

1Corinthians – Week 19

I. Quiz on chapter 4

II. Review: 1Cor. 4:9-17

A. Paul outlines what his life is really like in contrast to the proud Corinthians

- i. Paul saw himself like a captive in an arena, condemned to die
- ii. He experienced hunger and thirst; he was poorly dressed, mistreated, homeless and being hard at work.
- iii. He was insulted, persecuted, and slandered, yet he responded in kind.
- iv. He appeals to the Corinthians as their gospel father, calling them to humble themselves and imitate him.
- v. He sends them Timothy, his faithful, gospel son, to remind them of Paul's ways in Christ. **Christianity is a way of life!**

III. Continuation

A. 1Corinthians 4:18-21 (ESV), *“Some are arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. ¹⁹But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power. ²⁰For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power. ²¹What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?”*

- i. Like children who do mischief while dad is away, these arrogant members were misbehaving as if Paul would never return there again.
- ii. They probably thought he sent Timothy there because he was afraid of coming himself.
- iii. However, Paul warns them, “I’m on my way to see what’s going on there!”
- iv. Paul knew that his plans and journeys depended on the will of God.
 1. In the like figure, we should never plan without making reference to His will.
 2. James 4:13-15 (ESV), *“Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit’—¹⁴yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. ¹⁵Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.’”*
- v. His purpose of visiting was not to hear their boastful talk, but to see their power:
 1. What manner of life are they living?
 2. Are they walking in step with the Holy Spirit? (cf. Gal. 5:22-26)
 3. Are they walking in the ways of Christ?
 4. Are they building up one another in love?
 5. Are they serving one another in love?
- vi. The kingdom of God is not about talk, but about changed lives!
 1. Lives captivated and shaped by the power of God’s Spirit!
 2. Lives being transformed into the image of Christ!
 3. The kingdom of God is about people who captive into doing God’s will.
 4. Paul is basically saying, “I want to see if these arrogant members are living sanctified and transformed lives.”
- vii. Paul, then, gives them a choice: How should I come? As an angry father or as a pleased father?
 1. If I find you misbehaving, then I will have to show you love by administering the spiritual rod of discipline. (cf. Proverbs 13:24)
 2. If I find you conforming to the ways of Christ, then my time with you will be sweet fellowship.

B. Chapter 5 – Getting to the *whats*.

- i. Paul begins to detail the more specific ways in which the Corinthians were flaunting their arrogance to their own shame.
- ii. Paul usually outlines his messages with the *why* and then the *what*. Now we're starting to get into the *whats* in this chapter and the next few.

- C. 1Corinthians 5:1 (ESV) *“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife.”*
- i. It seems that the Corinthians, instead of upholding God's wisdom and shining a light on it, were tolerating worldly ways that not even the decent people in the world tolerated.
 - ii. A man was being sexually immoral with his step-mother. This is something God's holy laws denounced (Lev 18:8; Deut 22:30; 27:20).
- D. 1Corinthians 5:2 (ESV) *“And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.”*
- i. Paul charged them with **arrogance** (*Webster's Dictionary: making exorbitant claims of rank or estimation; giving one's self an undue degree of importance; haughty; conceited*).
 - ii. Instead of seeking wisdom they had decided already what they needed to do.
 - iii. Thinking they were better than their teachers, they had already caused division by their choices, seeking perhaps to be "delicate" or "careful" in how to handle the matter. Perhaps they were more concerned about offending others than exposing the sin and judging rightly.
 - iv. This is a case of swallowing camels and straining gnats (Mat 23:24-25).
 - v. Paul steps in and corrects them even with the right attitude they ought to have!
 1. Not arrogance
 2. Not dismissiveness
 3. Not excuses
 4. Not shoving it under the rug
 5. But mournful, concerned for offending the Lord - godly sorrow
 6. Swiftly judging according to God's laws
 - vi. This sinful practice required the immediate removal of the offending person from their midst. Paul will elaborate in the following verses.
- E. 1Corinthians 5:3 (ESV) *“For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing.”*
- i. The reason why Paul already judged is because he knew God's judgment on this because of the word of God. He did not need anyone's advice nor did he need to be there to know what to do: it was a grievous sin.
 - ii. Perhaps those in Corinth were hesitating because:
 1. They didn't have all the details
 2. They were trying to find out motive
 3. They felt sorry for those involved
 4. They didn't want to jump to conclusions
 5. They needed to pray about it
 - iii. When something is wrong we need to be in agreement with God if we know His judgment about it. We need to carry out God's judgment, not our own, when the situation calls for it.
 - iv. This situation in Corinth illustrates what happens when those who are not mature in the faith are allowed to make, or in this case, abstain from God's judgment.
 1. It causes division
 2. It promotes doubt
 3. It promotes man's wisdom
 4. It enables sin
 5. It offends God
 - v. The decision whether or not to denounce this man had caused rebellion, one of the reasons Paul had gotten wind of the situation in Corinth. This had led to all the other problems Paul was addressing concerning division, wisdom of man vs. wisdom of God, and the power of transformed living as opposed to the power of talk or status.