

Our Bible reading for today – **1 Corinthians 4:1-17**

“A Good Steward”

God calls people to do certain things and be certain things. That fact hasn't changed over the centuries. Abraham, Moses, David, Samuel and Isaiah are good examples. When God called Jeremiah He told him some really hard things. Essentially God told him, *“Here's what I want you to say. Nobody will listen. It will be hard. You will not have any success. But do it anyway.”* And it all turned out that way. Admire Jeremiah! He deserves it!

Paul is a great New Testament example. Because of God's call he understood who he was, and what God wanted him to do. Of course, God gave continual guidance in the details – where to go, whom to talk with, how long to stay, what to do – through circumstances, urgings in his mind and heart, spiritual burdens and specific guidance.

“For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles-- Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you,” (^{NIV} Ephesians 3:1-2) As Paul talked about his call in this text he spoke of himself as an ***“administrator”***. That, in the original Greek is an interesting word. The translators render it numerous ways. (KJ – ***“dispensation”***; NAU – ***“stewardship”***; NIV – ***“administration”***; NLT – ***“special management”***) The original word is literally, *“management of a household or house”*.

Let me suggest that God's will (His call) to each of us is to be exactly that – however you translate it. Each of us has been placed by God in a *“household”* which is uniquely our own. Not even your husband or wife, brother or sister has the same *“household”* as yours. They overlap, but they're not totally the same. (Christ used His *“household”*. Every one of the disciples had a traceable family or friend connection to Jesus except one, Judas Iscariot.)

God has made each of us as one-of-a-kind. He has called each of us to do His special will. He has uniquely gifted us. He has uniquely placed us. We each need to understand that each of us is God's person in the context of where He has placed us - in our family, on the job, in our neighborhood, in each of our associations and even in the church too. And He has purpose for us, and things He wants to accomplish through us. He has uniquely placed us in a context, a *“household”*, a sphere of influence, among people He loves.

In the Bible reading for today, the same word is used both in verses 1 and 2. ***“Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”*** (^{NKJ} 1 Corinthians 4:2)

When I worked in a factory in Chicago, to earn a living while I was finishing up my training for the ministry, my boss made a comment to me after he fired a man, *“It's hard to get good employees today.”* To him that meant – showing up for work, being on time, not pilfering, an honest day's work, etc. (In other words – faithfulness)

God wants faithfulness too. Pray for yourself today. That you'll see yourself as one God has called. That you'll see the opportunities today that He gives you. That you'll love the people in your associations (*“household”*) today. That you'll serve them and Him today – faithfully!