

**the book of
1st
Corinthians
Thursday Morning
Bible Class
1 Corinthians 4:8-5:5**

1

Fools for Christ – 4:8-13

- † **Context:** Paul has been dealing with factions in the Corinthian Church – factions that seem to be centered on human wisdom and oratorical skill. Paul is offering neither.
- † **8** – Using irony, Paul attacks their arrogance. They had, indeed, been given God's gifts, but they were filled with pride over this and overlooking their moral defects.

2

Fools for Christ – 4:8-13

- † **8 (cont.)** – “Without us” – in all their boasting, they felt that they had done it without any help from the Apostles and teachers.
- † **9** – While they think they have it made, look at what the Apostles have been going through for them. God made them the bottom of society – a spectacle watched by the eyes of heaven and earth.

3

Fools for Christ – 4:8-13

- † **10** – The Apostles are fools according to worldly standards because they preach only Christ crucified. But the Corinthians are “wise”.
- † **“We are weak”** – but they are “strong” – boasting in their strength.
- † They are held in honor by men while Paul’s wisdom is despised.

4

Fools for Christ – 4:8-13

- † **12** – Paul must work as a common laborer to support himself, which seems to have been a disgrace in the Greek mind.
- † When reviled, they bless. When persecuted, they endure.
- † **13** – They are trash to the rest of the world.

5

A Fatherly Appeal for Unity – 4:14-21

- † **14** – Paul shifts to a milder tone. He had rebuked them as a father would his children.
- † **15** – He can rebuke them because he was their “father” – He brought the Word to them. As such, he has the right and privilege to help them in their growth in faith.

6

A Fatherly Appeal for Unity – 4:14-21

† 16 – As a father, he urges his “children” to imitate him in humility and renouncement of ambition. Get rid of their pride.

† 17 – To help them, he sent Timothy. His purpose? – To help them follow the example that Paul had set for them, and not just for them, but for all the churches.

7

A Fatherly Appeal for Unity – 4:14-21

† 18 – He is aware that some think Paul is afraid to come and face the ones who oppose him. He calls them “arrogant” or “puffed-up”.

† 19 – “I will come.” His intention is to come, if God allows it. And when he comes he will find out where the problems are.

8

A Fatherly Appeal for Unity – 4:14-21

† Note: – After writing this letter, Paul made a “painful visit” to deal with opposition. He followed that with a “sorrowful letter” (which we do not have.)

† 20 – The real power of God lies in the simple proclamation of the Gospel. The false teacher prides himself in rhetoric; the Gospel relies on the power of the Holy Spirit.

9

A Fatherly Appeal for Unity – 4:14-21

† **21** – He is coming. Meanwhile it is up to them whether or not they act on what he has told them. Will they rectify the party strife or not? Do they want Paul to come to discipline them or to come in a spirit of love and forgiveness?

10

Immorality in the Church – 5:1-5

† **1** – Paul now moves from the subject of party spirit to another matter reported to him – immorality.
 † **The problem?** Gross immorality – a man is sleeping with his step-mother.
 † **2** – And what astounds Paul even more is that the Church is not doing anything about it!

11

Immorality in the Church – 5:1-5

† **2 (cont.)** – “They are arrogant (4:8). They should rather be sorrowful that a member of the body of believers has sunk so low, and thus the whole church has been defiled.
 † **Not only** should they mourn, but they should remove this black mark for the sake of the church – and the offender!

12

Immorality in the Church – 5:1-5

† 3 – Paul, although present only in spirit, is also a part of that body. And he has already decided what must be done. He has judged the offender. He proclaims the judgment of God.

† 4 – The church should assemble together, and in the name of Christ declare the man an unrepentant sinner.

13

Immorality in the Church – 5:1-5

† 5 – “Deliver him to Satan” for the “destruction of the flesh.” The hoped for result of this action is to awaken this man’s conscience so that by the power of Christ he will turn from his sinful ways, “so that his spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

14

Immorality in the Church – 5:1-5

† “Flesh” = sin. “Spirit” = saving faith in Christ. The flesh wars against the spirit. With the sinful flesh destroyed, his spirit will ultimately save him.

† The whole purpose of excommunication – to cast someone out so that they can be aware of their sin and moved to seek repentance and forgiveness.

15