Read 1 Corinthians 4:1-21 (be sure and note verse 14)

**1 Cor 4:1-5  “Stop Passing Judgment”**

1. With what three persons or groups of persons does Paul not concern himself in terms of their examination of him?

2. How does this passage relate to 3:10-15 in either a comparative way (they’re similar) or a contrastive way (they’re opposite)?

3. What do you think Paul means by verses 3 & 4 and what do you think he does not mean? Does he mean in verses 3-4 that “God is going to do all of the judging that really counts, that His standard will be faithfulness in stewardship, and that your judgment of me doesn’t count, not even my own judgment of myself counts. So, we all need to quit judging spiritual leaders based on our human standards and preferences. Let each leader do what they do and leave the judging to God.” If that is what Paul means, what are the implications for how we should evaluate and discern whether a given leader in the church is worthy of our attention?

4. It's clear from verse 6 (note the “for your benefit that you may learn…” ESV) that the things that Paul said in verses 1-5 were intended to result in, or to give the basis for, or to explain why the Corinthian church should stop choosing sides between Paul or Apollos and then being proud about it. Write down what you think the argument is in verses 1-5 and how that argument leads to the application of verse 6.
5. What does Paul mean by his exhortation to the Corinthian believers not to exceed what is written? What “written” thing is he referring to and in what way were they exceeding it or in danger of exceeding it?

6. Look at verses 6, 7, 18, and 19. What do they have in common? How does that help us understand Paul’s argument or flow of thought in chapter 4?

7. Notice the linkage between vs 6 and vs. 7 indicated by the linking work “For…” at the beginning of verse 7. In what way does verse 7 explain or help us understand what Paul was talking about in verse 6?

8. Notice the contrast between verse 8 and verses 9-13. At least I think Paul is drawing a contrast between the Corinthians and himself and the rest of the apostles. What is that contrast? Or, if you don’t like the idea of a contrast, what is the relationship between Paul’s statements about the Corinthians in verse 8 and the statements he makes about himself and the rest of the apostles in verses 9-13? How does he get to the place where he was discussing his dire circumstances, so dire that he and the apostles had become the scum of the world?

9. What was Paul talking about in verse 8 when he told them that they had already been filled, they were already rich, they had already become kings?
1 Corinthians Chapter 4:1-21 Study Questions Oct 12, 2015

1 Cor 4:14-21 “Be Imitators of Me”

10. How does verse 14 help us understand what Paul was saying in verses 1-13?

11. What “ways in Christ” do you think Paul was referring to in verse 17? Do you think it was anything specific or was it more general, i.e., his whole attitude and values and priorities, the way he treated other people. etc.?

12. Verse 18 sounds like an apostolic threat to me. What was Paul going to do?

13. How would Paul distinguish between the talk and the power of these arrogant people?

14. What did Paul mean by coming to them with a rod? Was he going to publicly rebuke them? Or, excommunicate them from the church? Or, call down some kind of supernatural judgment of God, like Peter did toward Ananias and Saphira? What do you think he meant?

Application

15. What “take away” do you have from this lesson? (if any) Can you identify any attitudes within yourself that might be similar to those present in the Corinthian believers and that Paul was trying to change?