

Corinth was a thriving cosmopolitan city of Jesus' day. It had the fourth largest population; sat on trade routes that brought a mixed multitude of sailors, merchants, and dignitaries; and was one of the wealthiest, most influential cities of the Roman Empire. But all this worldly success also made it a city of wide-spread immorality, humanistic philosophies & heathen customs of all kinds.

Paul capitalized on the large Jewish population in forming the church at Corinth during his second missionary journey. But the church members were constantly under moral assault as they attempted to live in Christ against the flow of this pagan society. The result was spiritual immaturity by the constant antagonism of worldly values that weakened their grip on godliness.

Specifically, it was reported to Paul that the church suffered from divisions and sin of all kinds: incest, law-suits, disorder in worship, heresies @ resurrection, & abuses in liberties of faith. In short, the love & compassion that was to mark the lives of those who followed Christ was dangerously compromised.

READ: 1Corinthians 1: Symptom, Cause & Cure!

Symptom: *division in the body!*

2) Paul reminds them of **who they are and whose they are!**

-“God made you holy to act holy,” doing His will on earth

5-7) God has given your church everything you need for holiness

-He enriched you in speech, knowledge, gifts & ministry

10-11) Assume that Paul tackles the most important issue first!

-***Division, for any reason, in church is a BIG DEAL!***

We can't show love & oneness: unity of diversity/variety

-Phil 2:1-4

-God is Three-in-One: individual & distinct, yet unified

Paul reports Chloe's criticisms – **by name! Why?** Accountability

-Stand behind your opinions/values; no anonymity/hiding!

-I am against secret ballot votes! Why? No accountability!

Cause: *worldly distractions & definitions*

12-15) Being “of Paul, Cephas (Peter), Apollos” was a “claim to

fame” & personal significance! This struggle for importance and worth is common among all people; it is a residual from the Fall. I believe God created us each with needs for love & approval, worth & significance, and belonging & acceptance: but only He can adequately meet those needs. He does so in Christ; yet we continue to pursue them from popularity, prominence, & possessions! “*Keeping up with the Jones'*” is a national epidemic!

The problem is our priorities! We're already “in” the world; but we're not to be “of” it! A Christian's definition of success is different than the world's – ***and it's supposed to be!*** Our greatest “success” in life is knowing God well – in Spirit & truth, intimacy & transformation. (**Jer 9:24**) But the Corinthian church, and even today, the church FBC Tyrone, loses its grip on our purpose & priorities, allowing them to be whittled down to match those of the world around.

Cure: *Boast in Christ alone*

18-21) God determined salvation never based on human qualities

-Not human intelligence, wisdom, power or prominence!

God and His message of salvation is foolishness to the world!

-(1John 2:15-17) *You cannot please God and the world!*

24-29) Christianity = NOT for the strong; but for the weak/needy

-We + foolish, weak, nothings God chose to shame world

When we look to the cross, we see God saying, “***I love you; you are immeasurably valuable to Me; I created you with the great value & significance – to be My image bearers on earth!***”

So, as Christians and members of Christ's body, we must guard ourselves/each other against the worldly influences/definitions of value, success & significance that distract us from holiness! We cannot seek our value/significance in popularity or position, or friendships with those who possess them! Instead, our significance in knowing God personally/intimately in Christ!

INVITATION:

1) *What IS your claim to fame?* Personal Qualities or Christ?

WORSHIP IN MEDITATION: Jeremiah 9:23-24

God speaks to His people thru Jeremiah saying:

23) *This is what the LORD says: “Don’t let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. **24)** But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know Me and understand that I am the LORD who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the LORD, have spoken!*

God reminds His people that their only “claim to fame” is that they know Him! God’s people are to challenge one another when they boast about their own human intelligence (wisdom), position or influence (power), and wealth (riches) – because these are not lasting sources of personal value/worth! Egotism & pride are not characteristics of mature believers!

The world assigns special value/worth to people with extraordinary human traits: athleticism, popularity, & acumen of all kinds...**but God does not!** Knowing Him in Spirit & Truth is the only claim to fame that lasts forever!

Sermon in a Sentence: What’s Your Claim to Fame?

WORSHIP WITH CHILDREN: 1Corinthians 1:24-25 (NLT)

24) *But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. **25)** This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God’s weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength.*

Who does the bible say is the wisest: a world-famous scientist, doctor or teacher...or God?

Who is the strongest: an Olympic weight-lifter, Superman ...or God?

God is the biggest, strongest, smartest, kindest, most loving being in the whole world. So, when He says, **“I made you and love you just the way you are!”** and other people say, **“You better change if you want us to like you!”**, who is telling the truth about you?

When God says, **“I created you to be My child,”** and people say, **“You’ll never be good enough!”** – who is telling the truth?

When God says, **“You are so important to Me!”** & some-one else says, **“You are worthless!”** who is telling the truth?

What God says about you in the bible is true. When others say something different...LISTEN TO GOD! He tells the truth!

FBCTyrone Family Worship Parent’s Guide

Use the following questions as “Discussion Starters” with your children

- 1) What was the last “success” you celebrated with your child?
- 2) Was thankfulness to God part of your celebration?
- 3) Discuss the meaning: “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord!”
- 4) Which possession or ability of yours did not come from God?
- 5) Read 1Cor 1:30: What 4 things do we need & have in Christ?