

1 Corinthians 4.1-21

Kings and Paupers

All Around World – This Time of Year – Young People having Talk w/ Parents

Parents – Brought them INTO this World – Still see them as their Little BABIES

Young Adults – Realizing will 1 Day See their Parents OUT of World > OLD!

YA Growing CONFIDENCE, ALMOST Graduated! Money in WeChat Wallet!

Parents – Still Paying your Bills – Growing Student Debt > Mother does Laundry

YA – I am READY! I am GROWN UP! I can make it ON MY OWN NOW!

TREAT me as ADULT or You won't see me any More on HOLIDAYS!

PARENT – Great! You are All Grown Up Now! Waiting many Years for This!

Tomorrow I will QUIT my Job – Mom & I MOVE in w/ You – Eat Your Table!

1st 4 Chapters Letter – PAPA Paul having this Talk with his KIDS in CORINTH

1. Time of Salvation: Now but Not Yet

Bible has a SALVATION Clock > Started TICKING in the GARDEN of EDEN

PROMISE that SAVIOR Coming > HEAD of SERPENT would be CRUSHED

a. Finished Work of Christ

First Words of Jesus as BEGINS His Earthly MINISTRY in Gospel of MARK...

Jesus: *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”*

Mark 1.15

LAST WORDS of Jesus at END of His Earthly MINISTRY in Gospel of John

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, *“It is finished,”* and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

John 19.30

2 Weeks ago CELEBRATED the GREATEST DAY IN HISTORY

Savior who is FOREVER ALIVE – Mission Fully Accomplished – NOW Saved

Risen Jesus Commissioned APOSTLES to Proclaim Great News to WORLD

Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus...To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus...Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 1.1-3

CORINTH in 1st Century – Most POWERFUL and PROSPEROUS in Greece

ROMAN City Rebuilt by Special Concern of JULIUS CAESAR himself

Thousands of MERCHANTS, SAILORS, BUSINESSMEN walked Streets Daily

When PAUL the Preacher came FIXED Attention on WORDS most Comfortable Jesus: WISDOM, STRENGTH, HONOR > Saw Selves Wise, Strong, Honorable

Paul taught that ONE DAY we would RULE and REIGN with RISEN Christ
Meek will inherit WHOLE EARTH – In Christ we are HEIRS of ALL Things
Corinthian Choir 1 Song “*I’m walking in VICTORY, I’m walking in POWER!*”



v. 8 Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you!

KEY Word > ALREADY ---- Had RICHES and RULE --- RIGHT NOW!!

Theologians > ‘OVER REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY’

PARENTS of Little Kids > WANT Christmas Presents NOW, Only April 15!

Paul > I’ll be GLAD for you to get MANSION & MERCEDES > *We’ll SHARE PRIDE IRONIC, BRAGGING* - It WILL happen, but NOT NOW, Not Just You

Because they ALREADY Reigned and Ruled – NOW can Name It & Claim It
 They DETERMINE their MINISTRIES / DEMAND more GIFTS to SHOW Off
 “I am SPECIAL – I am INDISPENSABLE – Our CHURCH is BEST!!”

v. 7 For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

Corinthians lived under ILLUSION about Themselves and Situation

Apostle CATECHIZES BOASTERS > Uses SARCASM to POP their BUBBLE
 We have NOT EARNED or MERITED the Gifts – Given by Grace for His Glory

Corinth just ONE of many small ‘c’ churches in BIG C – Church of Jesus Christ
 church of God that is in Corinth...together with all those who in every place call
 upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours 1 Corinthians 1.2

NOTHING One Group of Christians have that all Christians do not SHARE

If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice
 together. 1 Corinthians 12.26

NO Super Christians – we have Same Struggles, Sins, and Sorrows in Life
 Same Love from God in Christ, Word of God, Power of Holy Spirit

b. Unfinished Work of the Church

v. 5 Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord
 comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will
 disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation
 from God.

