

## **Embracing a Biblical Perspective of Spiritual Leaders I Corinthians 4:1-7**

The Apostle Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth is corrective in purpose. The initial issue he addressed was a quarrelsome, arrogant attitude among the members that threatened to divide the church (1:10-12). Instead of giving their foremost allegiance to Jesus Christ, many were elevating their favorite teacher and leader beyond what God intended.

Paul devotes significant space in the first four chapters to addressing this problem. His corrective words provide Christians in all ages with a Biblical understanding of how to view spiritual leaders in the church. In our passage for today, Paul expands on his earlier corrective words to highlight three crucial truths that apply to the church in all generations (I Cor. 1:1-9; 10-12; 2:1-4; 4:15).

### **1. Paul corrects their flawed perspective on how to View Christian leaders (Verses 1-2).**

- Paul and his fellow leaders were to be viewed as servants and stewards.
  - Their service was to Christ.
  - Their stewardship was of the mysteries of God.
  - The foremost calling of servants and stewards is faithfulness to Christ and His Word.

### **2. Paul corrects their mistaken perception of how to evaluate spiritual leaders (Verses 3-5).**

- Their evaluation of others was of minimal importance.
- Paul's evaluation of himself was far from conclusive.
- God's evaluation of everyone is what ultimately matters.

### **3. Paul corrects their inflated sense of arrogance in failing failing to see God's goodness in everything they possessed (Verses 6-7).**

- Paul's illustration of himself and Apollos was for the church in Corinth; his words about Christian leadership apply to the church through the ages. (Verse 6)
- Paul asked three penetrating questions that have application for all believers. (Verse 7)

(Other referenced verses: Phil. 2:6-9; Mark 10:45; John 13:13-15; Luke 17:7-10; I Cor. 3:8-15; Col. 2:2-3; Gal. 2:7; I Thess. 2:4; I Cor. 9:17; II Tim. 2:15; I Cor. 3:8-9; II Cor. 6:1; Psalm 12:1; Proverbs 20:6; I Thess. 3:2; 5:12-13; Romans 11:33-36; I Cor. 1:26-31)