest!





3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

- If my pastoral labors flunk Christ's refining trial, He will rightly rebuke me.
- Please remember that these chapters are about builders – Christ's ministers.
- Paul continued his metaphor about combustibles and fire. This pastor loses.
- This is fair. A truly saved pastor will gain heaven but lose ministerial honors.
- If I have not been strict enough, I will be. If not pressing enough, I will be.



Warning of the Times

Perilous times ... just look around ... easily prove there is more wood, hay, and stubble than ever ... except that much of what is taught today is worse than these combustibles ... Many teach downright abominations of a perverse sort.

3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

- This glorious verse is about our church, not your physical body (I Cor 6:19-20).
- Our meeting together today as loving brethren in God's family is very special.
- This body of believers is the house of God, His temple, for a holy habitation.
- What a glorious, gracious blessing for us to be a temple of Jehovah & Jesus.
- We must do all things in thought, word, and deed to please the Spirit of God.

3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

- This terrible warning must be grasped in context – ministerial compromise.
- Defiling the church is offending the Spirit of God by combustible materials.
- Our church is God's holy habitation, and everything I call for better be holy.
- Do not resent anything I have chosen for reverence and godly fear (Heb 12:28).
- You cannot directly defile God's temple in this context like I very easily can.

We Could Have a Mega Church

All we need to start is to reject Pauline doctrine.

Then we tap talent in our church to entertain.

We end Bible preaching that condemns sin.

We incorporate every new trend gladly.

3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

- Self-deception is easy for any, but especially for pastors esteemed by people.
- A pastor must never think he is anything, since he is not (3:7; 4:6; Luke 17:10).
- Picking up anything from the world – spirit, word, deed – defiles the church.
- A faithful pastor knows he is nothing and says so and foolishly follows Christ.
- An epistle to a church allows you a little application, but it is mainly pastoral.

Your Pastor Does Follow Religious Trends

He follows them in the news, reading of them.

He despises and hates every one against Paul.

He wants the crown of the road, no ditches.

Religious trends tell him popular ditches.

3:19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

- Pastors, read the text! Flush the wisdom of this world lest Christ destroy you!
- No matter how beautiful, enjoyable, or smart, God destroys worldly wisdom.
- Never forget that countless false teachers today will be exposed (II Tim 3:8-9).
- A faithful pastor knows no amount or kind of popularity can overthrow Paul.
- Why is America in the mess she is today? Her preachers have compromised!

3:20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

- All glory to our God of truth and wisdom for His disdain of human ideas.
- No matter how beautiful, enjoyable, or smart ... God knows they are idiots.
- What would be worse? A pastor's conference with Benny, Rick, Frank, Joel?
- A faithful pastor has the mind and revelation of God for all profitable things.
- Identity and disrespect of false teachers is good and right as the Bible shows.

Think of a Few Differences We Have

Softball Games/Team ... or ... Bible Quizzing

Church Picnics ... or ... Fatted-Calf Feasts

Swimming Camp ... or ... Singing Camp

We Separate Events from Assemblies

3:21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;

- There is only one Man that should ever get real glory in this church – Christ!
- Since God mocks all human and worldly wisdom, then discount the preacher.
- Any pastor you have is a providential gift of God in Christ for your soul profit.
- As a son of God, your sovereign Father in heaven has given you the universe.
- Everything but God and Christ are gifts and tools for your growth in grace.

3:22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

- Look at these three preachers – the best of the best – but God's gifts to sons.
- This aspect of the only right worldview is gloriously wonderful for great joy.
- God is in complete control of each item in the list and they are for your best.
- Do not resent perceived negative events and do not glory over positive ones.
- Jesus Christ fills all in all, but you are the fulness of Him that fills all in all.

3:23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

- You are in the Father's hand in the mighty hands of Jesus Christ forever.
- As a son of God and a brother of Jesus Christ, God gave gifts to serve you.
- Little glory should be given to the gift but much to the Giver, God and Christ.
- As a son of God, you are a joint heir with Jesus and totally accepted in Him.
- There is no safer place and more triumphant view than our position in Christ.

Do You Grasp Your Glorious Situation?

As a child of God, your Father rules all for you!

Men ... even as good as Paul ... are for you!

The universe now and later is for you!

You are *perfectly* safe in Christ.

4:1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

- How should members think of their pastor? As an ambassador from Christ.
- How should members think of their pastor? As a steward of God's treasury.
- God chose His pastors, convicted them for it, and providentially sent them.
- They bring things new and old out of God's library of divine truth (Matt 13:52).
- Disrespecting or despising them is foolish and sinful like disrespecting God.

4:2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

- Christ's ministers must be faithful, just as the previous chapter taught them.
- However, their faithfulness is not judged by the church but by their Master.
- Paul already warned pastors of Christ' judgment, and here is more of same.
- He chose them ... convinced them to do it ... introduced you ... moves them.
- No great or exceptional glory should be given them ... yet respectful honor.