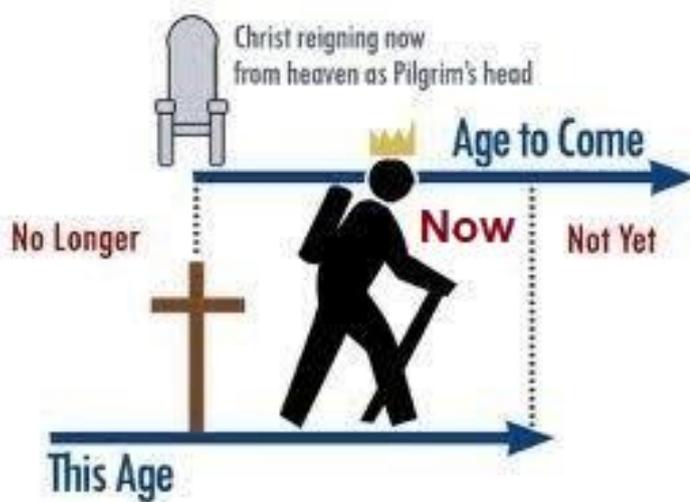
NO FINAL Judgement “before the time” – Not yet in the Age to Come

CLAIM they can do More to Judge than the Apostle of God – Paul Not Judge!
 Maybe Corinth claimed PROPHETIC Gifts Tell what is IN your HEART? Today
 Cannot Administer the Lord’s Last Day Judgment NOW – He WILL do That

vs. 3,4 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me.

NOT Saying we don't NEED ADVICE or Need to REPENT or IMPROVE
Paul is DENYING any HUMAN Judgement that CLAIMS to be DIVINE
Thanks for your SUGGESTION --- Final STANDARD I FEAR is the LORD

Pastors, Elders, Ministry Leaders --- SERVE the Church > SERVANTS of GOD
Not to be MAN-PLEASERS – PASSION and PURPOSE is GLORY of GOD
Do *want* to be LIKED, FRIENDLY, HAPPY – Of Course – GREATER JOY!
Ministry GOAL Not to BE LIKED, Make FRIENDS, or STAY HAPPY



v. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute.

Paul & Corinthians NOT Reading the Same SALVATION CLOCK

Both Moved BEYOND No Longer > Christ DIED & RISEN

Paul still in NOW – Not FULLY EXPERIENCE all Blessings of Salvation YET

We are WALKING BETWEEN This Age and the Age to Come

Corinthians already Living in END of DAYS --- they THOUGHT anyway...

John STOTT used to say “we need to listen to the BBC”

BIBLICAL BALANCED CHRISTIANITY

2. Task of Stewards: Authority and Humility

a. Stewards of the Word

vs. 1,2 This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.

Paul defines MINISTRY in the NOW with 2 HUMBLE Words: Servant, Steward

STEWARD – Key SERVANT in the HOUSEHOLD of the MASTER

JOSEPH was the STEWARD – In HOUSE of POTIPHAR & LAND of Pharaoh

Position of AUTHORITY & RESPONSIBILITY but NOT OWNERSHIP

“Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.” Luke 12.42,43

Steward of MYSTERY > OPEN Secret of Gospel: Blessing of Abe Now in Jesus

This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Ephesians 3.6

PAUL Boldly & Courageously Preaches this GOOD NEWS, No Longer Hidden!

For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

1 Corinthians 2.2

v. 17 ...my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.

v. 6 I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.

Paul & Apollos were MESSENGERS of the WORD in GOD’S FIELD, Temple

In CONTEXT of Word Ministry & Stewardship > Handle Word Responsibly

Say WHAT God says in WORD – No MORE and No LESS

Do NOT GO BEYOND what is Written – Bound TO & BY Scripture
 God Sets BOUNDARY / Rule of Faith / Nothing Beyond what is WRITTEN

“keep your finger on the text” D.A. Carson

To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord)... 1 Corinthians 7.10

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you... 1 Corinthians 11.23

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures 1 Corinthians 15.3,4

In his FINAL LETTER Paul reminds Timothy to be Faithful Steward of WORD

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth
 2 Timothy 2.15-18

b. Slaves in the World v. 1 This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ

CORINTHIANS thought they were KINGS, PAUL was just a PAUPER

Puts Judgment from MEN in Proper CONTEXT

We are ACCOUNTABLE to GOD ALONE

Only God's ASSESSMENT Ultimately MATTERS

Do not be a REED SHAKEN by the WIND

God-Centered Attitude – Save us from **Criticism** (by others) AND **Introspection** (by judging self) – Self Assessment can be OBSESSION

- Not mean we are to IGNORE Criticism that we Need to HEAR

- Not mean we should be SWAYED by PRAISE and FLATTERY

BOTH are DEFLECTED UPWARD to God – Scrutiny comes from HIM

vs. 9-13 For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men...To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.

