

Summit Woods Baptist Church
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1 Corinthians 4:14-21

In chapter 4, Paul closes out the first section of his letter to the Corinthians. On Day 3, you will be looking back over the **whole section** from 1:10-4:21, so be sure to begin your study early enough in the week to allow time for thinking through the larger section without being rushed.

❖ Day 1

Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-21.

For these lessons, the sermon text is provided in a format that visually helps display the structure of the paragraph or section of text. The verbs are underlined. The main clauses remain to the left, and the supporting clauses are either directly underneath when they have equal priority to what comes before, or are tabbed to the right when the clause supports, develops or explains previous clauses. Suggested themes in the text are provided in the box on the left. As the class progresses, you will have the opportunity to learn how to do this yourself.

Paul's purpose in writing	¹⁴ I do not <u>write</u> these things to <u>make</u> you <u>ashamed</u> , but to <u>admonish</u> you as my beloved children.
Paul's relationship to them	¹⁵ For though you <u>have</u> countless guides in Christ, you do not <u>have</u> many fathers. For I <u>became</u> your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.
Paul's charge to them	¹⁶ I <u>urge</u> you, then, <u>be</u> imitators of me.
An example of a faithful imitator	¹⁷ That is why I <u>sent</u> you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to <u>remind</u> you of my ways in Christ, as I <u>teach</u> them everywhere in every church.
An example of unfaithful non-imitators	¹⁸ Some <u>are</u> arrogant, as though I <u>were</u> not <u>coming</u> to you.
A coming evaluation	¹⁹ But I <u>will come</u> to you soon, if the Lord <u>wills</u> , and I <u>will find out</u> not the talk of these arrogant people but their power.
God's mark of approval	²⁰ For the kingdom of God <u>does</u> not <u>consist</u> in talk but in power.
An opportunity to obey	²¹ What do you <u>wish</u> ? <u>Shall</u> I <u>come</u> to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?

1. What is the difference between shaming and admonishing?

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2. What is the difference between a guide and a father in the faith?
3. Why does Paul claim a special relationship to the Corinthians?
4. This is not the only time that Paul will urge them to imitate him. Look at 11:1. Why does he say that he is a faithful example to follow?
 - a. What phrase in verse 17 also shows that Paul is not just urging them to imitate him but to imitate him *as he imitates Christ*?
5. Who did Paul send to them as a guide?
6. What did Paul send Timothy to Corinth to do?
7. Is the church in Corinth special or unique in being taught Paul's ways in Christ, and from where in the text do you get your answer?

❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-21 again.

8. Why might some be arrogant if Paul was not coming to them?

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9. How does the power of the kingdom of God manifest itself? (Think about what Paul has already said in 1 Corinthians.)

10. How do verses 18-21 relate to the father/child word picture?

11. Why is Paul's statement that he "will come find out" not contradictory to his words in 4:1-5 about God as the only true judge? (Remember what Pastor Bret said about the two different words used.)

12. What do the Corinthians need to do in order to have Paul come in gentleness and not with a rod?

❖ Day 3: Summarizing the Larger Section

Read 1 Corinthians 1:10-4:21. Answer the remaining questions with the entire section in mind.

13. In this larger section, what does Paul want the Corinthian church to stop doing?

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14. What does he want them to do instead?

15. In this section, what have you learned about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

16. What have you learned about mankind/the world?

17. What have you learned about the church?

18. What were the Corinthians' wrong thoughts about wisdom?

a. What is the correct way of thinking that Paul presented?

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19. What were the Corinthians' wrong thoughts about the church leaders?

a. What is the correct way of thinking that Paul presented?

20. What were the Corinthians' wrong thoughts about pride and boasting?

a. What is the correct way of thinking that Paul presented?

21. Read James 3:13-18. Why has Paul spent so much time addressing the arrogance and quarreling that is going on in the Corinthian church?

22. Summarize 1:10-4:21 in one or two sentences.

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23. If there are any areas where the Lord has brought conviction upon you, read 1 John 1:9 and write out a prayer of repentance to God.

- a. By God's grace, what changes do you need to make to be living in accordance with God's Word in this area? Ask the Lord to strengthen and enable you as you strive to walk in obedience.

In preparation for Sunday, pray that we as a congregation would have a correct biblical understanding of the gospel, ourselves, the world, and our leaders, and that we will serve the Lord together with humility and unity.