

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

ministers (servants) of Christ ([1Co 3:5](#)), not as leaders. The [Greek] word [*huperetes*] rendered "ministers," means, literally, "under-rowers." The figure is that of a ship impelled by oars. The church is the ship; Christ commands; the rowers only obey orders. Since they have no right to give orders, no parties should be formed about them.

The People's New Testament Commentary By B.W. Johnson Volume 2 pg.85

Steward - The steward or house manager (*oikos*, house, *nemō*, to manage, old word) was a slave (*doulos*) under his lord (*kurios*, [Luke 12:42](#)), but a master ([Luke 16:1](#)) over the other slaves in the house (menservants *paidas*, maidservants *paidiskas* [Luke 12:45](#)), ... **Word Pictures in the New Testament**.

Mysteries of God --- See comments in **1st Corinthians 2:7 page - 7**

² Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

³ But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself.

⁴ For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord.

⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

The prohibition of this verse must not be understood to forbid all judgments. If so, Paul condemned his own judgment of the Corinthian fornicator (5:3,12-13). Furthermore, the Lord commanded us to judge false teachers (Acts 20:28-32; Rom. 16: 17-18; cf. Matt. 7: 15-23). The type of judgment condemned here is that which involves estimating the true worth of a preacher and one which involves judging one's heart. To make this a universal prohibition of all judgment is to make the Scriptures self-contradictory. **1st Corinthians (Truth Commentaries)** by Mike Willis pg.110-111

⁶ Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.

Throughout this section from 1:10 Paul has intimated that the divisions in the church at Corinth were the result of pride, elevated by human wisdom. He is not here denying that factions existed at Corinth, named after "Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ," 1:12. That fact seems evident, confirmed also by the necessity to explain that their position was merely that of humble servants who planted and watered, 3:4-7. Though Paul laid the foundation at Corinth and Apollos built thereon, 3:10, they did not form these parties. Other ambitious men had introduced their own human philosophies while claiming they were followers of Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ. Who led these factions? Paul explains now that he will transfer their names to himself and Apollos as examples instead of specifically naming the troublemakers. By using the names of Paul and Apollos the Corinthians would learn in them the proper instruction. The lesson? If it was wrong to lift up Paul and Apollos and follow them if they taught something not revealed by God, neither should Christians follow other men. If it was not proper to follow inspired men, it was certainly wrong to follow uninspired men who taught things beyond that "which was written." Unity among believers requires that we follow only that which has been revealed from God, 2 John 9; 1 John 4:1. Research into the development of various denominations serves as proof that following human opinions and creeds has severed believers into many divisions.

First Corinthians by Robert Harkrider pg. 29-30

⁷ For who makes you differ *from another*? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive *it*, why do you boast as if you had not received *it*?

⁸ You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us--and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you!

Now ye are full. The emphasis is on now (*ede* "already"). The state in which the Corinthians imagined themselves to be is one which will only be fully possible in the new heavens and new earth. However, the Corinthians, like the Laodiceans of Revelation 3: 17, imagined themselves already to be in full possession of the spiritual blessings. We have here a picture of the self-conceit of the Corinthians - the disposition that they were spiritually self-sufficient and in need of nothing. Sectarianism often is accompanied by this disposition because men generally think so highly of the truth which they have discovered that they cannot imagine that others have found equally important truths. Ye are full (*kekoresmenoi este*), a passive form of *korenumi*, means "to be satiated, have enough." The item of which they were full was, most likely, spiritual food. They thought they had all they could hold and had need of no more.

Now ye are rich. Again the emphasis is on now, "already." The conditions described in this verse cannot be interpreted literally; 1:26-28 shows that not many were literally rich in Corinth. Therefore rich much be understood in relation to spiritual things. They considered themselves to be rich when in reality they were poor, still babes in Christ. Paul's language is filled with irony and sarcasm (Rev. 3:17).

Ye have reigned as kings without us. The position of without us (*choris humas*) in the sentence is for emphasis. The Corinthians actually imagined that they were already reigning in the heavenly kingdom. Somehow, they supposedly got there without taking the apostles with them. The Corinthians most likely did not literally think of themselves as Paul described; instead, he was exaggerating for emphasis in order that he might deflate their own inflated concept of themselves.

1st Corinthians (Truth Commentaries) by Mike Willis pg.117-118

The first three clauses are directed against the false teachers, who had promoted themselves in the eyes of their admirers, were receiving honors and emoluments from them, and affecting all the airs of "big men," not merely in the church, but in the whole city. The three pungent clauses are spoken in irony and disapproval, the true state of such imposters being far different from what they imagined.

"I would that ye did reign ... " has the equivalent meaning of "Oh, if it were only true, what you think of yourselves because if it were true, together we could go on building up the temple of God.

First & 2nd Corinthians by James Burton Coffman pg. 65

⁹ For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both 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* distinguished, but we *are* dishonored!

We--you (*hêmeis--humeis*). Triple contrast in keenest ironical emphasis. "The three antitheses refer respectively to teaching, demeanour, and worldly position" (Robertson and Plummer).

A. T. Robertson's Word Pictures

¹¹ To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless.

¹² And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure;

¹³ being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the off scouring of all things until now.

See: **2nd Corinthians 4:7-12 & 2nd Corinthians 11:22-29**

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

¹⁵ For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have **begotten you through the gospel**.

Romans 1:16 (NKJV) For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation** for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

2 Corinthians 5:19 (NKJV) That is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the **word of reconciliation**.

James 1:21 (NKJV) Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the **implanted word, which is able to save your souls**.

1 Peter 1:22-23 (NKJV) Since you have **purified your souls in obeying the truth** through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, ²³ having been born again, not of corruptible seed but **incorruptible, through the word of God** which lives and abides forever,

¹⁶ Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

1 Corinthians 11:1 (NKJV) Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.

Philippians 3:17 (NKJV) Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

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

¹⁸ Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you.

¹⁹ But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power.

²⁰ For the kingdom of God *is* not in word but in power.

For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. The kingdom of God is the eternal kingdom which Jesus came to this world to establish and which, unlike other kingdoms, cannot be destroyed. The kingdom presently exists as the church (Matt. 16:18-19; Col. 1: 13-14; etc.) but can also be referred to as something of the future (2 Pet. 1: 11) because of the change which will occur at the second coming. At any rate, the kingdom of God was a present reality to the Corinthian Christians. The kingdom of God is not established, expanded, or edified by boisterous speech. God's kingdom is built up by power, namely, the power of the gospel (cf. Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:18) and the power of an exemplary life.

1st Corinthians (Truth Commentaries) by Mike Willis pg.129

²¹ What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

Questions 1st Corinthians Chapter Four

1. How does Mike Willis explain verse 5?
2. How does Robert Harkrider explain verse 6?
3. What lesson is Paul trying to teach from verses 7-10?
4. Where does it teach, “I have begotten you through the gospel” and why does Paul bring this to their attention?
5. Why was Timothy sent to the Corinthians?
6. How does Mike Willis explain verse 20?
7. What will you remember from chapter 4? Why?