

Studies In First Corinthians

(I Corinthians 4:1-8)

1. What were Paul and Sosthenes stewards of?

Stewards of the mysteries of God: *"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God"* (I Corinthians 4:1).

- Ministers are servants to specific needs (I Corinthians 3:5, II Corinthians 3:6, II Corinthians 6:4, II Corinthians 8:1-4, II Corinthians 9:1, Philippians 2:25, Colossians 1:7, and Colossians 1:23).
- Stewards, which in a way we are all stewards (I Peter 4:10), are responsible for taking care of something (Luke 16:1-8).
- They were revealing the mysteries of God (Romans 16:25, Ephesians 1:9, and Ephesians 3:1-4).

2. What is required of a steward?

Faithfulness: *"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful"* (I Corinthians 4:2).

- A steward must be faithful, able to be depended upon (Proverbs 13:17, Proverbs 25:13, Proverbs 26:6, I Corinthians 4:17, and II Corinthians 2:17).

3. Did Paul concern himself with what people thought about him based upon human judgment?

No: *"(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. (4) For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord"* (I Corinthians 4:3-4).

- Paul was confident he had no wrongs to be found and such confidence comes through self-examination of the heart (I John 3:20-21).
- Paul judged himself, as is wise (I Corinthians 2:15 and I Corinthians 11:28-32).
- We must all live so that we're not afraid of the proverbial "glass house" (I Thessalonians 2:10 and I Timothy 4:12).

4. Are there things about people that will not be revealed until Christ comes?

Yes: *"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).

- Paul is NOT telling them never to judge (John 7:24, Luke 17:3-4, I Corinthians 5:1-13, and I John 4:1-5). What is going on is, they are guilty of unrighteous judgment (I Corinthians 4:13; 18-19, II Corinthians 10:1-2, and II Corinthians 10:8-11).
- Leave things unknown up to God to judge (Romans 2:16 and I Timothy 5:24-25).

5. Should we take the authority of anyone over the Scriptures?

No: *“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).*

- Man is not the standard (**Isaiah 2:22**, **Jeremiah 17:5-6**, **I Corinthians 2:5**, and **II Corinthians 10:12**).
- We must always limit our thinking to the real standard, the word of God (**Colossians 1:23** and **II Timothy 1:13**).

6. Is one person superior to another in the local church?

No: *“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” (I Corinthians 4:7)?*

- **Romans 12:3**, **Romans 12:16**, **Philippians 2:3-8**, and **I Peter 5:5-6**.

7. Carnally speaking, were the majority of the folks assembling in Corinth poor?

No: *“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” (I Corinthians 4:8).*

- The entire congregation in Corinth was not rich. There were poor folks among them who were being shamed by those who were rich in worldly possessions (**I Corinthians 11:18-21**).
- It is not necessarily a good thing that some in Corinth were well off (**Revelation 3:14-19**).
- Physical wealth and/or power do NOT indicate that someone is doing well spiritually (**Proverbs 13:7** and **Luke 6:25**). *That does not mean all rich people are in sin (**Psalms 112:1-3** and **Matthew 27:57**) or that all poor people are good (**Proverbs 20:4**).
- Paul did not hold the carnal success in Corinth against them in any way. In wanted them to reign and to share in that with them (**Romans 12:15**).