

1 Corinthians 4

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Tape #8139
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Shall we turn now in our Bibles to 1 Corinthians, chapter four, as we continue our journey through the Bible.

Paul said, *Let a man so consider us*, (Now he has been talking about himself and Apollos.) *as servants of Christ* (The word servants here is an interesting word. In the Greek it literally means, under rowers. Now in those old ships that used to sail the Mediterranean, they had slaves that were down in the galleys. They were the under rowers. When there was no wind or whatever these were the guys that had to row. They were the lowest of the slaves. Paul here says to account me as the lowest slave of Christ.) *and stewards of the mysteries of God*. (Now the steward was the servant that had charge over the household. He was the one that paid the bills. He was the one that ordered the food. He was the one that saw that the other servants did their jobs. Paul said that he was a steward of the word of God. That was his duty, dispensing God's Word, the mysteries of God to the people, the truths of God that are now being revealed by the Holy Spirit. This was entrusted to Paul, so his duty as an under rower of Jesus Christ was to be a steward, a dispenser of the mysteries of God.)

²*Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful*. That was the primary requirement of a steward, to be faithful to the master, faithful in overseeing the master's goods. We have several parables in the gospels of Jesus concerning stewardship, those that were good stewards of the things that were entrusted to them. There are also parables about those who were not faithful stewards. They were punished because they were not faithful to the charge and the responsibility as a steward. To us as stewards of God, being entrusted by God, with the things of God. It's important that we be faithful. Faithful in carrying out our duties as a steward.

³*But with me* (Paul said) *it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you* (Now, you see as Paul would leave an area, there were always those that would follow up after Paul's ministry, seeking to subvert the ministry of Paul. There were the Judaizers, that is those that would come in and say, well, Paul's message of grace is not quite right. Paul really isn't an apostle. He is sort of a renegade. He has this message, but in reality, the law is vital. The law is important and unless you keep the law, you can't be saved. They would try to build their own stock in the minds of the people by tearing Paul down.

Now this is a very common tactic. A person comes in. He wants to establish himself. But he feels the only way he can establish himself is by tearing down the person that the people have looked up to, the person that has brought to them the truth of God. They are appreciative. They are thankful. So the person coming in feels well, I've got to establish my own place here and the people are very much attached to the minister who brought them to the knowledge or understanding of God or brought them to Jesus Christ. And sometimes they foolishly as they come in, try to tear down the previous pastor thinking that that elevates them or gives them a greater place in the person's heart or lives.

It's important that we realize that as Paul said, whether Cephas or Apollos or Paul, all things are yours. In other words, everyone can have a place of ministry in your life. We don't need to divide into factions and say, well, I'm of Paul or I'm of Apollos or I'm of Peter. Each one has ministered to you and has a place in your life. You don't establish your place in the life of the people by speaking against the person who has been used of God to maybe bring them to Christ or has ministered to them for a long time.

It used to be that when I was in a denomination, we would change to church to church. I was asked to take a church in which the previous pastor had been guilty of molesting some of the teenage boys in the church. The sheriff told him that if he would leave the country, that is the area, that he would not press the

charges that were being filed against him. He gave him the opportunity to leave. We had to go into that kind of a situation. He had established the church and ministered there for thirteen years. Most of the people in the church were brought to Christ through his ministry. Suddenly he is exposed. People are devastated, especially the families whose boys had been sexually involved with him. In going in to the church, it was interesting that there were those, especially who wanted to kill him. But there were others who really couldn't believe that he could ever do that. And they still had a tremendous loyalty in their heart toward him. I knew that if I was going to successfully minister to those people, I would have to create my own place in their hearts. But not by tearing him down. Not by bringing up the sin that he committed, but just going in and ministering to them. Those who were loyal to him would come and they would speak about how he had such a tremendous influence on their lives. I would not say anything negative. I would just say, well, I respected this man highly as a teacher. He was a marvelous teacher of the Word of God, never saying anything negative, letting him have his place in their life. Actually, he had dedicated their children. He had married their older children. He had been with them while they were in the hospital. He had ministered to them for thirteen years. You can't minister to people for thirteen years without really becoming close to them. You go through their joys. You go through their sorrows and you become very close. You have a place in their heart.