4:3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

- These inspired words should not offend you ... you should love such men.
- Paul did not care what Corinth members or teachers thought of his ministry.
- You dream about such a leader in the oval office. Appreciate it in a pastor.
- Rather than seek to please men, he always and only sought to please Christ.
- Paul examined himself, but left final judgment to God. See Pr 21:2. See Heb 13:7.

4:4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

- Paul knew most everything, but he did not rely on his opinion of his ministry.
- And he knew that his choice to not judge himself did not guarantee honor.
- He only trusted himself so far ... the rest would wait until Christ's judgment.
- He did not know himself or ministry perfectly, but it did not relieve his duty.
- The safest place to leave efforts is with the Lord – perfect justice and mercy.

4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

- Think! The next chapter orders judgment. Do not judge pastoral spirit/works.
- As in the previous chapter, a time is coming when Christ will judge teachers.
- This verse is very similar to discovery and exposure taught earlier (3:13-17).
- All men that deserve praise will receive it; all compromisers will be judged.
- At all times in these two chapters, a group of teachers were being rebuked.

4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

- Churches make many judgments, but pastoral motives/works are left to God.
- When Jesus Christ comes, called the terror of the Lord, He will judge pastors.
- Any hidden corruption of doctrine or practice will be fully exposed to Him.
- Any false motives or personal agenda contrary to holy ministry will be seen.
- Every faithful pastor will be praised ... a far larger number will not be praised.

Do You Grasp a Pastor's Unique Burden?

If he allows this temple to be defiled, he will pay.

Therefore, you should understand he is nitpicky!

He is frustrated with every text out of context.

He fears any sound bite not Bible perfect.

4:6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

- The things Paul applied to himself and Apollos were what came before this.
- Paul used Corinth's two greatest teachers to subtly warn the lesser teachers.
- His goal was to warn against exalting teachers too high, even he and Apollos.
- By reducing even apostolic honor, he dealt a major blow against their heroes.
- Rather than the crazy competition at Corinth, Paul pointed them up to God.

4:7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

- We often use this verse out of context and loosely; it is mainly spiritual gifts.
- The differences among Corinth's teachers were by God's choices (Rom 12:3-8).
- The pride and emulation in Corinth was folly in light of God's differences.
- Paul does rank effort and labor elsewhere, but God's gifts are his lesson here.
- Churches should not rank ministers, for God honors two and five talent men.

4:8 Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

- Here is some of the most entertaining sarcastic irony in the Bible. Go Paul!
- They were not really full, rich, or reigning, for why did Paul desire it to be so?
- Paul here mocked their pride in their prosperity, just like Jesus did Laodicea.
- Paul wanted their great success as a church, but they were not close to it yet.
- Key words here are “without us,” rebuking Corinth for disrespecting apostles.

Jesus and Paul Resent False Confidence

Jesus severely threatened Laodicea for “success.”

Your shiny idea may be a threat to a holy temple.

Corinth was a mess but thought they were fine.

Let us seek the old paths (Paul), even if boring.

4:9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

- Pick up on Paul's subtle argument ... why are all your teachers living so well?
- The apostles were the greatest office and teachers in the church of all time.
- They were abused at every turn, at risk of death, and mocked by the world.
- But Corinth had great festivities that their teachers were full and rich kings.
- Paul will write shortly that God hath set some in the church *first* ... here *last*.

4:10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.

- Paul and Apollos were not fools, and Corinth's teachers were not wise. Irony!
- Not only is there irony, but the apostles chose to live sacrificially for Christ.
- The many prophets and teachers at Corinth were fleecing Paul's early labors.
- They compared themselves among themselves to exalt their gifts and offices.
- Will you be a fool for Jesus? Think Baptist immersion! I will gladly be His fool!

4:11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace;

- The apostles suffered for Christ, very unlike Corinth's pastors and teachers.
- No group of men ever served the churches of God like the apostles served.
- They were a great gift to the church handpicked and empowered by Jesus.
- These teachers were taking hefty salaries while the apostles were destitute.
- Even after years of labor, the apostles continued to suffer ... until martyred.

4:12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

- They did not take money of congregations unless it was pushed on them.
- Paul sewed tents on the side, even at rich Corinth, taking gifts from Philippi.
- He intended to show Corinth a lesson, but they fancied their paid pastors.
- In contrast to praise and pampered parsonage lives, they had Christ's spirit.
- Paul continued to draw a serious difference between the greater and lesser.

4:13 Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

- Though the apostles were very great men, they suffered as filthy spectacles.
- Do not miss a continual comparison to pampered lives of Corinth's teachers.
- Paul gently laid a foundation of his authority and exposed their haughtiness.
- He will get more direct in his comparison especially in the second epistle.
- Thank God for the apostles. Learn their sacrifices. Think – *world not worthy!*

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

- Shame was not his primary goal but rather to warn them and convert them.
- After mocking them as full and rich kings, he called them his beloved sons.
- Any spiritually-sensitive member or teacher would have been well ashamed.
- At all times you should think the teachers first and then all church members.
- He will get more direct with the teachers, even before this chapter can end.

