

Sermon Notes – December 31st, 2017

1 Corinthians in Review:

- ⇒ Paul is writing to a church in Corinth that is riddled with problems. The root of these problems is their confidence in _____ and not the wisdom of God. As a result, they have divisions, rivalries, disorder and immorality in their midst.
- ⇒ But although the wisdom of God is foolishness to the world, God chose what is _____ in the world to shame the wise and what is _____ to shame the strong.
- ⇒ Believers are God’s building and Christ is the foundation. There is a day coming when each person’s work will be revealed and each of us will be held accountable for how we build on our foundation.
- ⇒ Although the Lord will judge His own, He will not do so according to human wisdom, but according to a completely different standard. The Corinthians suppose themselves to be something because of their wealth, status, and human wisdom. But Paul is pointing them towards the path of a _____, a path of shame, persecution, and suffering.

Today’s Text: 1 Corinthians 4:14-21

Today’s text is an invitation to make an important choice. There are times when God’s people need to repent and reverse course. When we are confronted with the need to repent, we have to decide whether to humble ourselves and submit to the Lordship of Christ, or to arrogantly persist in our own way as our own lords.

A Word to the Wise

- ⇒ Paul’s purpose is not to shame the Corinthians (although they very much ought to be ashamed!) but to _____ them. Biblical confrontation of sin has the repentance and restoration of the sinner as its goal (cf. Matthew 18).
- ⇒ Paul’s desired relationship with the Corinthians is that of a father and his children. He is not motivated by building a movement around himself (cf. chapters 1-3), but by his _____ for them and is motivated for their good. Biblical confrontation is not easy but is necessary for genuine biblical community.

Do As I Do... as I Do as He Did

- ⇒ Paul reminds the Corinthians of the basis of their relationship (he “fathered” them in the gospel) and calls on them to imitate him and his ways. Although this may seem conceited, this is Christian _____ – follow me as I follow Christ.
- ⇒ The “ways” the Corinthians are to follow are the application of godly wisdom and the rejection of the world’s wisdom. They are to follow Paul in step with a crucified Lord.

Choose Carefully!

- ⇒ Once again, the Corinthian problem is arrogance in step with a world obsessed with honor and status. Some may have been offended that Paul sent Timothy instead of coming himself. Paul is coming, but it may not be the coming they are anticipating!
- ⇒ Although the Corinthians are full of the talk of human wisdom, Paul is coming to see whether there is any _____ behind their talk. The Kingdom of God is not comprised of words but of God’s _____ to transform lives, hearts, and communities.
- ⇒ Paul gives the Corinthians a choice for the kind of visit they can expect. Will they be arrogant and _____? Or will they _____ themselves and accept correction? The choice is theirs!

Responding to God’s Word:

- ⇒ It is rarely easy to be confronted. Our natural response is to defend ourselves or attack the one confronting us. We must be able to see our sinfulness, humble ourselves and repent. This not only happens at salvation but should be a life-long habit!
- ⇒ As a spiritual father, Paul offers himself as a model for imitating; who are you imitating? Seek and choose fathers and mothers in Christ diligently and carefully! Who are you leading towards Christ? How are you using your influence to lead others?