

LIFE GROUP notes

30 March



Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: 1 Corinthians – week 8



Let's hear your story

1. Tell of a time when you had to explain to a friend or family member the characteristics of a minister of Jesus Christ?
2. What did Paul say in v.1? **(This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.)**
3. What is required of stewards according to v.2? **(Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.)**
4. What does Paul tell us in v.9? **(God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, a spectacle to the world, angels and men.)**



Let's go deeper

5. What does v.11 tell us? **(To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless.)**
6. What does v.13 tell us about being an apostle? **(We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.)**
7. What was Paul's words in v.15? **(For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.)**
8. What was Paul's instruction to the church in v.16? **(I urge, you, then, be imitators of me.)**



Let's apply this

9. 1 Corinthians 4:1 – 2; This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

If a servant of God is faithful in his personal life, in his home, and in his ministry of the Word, then he is a good steward and will be rewarded.

- Have you been a faithful servant to God's plan and purpose for you?
- Have you been a faithful steward to the words and works of Jesus?
- Have you been a faithful servant to God's family in example, explanation and discipline?

SUMMARY:

Week 8 – Three characteristics of a minister of Jesus Christ **Read:** 1 Cor. 4:1 – 21

vv.1 – 6; Characteristic is faithfulness: A minister as a servant and steward.

Paul called himself, Peter, and Apollos ministers and servants of Christ. The word translated ministers or servants is the word **"huperetes"** in the Greek, and this word means under-rower. It described the slaves who rowed the big Roman war-galleys. "We are not the captains of the ship," said Paul, "but only the galley slaves who are under orders. **5 Aspects of an under-rower's work:** An under-rower had to row to the captain's command and had to trust the captain. The under-rowers had to row together. An under-rower was committed for life without any honour.

A steward is a servant who manages everything for his master, but who himself owns nothing. The responsibility of the steward is to be faithful to his master. A steward may not please the members of the household; he may not even please some of the other servants; but if he pleases his own master, he is a good steward. The main issue is not, "Is Paul popular?" or "Is Apollos a better preacher than Paul?" The main issue is, "Have Paul, Apollos, and Peter been faithful to do the work God assigned to them?" If a servant of God is faithful in his personal life, in his home, and in his ministry of the Word, then he is a good steward and will be rewarded.

Paul points out three judgements in the life of steward:

- v.3a; There is man's judgement.
- v.3b – 4a; There is the servant's own self-judgement.
- v.4b; The most important judgement is God's judgement.

vv.7 – 13; Characteristic is humility: A minister as a spectacle to the world

When Paul called himself and other apostles "a spectacle to the world" (v.9), he was using an image familiar to people in the Roman Empire. The government kept the people entertained by presenting entertainment in the different cities. The amphitheatres would be filled with citizens, eager to see men compete in the games and prisoners fight with the beasts. The Coliseum at Rome became the centre for these "entertainments." When the "main events" were ended, then the poorest and weakest prisoners were brought in to fight with the beasts. Nobody expected too much from their performance.

vv.14 – 21; Characteristic is tenderness: A minister as a spiritual father

Paul had already compared the local church to a family (1 Cor. 3:1–4). But now the emphasis is on the minister as a "spiritual father." Paul reminded the church of the important ministries he had performed on their behalf:

vv.14 – 15; Paul had founded the family.

vv.16 – 17; Paul was an example to the family

vv.18 – 21; Paul was faithful to discipline the family.