I Must and Will Heed the Warning

God graciously used my recent time on vacation.

He immediately got my attention with this text.

His Spirit led me to admire our temple of God.

His Spirit led me to fear any defiling I can do.

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.

- He reminded them he converted them and started the church at Corinth.
- The many prophets and teachers had come along after he did the real work.
- He carefully and kindly appealed to consider their Source/source of truth.
- God's providence in pastors is even greater in value and grace than spouses.
- Paul repeated this angle later to the Hebrews ... *whose faith follow (Heb 13:7)*.

God's Providence in Pastors Is Real

God did not see pride in Paul to remind them.

He had taught them most truth that they knew.

Careful reading shows Paul's variety of appeals.

If President Biden is by God, so is your pastor.

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

- Paul, as apostle for the Gentiles, magnified his office – He was the pattern.
- Beseech = beg. Paul tried the kind approach first, but they did not all learn.
- Let us always be Pauline Christians and reject all alterations or inventions.
- Our document, *Jesus or Paul*, causes consternation to unlearned readers.
- Jesus was a Jew under Moses' O.T. law... Paul shows us N.T. religion in Christ.

Faithful Ministers Follow Christ and Paul

They are dedicated to Pauline doctrine/practice.

They know the Bible alone makes them perfect.

They are not moved by noble ideas of men.

They will not consider popular options.

Pastors Must Resist Altars To:

Liberty
Character
Education
Philosophy
Professions
Social Projects
Bodily Exercise
House Perfection
Health & Medicine
Family Fun & Games
Politics / Conspiracies
Investments & Money

Pastors Resist Altars Many Ways

Sermon content must not vary far from Christ.

Update content almost ignores current events.

Prayer content stresses the spiritual like Paul.

Activity emphasis depends on spirituality.

Pastors Resist Altars Many Ways

Men's Meetings are directed more spiritually.

Public use and honor emphasize spiritual men.

Socializing seeks spiritual content or purpose.

Religious things done like sport are avoided.

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.

- Paul could not or would not visit then, so he sent young Timothy to them.
- What a glorious testimony on two counts – beloved son and faithful in Christ.
- The church by its teachers had left Pauline religion by their inferior teachers.
- There is one and only one apostolic religion once delivered to all churches.
- Are you willing to earnestly contend for it with me in these perilous times?

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

- Since they thought Paul foolishly or fearfully delayed, teachers got haughty.
- Do you recall how he blasted their *yea-and-nay* opinion of him (II Cor 1:15-20)?
- Once you know the setting at Corinth, your heart grieves for Paul's troubles.
- Being puffed up is one of the worst things you can ever do – haughty pride.
- *While the cat is away, the mice will play* ... Paul delayed coming, so they ...

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.

- Oh, yes! Here comes the gentle apostle with a godly, stern warning for them.
- He would get back to Corinth, but they would not like how he would visit!
- Talk = hot air. Power = authority, boldness, character, scripture, and revenge.
- Recall how the crowd marvelled at Jesus' authority unlike the Jewish scribes.
- Paul used more inspired threats like this (4:21; II Cor 10:1-2,8-11; 12:20; 13:2-3).

4:20 For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

- True Christianity is nothing like the puffed-up, personality factions at Corinth.
- Talk = hot air. Power = authority, boldness, character, scripture, and revenge.
- There is no room for weekend warriors getting haughty in mere opinions.
- Why are Americans so addicted to criticizing and disrespecting authority?
- If you want to show the Lord, the church, or me a better way ... ***Show us!***

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

- As Paul concluded his gentle rebuke, he warned them of what could happen.
- Like a father with children, there is a time for gentleness and also revenge.
- The happy state of Corinth depended on their conversion and submission.
- Ministers should be loving and meek in conduct ... most of the time ... until!
- As with God, so with a faithful pastor. He loves good men. He dungs the rest.

Why Did I Preach This Subject?

To share with you my conviction, fear, purpose.

For you to understand more why I do what I do.

For you to learn two chapters of Paul's doctrine.

For us to build a holy temple for God's delight.

Serious Students May Review More

<https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/index/year-2004/first-corinthians-3/>

<https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/index/year-2004/first-corinthians-4/>

Many More Outlines Will Be Indexed on the Last Slide

Further Study

I Corinthians 3 ... 2004 ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2004/first-corinthians-3/>

I Corinthians 4 ... 2004 ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2004/first-corinthians-4/>

Higher Ground ... 2015 ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2015/higher-ground/>

Mighty Man's Life ... 2005 ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2005/a-mighty-mans-life/>

Contemporary Christianity ... 2000 ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2000/contemporary-christianity/>

Perilous Times ... 2014 Overview ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2014/perilous-times/>

Perilous Times ... 2000 Details ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2000/perilous-times/>

What Is a Great Church ... 2014 ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2014/what-is-a-great-church/>

Priorities for Good Choices ... 2021 ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2021/priorities-for-good-choices-1/>

Character Without Christ ... 2021 ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2021/character-without-christ-1/>