

Summit Woods Baptist Church  
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1 Corinthians 4:6-13

❖ Day 1

Read 1 Corinthians 4:6-13.

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. As the class progresses, you will have the opportunity to learn how to do this yourself.

<sup>6</sup>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.

<sup>7</sup>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?

<sup>8</sup>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!

<sup>9</sup>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.

<sup>10</sup>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 [are held] in disrepute.

<sup>11</sup>To the present hour we hunger and thirst,  
we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless,

<sup>12</sup>and we labor, working with our own hands.

When reviled, we bless;  
when persecuted, we endure;

<sup>13</sup>when slandered, we entreat.

We have become,  
and are still,  
like the scum of the world,  
the refuse of all things.

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1. To whom has Paul “applied all these things”?
2. What are the “these things” to which he refers?
3. Why does he say that he has applied these things to himself and Apollos?
4. What does he want the Corinthians to learn?
5. According to Paul, what is one consequence of “go[ing] beyond what is written”?
6. Written where? (Hint: see 1:19 and 3:19)
7. The beginning phrase in verse 7 centers around the Greek word *diakrinei*, which speaks of making a distinction between persons or things. It generally implies a judgment of superiority. Is Paul saying that there are no differences among us?
8. How does he say that we should and should not view our differences?
9. Who/what is the source of our differences?

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10. So then who is to be honored and praised when something noble is seen in a believer?
11. Gifts can reflect both the value of the recipient and the generosity of the giver. Which do you think Paul would say is the correct perspective concerning the things God gives to His people?

❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 4:6-13 again.

12. What is the main problem that Paul has been addressing in their congregation so far?
13. Why is it foolish to pridefully boast about things that you have received?
14. Think about a few things that differentiate you from others in our congregation. List a few ways that you can use the way God has made you to be a unifying blessing in our congregation.
  - a. List a few ways that your distinctions could lead to division in our congregation if you misuse them.

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15. Paul is speaking with strong sarcasm in verses 8-13 in order to grab their attention. Sarcasm is generally used for the purpose of mocking in order to wound someone. What do you think Paul hopes to accomplish in his sarcasm? (Hint: look ahead to 4:14; see also Proverbs 27:5-6)
  
16. Verse 9 begins with 'for', which indicates that what follows is given to further explain what precedes. How does the picture Paul paints of the apostles serve to show the foolishness/absurdity/misguidedness of the Corinthians' lofty view of themselves?
  
17. According to Paul, what has faithfulness to God and the gospel resulted in so far for the apostles?
  
18. How does Paul's description relate to God's wisdom versus the world's wisdom, as discussed earlier in 1 Corinthians?
  
19. How are you inclined to respond when faced with hunger, need, and persecution?
  
20. According to the example of Paul and the apostles, how should we respond?

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❖ Day 3

Read 1 Corinthians 4:6-13 again.

21. In truth, coming to Christ does fill us with spiritual riches and a royal nobility (1 Cor 1:4-9, Eph 1:18, Col 2:2-3, 1 Pet 2:9), but Paul says that they have the wrong perspective on riches and nobility. What attitude has their perspective produced in them?

a. What is the proper attitude to have towards the riches of God's grace that we receive?

22. What perspective did Paul and the apostles have that enabled them to respond to difficulty the way that they did? Be sure to list the Bible verses that have informed your answer. (E.g., 2 Cor 4:17-18)

23. Read Luke 6:20-38 and describe the connections you see between Jesus' and Paul's teachings.

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24. Is there an area in your life where you need to repent of operating with the wrong perspective?

25. How should this week's passage impact us as a congregation?

In preparation for Sunday, pray that we would "not go beyond what is written," that we would not "be puffed up in favor of one against another," that we would remember that every good thing we have has been given to us by God, and that we would "bless, ... endure, ... [and] entreat" in the face of hardship to the glory of God.