

BE YE FOLLOWERS OF ME
I COR. 4:6-21

Introduction:

- A. Paul and Apollos were men who worked together.
 - 1. I Cor. 3:5,6.
 - 2. I Cor. 3:9.

- B. Paul used these illustrations for one purpose.
 - 1. I Cor. 4:6.
 - 2. He wanted no one to think of himself as the "foundation" of the Corinthian work.
 - 3. "that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."

I. THE CORINTHIAN ATTITUDE EXAMINED. V7,8

- A. Questions Paul asked.
 - 1. Why do you think you stand in a different circumstance to others in the church?
 - 2. What did you get that wasn't given?
 - 3. And if it was a gift, why do you glory, as though it was not a gift?

- B. The false sense of power.
 - 1. You are saying, how full we are! how rich we are! we have taken our thrones without the help of Paul or Apollos, or Peter.
 - 2. How we wish this was true, then we could sit on thrones with you!

II. THE POSITION OF THE APOSTLES. V9-13

- A. They were condemned criminals on their way to death.
 - 1. We are like the men condemned to die in the arena. God has exhibited us at the very end of the procession.

2. The parade to the arena for death!
 3. They were in life's parade and were last, the victims, only fit for death.
- B. They were the captives at the end of the victor's glorious return.
1. For we are put on display at the end of a victor's parade, to be stared at by men and angels.
 2. spectale - theatron - a public show.
- C. "we are fools for Christ's sake."
1. fools - moron - dull, unperceiving.
 2. "but ye are wise."
- D. "we are weak."
1. We are without strength, infirm, feeble.
 2. "ye are strong." - ischuros - physically strong.
- E. "we are despised." atimos - without honor.
1. We are without honor.
 2. Ye are honorable - endoksos - distinguished, aristocratic.
- F. Paul's present circumstances.
1. "up to this present moment, we have suffered hunger and thirst."
 2. We are ill-clad and knocked about.
 3. We have no home.
 4. We toil to exhaustion with our hands.
 5. Men curse us but we return a blessing.
 6. We meet persecution with endurance.
 7. We are slandered but speak kindly.
 8. To this moment we are considered the scum of the earth, the scraping of everyone's feet.
 - a. filth = that which is thrown away in cleansing.
 - b. offscouring = scrapings from all around.

III. PAUL'S PURPOSE IN REVEALING HIS STATE. v14-16

- A. "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons to warn you."
 - 1. shame = entrepo - to invert, to turn one in upon himself.
 - 2. warn = noutheteo - to put in mind, "I didn't write these things to make you blush, but to make you think."

- B. Paul wanted them to see him as a father.
 - 1. v15.
 - 2. "I have begotten you, through the gospel."

- C. "be ye followers of me."
 - 1. That is why I beg you to follow in the footsteps of your father!

IV. PAUL SENDS PASTORAL HELP.

- A. Timothy is faithful.
 - 1. He did not send a flunky, but the best!

- B. He will help you remember.
 - 1. "my ways which be in Christ."
 - 2. "as I teach everywhere in every church."
 - a. Not a different way in a different church.

V. PAUL WILL COME TO THEM. v18-21

- A. Some were angry at Paul. v18
 - 1. "puffed up."
 - 2. Some are filled with self-importance.

- B. Paul will come!
 - 1. "shortly, if the Lord will."
 - 2. Quickly, speedily, a short time.

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C. Paul will challenge the angry ones.

1. "I will find out whether these proud men are just big talkers or whether they have God's power!"
2. "for God's Kingdom does not show itself in talk, but in power."

D. How do you want me to come? v21

1. "with a rod?"
2. "or a loving and gentle spirit?"

VI. FOLLOW ME! IF I FOLLOW JESUS!