

1st Corinthians 4:8-13
Paul admonishes the Corinthians (cf. 4:14)

Paul's ironic/sarcastic response to the apparent success of the Corinthians—4:8

- 1) The danger of self-satisfaction: ⁸ *You^{pl} are already satiated! You^{pl} have already become rich!*
- 2) The danger of self-deception: *You^{pl} have already become kings without us!*
 - a) *And I wish* (an unfulfillable wish) *that you^{pl} had become kings so that we also might reign with you^{pl}!*

Paul's apparent lack of success—4:9-13

- 1) Paul assumed his public humiliation was by God's design—4:9 ⁹ *For, I think, God has exhibited* (in the gladiators' arena, or perhaps in the triumph parade)
 - a) The objects of the exhibit—*us apostles*
 - b) The ranking of the exhibit—*last of all*, (i.e. the least important, at the end)
 - c) The purpose of the exhibit—*as men condemned to die*,
 - d) What brought Paul to this conclusion? *because we have become a spectacle* [*theatron*] *to the world, both to angels and to people.*
 - i) Both angels and people are watching what God does in our lives.
- 2) Three-fold ironic comparison to the Corinthian Christians—4:10 (cf. 1:26-31)
 - a) Related to wisdom—¹⁰ *We are fools for Christ's sake, but you^{pl} are wise in Christ!*
 - b) Related to power—*We are weak, but you^{pl} are strong!*
 - c) Related to honor—*You^{pl} are honored, but we are dishonored!*
- 3) The reality of Paul's situation—4:11-13 (cf. 4:8)
 - a) Paul's lowly circumstances—4:11 ¹¹ *To the present hour we are ...*
 - i) Financially—*both hungry and thirsty, poorly clothed,*
 - ii) Socially—*mistreated, and homeless.*
 - b) Paul's lowly activity—4:12a ¹² *And we labor exhaustively, working with our own hands.*
 - i) Manual labor is something the Greek's despised, but Paul honors it.
 - c) Paul's gracious responses—4:12b-13a
 - i) *When we are verbally abused, we bless;* (cf. Luke 6:28; 23:34)
 - ii) *when we are persecuted, we endure;* (cf. Luke
 - iii) ¹³ *when we are insulted, we encourage;*
 - d) Paul's lowly reputation—4:13b *we have become ... until now.* (cf. Lamentation 3:45)
 - i) *as the filthy residue* [*perikatharma*] *of the world,*
 - (1) The word was used for what is thrown out after cleaning.
 - ii) *the scrapings* [*peripsema*] *of all things*
 - (1) The word indicates the scrapings of a dirty container or shoe.
 - iii) Cf. Isaiah 53:2-3

Note: Throughout the years, false teachers have promised Christians wealth, power, and honor. True Bible teachers have reminded Christians of the realities of the sufferings, weaknesses, and dishonors associated with following Christ.

Note: God's glory is displayed through the weakness of His faithful teachers.