

## FOURTH STUDY

### THE MISSION OF THE APOSTLE

#### REAL JUDGMENT (I Corinthians 4:1-5)

There are four elements in the mission of all who are called to preach the Gospel of Christ:

(1) Service - I Corinthians 4:1 - *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ. . .* The word *ministers* in the Greek is *hyperatas*, which means "servants:" which originally referred to the oarsmen who helped drive boats through the sea; suggesting toil and laboring in the work of spreading the gospel. (see Philippians 2:5-8)

(2) Stewardship - I Corinthians 4:1 - . . . *and stewards of the mysteries of God.* The word *stewards* (*oikonomos*) is accurately interpreted as a "house-manager:" a respected and efficient slave of a businessman or land owner to whom was appointed manager of the owner's estate. He was given authority over the helpers and staff. He was over the entire enterprise; but always was aware he was a slave and was carrying out the requirements of the owner.

"Mysteries" pertains to the whole plan of Salvation.

(3) Faithfulness - I Corinthians 4:2 - . . . *that a man be found faithful.* This is the major qualification of the Apostle, and all those who minister for God. This includes all the "five fold ministry gifts." This

---

Paul had a very tender relationship with the Corinthians. He was the spiritual father who begat them as his children in Christ Jesus through the gospel. His duty to them as their father was to watch over them. They were children who needed special care. What Paul was saying to them in I Corinthians 4:16, where he said, "*be ye followers of me,*" was, "Be ye followers, or imitators, of me as I follow Christ." We as believers know, though, in the highest sense we can only be imitators of God (Ephesians 5:1).

3. In I Corinthians 4:17, Paul says, because he is their spiritual father and has taken deepest interest in their well-being, he has sent someone to them.

(a) Who did he send? \_\_\_\_\_

(b) What does Paul call Timothy? (I Corinthians 4:17)\_\_\_\_\_

---

Paul was teaching *every where in every Church* of his *ways which be in Christ* . He had sent Timothy to bring them *into remembrance* of those teachings. They were not to listen to the proud speakers. *For the kingdom of God is not taught in word, but in power.* (I Corinthians 4:17-20; 7:17; 11:2; 14:33;)

4. To those who are "*puffed up,*" Paul gives a warning of 2 ways he could come to them? It is their choice. Name them. (I Corinthians 4:21)\_\_\_\_

is faithfulness to God and to the truth in all his teachings, and preaching. To be found faithful is a demand.

(4) Man's, Self, and God's Judgment - I Corinthians 4:3-5 - Although we are told in I Corinthians 11:31, we are to judge ourselves, Paul is saying in I Corinthians 4:3,4, he can recall nothing in his Christian life which condemns him. This does not mean he overlooks self-criticism of his shortcomings (I Corinthians 15:9). He felt he was not even worthy to share the title of "apostle," because of his past severe persecution of the Church of Jesus Christ. He also warns the Church of the future judgment of Jesus Christ, the final Judge (I Corinthians 4:5).

1. When the Lord comes, what will He bring to light and make manifest? (I Corinthians 4:5)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Name at least two things you think the Lord will reveal in His future judgment, that are secret in this life. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thus people should be careful neither to heap praise on favorite preachers nor to pour scorn upon people who were not to their particular liking. God is the only one qualified to judge. He alone can dispense well-founded praise or punishment. <sup>1</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_

1. BBC, Volume 8, p. 339, 340.

## CARNAL PRIDE VS APOSTOLIC HUMILITY ( I Corinthians 4:6-21)

Paul is saying in I Corinthians 4:6, that he and Apollos want to transfer to the Corinthians a picture Paul has in his mind: not to think of men above what is written in the Word; that no one of them think of himself any better than anyone else. This kind of attitude causes division.

This picture in Paul's mind had to have come from God.

1. In I Corinthians 4:9-13, Paul describes what he believes to be the office of the Apostle as God has them set forth to be. How does Paul describe his and Apollos' Apostleship? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. (a) What is Paul saying he himself is to the Corinthians in I Corinthians 4:14,15? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(b) What does Paul give as the reason for saying he is their father? (I Corinthians 4: 15) \_\_\_\_\_