

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2024

We are the Church: We can help each other

1 Corinthians 4: 1-21

## Welcome

What was the name of the first friend that you can remember and what were they like?

## Word

*In the meeting on Sunday, we talked about the importance of Christian friends and how as members of a church we should be good friends to each other in the following 3 ways:*

### Accepting each other

1. What characteristics make some people more difficult to 'accept'?  
Who is more likely to feel excluded from our church?
2. How can we make sure that we are more accepting/ inclusive of anyone who is part of our church?

### Encouraging each other

3. What can we do to encourage each other?
4. What makes you feel encouraged?

### Helping each other

5. What can we do to help each other?
6. How do you feel about pointing out something negative to a friend?  
E.g. 'I honestly don't think you should be doing that...'
7. We could use the word accountability – how can we be more accountable to one another in church?

Read 1 Corinthians 4: 1-5

8. What has Paul and the others been entrusted with in verse 1?
9. If someone 'trusts you' with something how does that make you feel and does it affect what you do?
10. What does verse 2 tell us about those who have been trusted?
11. How do we feel when others judge us?
12. Do we judge ourselves sometimes? Do we go easy or hard on ourselves?
13. How much of what we do is determined by whether we are currently thinking much or little of ourselves?
14. Who is the only one entitled to judge us?
15. Do we need to remember that when we are self critical? How can we be less self critical?
16. The Corinthians who were passing judgment on Paul were actually 'playing God' and assuming for themselves the privileges that only God has. Have you made this mistake?
17. Paul's conclusion can be summed up as, 'I'll leave the judgment to God...and I'll pursue faithfulness.' If we truly do this would it make us feel better?

Read 1 Corinthians 4: 6-7

18. Paul writes: "don't go beyond what's written". This means we should base everything on the word of God, The Bible. How would this prevent the quarrels that were happening in Corinth?
19. What do these verses say to us about boasting?

Read 1 Corinthians 4: 8-13 (*As you read this passage, understand that Paul is being 'ironic' to make his point!*)

20. What point was Paul making by using irony? (verses 8-10)

21. What do verses 11-13 teach the Corinthians (and us) about what it means to be a follower of Jesus?

Read 1 Corinthians 4: 14-17

22. Why is Paul saying all this? (verse 14)

23. In verse 15, Paul says he became their 'father through the gospel', this means he was the person who introduced them to the Christian faith. Can you identify your 'father or mother of the gospel' (in other words was there one person who introduced you to the Christian faith)?

*In verse 16, Paul wants them to imitate him – this needs to be taken in context. Many times in this letter he says he is not perfect – so when he says imitate me, he means imitate me in the way that I imitate Jesus.*

24. Is there a danger that we sometimes try to imitate a Christian we admire, rather than Christ himself?

25. What can we do to better imitate Christ?

26. Do you find the concept 'What would Jesus do (WWJD)?' helpful?

Read 1 Corinthians 4: 18-21

27. In verse 18 Paul calls some of them arrogant. He mentioned being arrogant in verse 6 using a different term – what term is it?

*Arrogance is really the key theme to this chapter – have another glance over the whole chapter and see if you can see this as the overarching theme.*

28. Verses 19 and 20 discuss how it's not a matter of talk but of power. Are we guilty sometimes of saying the right thing but not really calling on God's power?

## Worship & Witness

- Ask God to help you to be more accepting of others
- Think of ways you can be encouraging or helpful to others in our church this week and do it!
- Thank God for your 'father or mother of the gospel'