

**The Servant's Role**  
**Lesson #17**  
**1 Corinthians 4:1-21**

Paul addressed the Corinthian church; a church that had been divided into partisan groups each boasting about their identity with a particular leader, Paul, Apollos or Peter. Paul corrected their misplaced devotion by clarifying that the apostles were all servants of Christ. Each had been given a task by God, whether to plant or to water, but it was God who brought growth and maturity.

**Servants of Christ - 1 Corinthians 4:1-13**

1. What did Paul say about the role of servants of Christ? (1 Corinthians 4:1)
  
2. What is required from one who has been so entrusted? (1 Corinthians 4:2)
  
3. Paul went on to explain how he fulfilled that in his own role as servant of Christ. Using 1 Corinthians 4:3, 4:
  - How did Paul view the judgment or opinions of man?
  
  - What did he say about himself?
  
  - Whose judgment did he say was important?
  
4. Verse 5 begins with the word "*therefore*," so we must stop and see what it is there for! Paul was referring to what he had just written; therefore since that is true, what are the implications for all believers? (1 Corinthians 4:5a)
  
5. What will the Lord do? (1 Corinthians 4:5b, c)

6. In leadership, as well as for those who follow a leader, there is always the danger of pride. What did Paul say he did and why? (1 Corinthians 4:6)

7. In this next section, Paul contrasts the Corinthians and the apostles. Using 1 Corinthians 4:8-11, fill in the chart below with what is written about each.

The Corinthians	The Apostles

8. As apostles, Paul said *"we work hard with our own hands."* Look at the example of how he said they responded to each of the follow situations. (1 Corinthians 4:12, 13a)

- Cursed
  
- Persecuted
  
- Slandered

9. How did Paul describe the world's view of an apostle of Christ? (1 Corinthians 4:13b)

10. **Reflect:** Reread verses 8-13. What do you think was Paul's point in these verses? (Remember to keep this in the context of the issue with which Paul is dealing.)

- How do you think Paul would respond to today's "Prosperity Gospel" that teaches God wants you to be rich, healthy and happy?

**Paul As Spiritual Father - 1 Corinthians 4:14-21**

11. Why did Paul say he wrote with such strong language? (1 Corinthians 4:14)

12. By what authority did Paul feel he had the right to correct the Corinthian believers? (1 Corinthians 4:15)

13. Since that was true, what did he hope they would do as a result of this strongly worded letter? (1 Corinthians 4:16)

14. Paul said that he was sending Timothy to them. Using 1 Corinthians 4:17:

- How did Paul describe Timothy?
- What was Paul's purpose in sending Timothy?
- Was this unique to the church at Corinth?

15. Before dealing with some specific issues, Paul made a general statement that "*some of you have become arrogant.*" What did he say to the arrogant? (1 Corinthians 4:18, 19)
  
16. What did Paul point out regarding the Kingdom of God? (1 Corinthians 4:20)
  
17. As their spiritual father, Paul gave them a choice. What was that choice? (1 Corinthians 4:21)
  
18. **Reflect:** As you reflect on this chapter, do you get a sense that the arrogance and pride Paul was speaking about was based upon their identification with a particular leader, or was their pride in themselves?