If this SOUNDS a lot like JESUS than you are LISTENING WELL

Paul invites them to FOLLOW HIM as He FOLLOWS JESUS

Commends himself not his STATUS or his STUDIES by his SCARS

Paul's Theology was the Cross – All must be measured by the Cross

Know POWER of J's Resurrection IN ORDER TO Share in his Sufferings NOW

Like CAPTIVE, CONQUERED Soldier > Follows Jesus into BLOODY ARENA

So much energy goes into thinking about how we should 'market' the Christian faith in our generation. Often this is done by pretending that all the blessings of the age to come are available here and now, if only we could believe firmly enough. One day, we shall have everything we want – freedom from sin, sickness, and even death itself. Perfect wisdom, holiness, and fullness of joy will be ours. But that is what heaven is for! If we promise it on earth, we shall only breed disillusioned malcontents. We must not, however, go to the other extreme and forget that we are already members of that kingdom...great joys and blessings are already ours in Christ.

David Jackman

3. Time will Stop: Terror or Tenderness?

vs. 18,19 Some are arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. But 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.

Bad BOYS in Corinthian Church lived in FEAR of the Coming of PAUL

TIME of FINAL Reckoning – PUTTING things Right in the CHURCH

Paul's VISIT to Corinth SURPRISE > Like the Second Coming of Jesus

a. Reunited with Father

vs. 14,15 I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

FAITHFUL in Corinth LOOKING Forward to COMING of Spiritual Father
 Many GUARDIANS / Governess / AYI > Paul was APOSTLE & 1st Evangelist
 Paul did NOT give them BIRTH > Gave them LIFE-GIVING Word of GOD
 New BIRTH thru GOSPEL – Witnessed MIRACLE of NEW BIRTH, Adoption
 Paul is SUFFERING for them because THEY are his CHILDREN in the FAITH
 Paul NOT TRYING to LORD over Them like Abusive Father Jesus warns About
 Corinthians were his CHILDREN AND his BROTHERS and SISTERS

Here for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be a burden, for I seek not what is yours but you. For children are not obligated to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls.
 2 Corinthians 12.14,15

NOT Coming to DEMAND or DICTATE but be DRAINED Out – DIE for Them
 MINISTRY is NOT just JOB with BENEFITS and DEMANDS
 HIRELING RUNS from TROUBLE – SHEPHERD lays down LIFE for Sheep
 PAUL Stands up when it is DIFFICULT, Even Amidst OPPOSITION

vs. 16 I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

The Corinthians had not seen Jesus in the flesh, they had no Bible, but they had seen Paul.
 David Prior

Real Spiritual AUTHORITY is EARNED by INTEGRITY of EXAMPLE
 Not SEMINARY DEGREE or ORDINATION or TITLES of Church Leadership

Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. 1 Timothy 4.12

Age does NOT CONFER Authority and YOUTH does NOT Take it Away
AUTHORITY does not Come by Being OLD or YOUNG – but Being Example

If we are to commend our gospel, it must be because our lives reveal its power.
Leon Morris

b. Rejected Forever

Some Corinthians AFRAID to See Coming of PAUL – Correction, Change
Some FALSE Teachers would LOSE their POSITIONS and their PAY CHECK
SUSTAINED FEAR & Uncertainty – Not sure WHEN Paul come from Ephesus

v. 20 For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power.

MESSAGE of POWER --- Not Signs, Miracles, Wonders, Healings

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 1 Corinthians 1.18

What is AT STAKE in Corinth is NOTHING LESS than GLORY of GOD

God's HEART is Burning for His Own GLORY

Paul – God's True Servant – His HEART is Zealously Burning for God's Glory

Paul GOT to CORINTH --- Today we WAIT for JESUS to Return to EARTH
COMING in Power and Glory – Coming in JUDGMENT – Final DAY

...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed... 2 Thessalonians 1.7-10

Jesus himself spoke MORE about HELL than HEAVEN

“But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.”
Luke 6.24-25

BECAUSE he DID NOT Want Anyone to Go to HELL, DIED to Keep YOU Out

Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”
Revelation 6.15-17

JESUS is SPEAKING through these words of HIS APOSTLE...

v. 21 What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?

1 Corinthians 4.¹This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ²Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. ³But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. ⁴For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God. ⁶I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another. ⁷For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it? ⁸Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you! ⁹For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. ¹⁰We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. ¹¹To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, ¹²and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; ¹³when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things. ¹⁴I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. ¹⁵For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. ¹⁶I urge you, then, be imitators of me. ¹⁷That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church. ¹⁸Some 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?