Now in the body of Christ, one plants, another waters, God gives the increase. He that plants is nothing. He that waters is nothing. It is God that gives the increase. This man had planted. I went in to water, but did not seek to denigrate him in order to build my own place, but just went about to minister to them in order to establish my place in their hearts and in their lives.

In contrast I had been pastoring in Huntington Beach for many years and we had developed a place in the hearts of the people there. The pastor that followed me was very jealous because people said, well Chuck did this or Chuck did that or Chuck helped remodel the church here. He couldn't handle that. So he started saying all kinds of negative things about me. A lot of the people just left the church. You don't build your own position by tearing down someone else. You just go in and you establish your place and your ministry in their hearts.

So those had come in. They began to say negative things concerning Paul. People began to judge Paul because of these things. He said it's a very small thing that I should be judged by you *or by a human court*. It doesn't really bother me that I would be judged by you or by man's judgment, he said.

In fact, I do not even judge myself. He said, you want to judge, that's your business, but it doesn't really mean anything to me. I don't even judge myself, Paul said.

⁴*For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this;* (So that you judge me. It doesn't bother me. I don't know anything against me. Not that's quite a thing to say. I don't think I could say that. I know quite a few things against me. But Paul was able to say, I don't know anything against me. A unique kind of person, when talking about his previous life as a Pharisee, a member of the Sanhedrin and all, one who was seeking to be righteous by the law, he said, concerning the righteousness which is in the law, I was blameless! That's a pretty powerful statement. He must be a pretty unique guy. I don't even know anything against myself, he said. Well, in reality, Paul realized that in Christ, there is no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus. Paul had established his place in Christ. He knew that everything had been forgiven. There is no condemnation. So he could say, I don't even judge myself because I don't know anything against me. Any charges that may have been preferred against me, have all been covered by Jesus Christ.

But he said, *but He who judges me is the Lord.*

Then going on to talk about the Lord, as judge, ⁵*Therefore judge nothing before the time,* There is a time of judgement coming. Paul said we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. So the time of judgment is coming, but, but don't judge anything before the time, *until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.* We will all stand, he said, before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things that we have done while in our bodies, whether good or evil. When we are judged by the Lord, as the Scripture said, everything is naked and open with the One with whom we have to do. The Lord will judge our hearts. He

will judge the motive of our hearts as we were talking earlier. Our works will be examined by the fire. Those that endure the fire will receive their rewards. For others there will be the loss of our works, but we will be saved as though by fire. There is a day coming when the true Judge, the Lord, will bring everything to light and the hidden things. He will make manifest or reveal the counsels of the heart. Amazing! To make manifest or reveal the counsels of the hearts!

A computer is an interesting thing, in that you can go into a computer. You can find the records of all of the calls that you have made on that computer into the Internet. Every call that has been made is recorded, kept in that computer. And if you are say, dialing in on the Internet to some of those porno things, it all recorded and kept in the computer. A computer geek can come along, access the files, and know everybody you have called. You may deny, but here it is. Here is the record.

Now, if we can keep records with computers like that, is it any surprise that when men stand before the judgment bar of God that the Books will be opened and they will be judged by the things that are written in the Books? God keeps better records than your computer. The secrets of the heart will be made manifest or revealed! That's more than the computer can do. So Paul says, wait for the judgment. It's coming. And it will be a righteous judgment as Jesus comes to judge. Then, we will receive the praise of God. That is, we will be rewarded for the things that we have done for Christ out of pure motivation.

So he says, ⁶*Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes*, The figures are, we are husbandmen or farmers. We are builders and we are servants or stewards. The figures that Paul uses, of the husbandman, of the stewards, must be found faithful, and of the master builders, Christ the foundation. And building on that foundation with precious metal or gems or building on it with wood, hay or stubble.

So I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, *that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other*. Like, well, I'm of Apollos! Well, I'm of Paul, and you get puffed up against each other. But Paul said, I've written these things to you so that you really won't be attached to a man. You need to be attached to the Lord Jesus Christ. And you need not to be puffed up or lifted up one against another.

We find this today, unfortunately, in this whole thing of Calvinism and Armenianism as those that hold the one position get puffed up against the those that hold the other position and they begin to accuse each other, lack of scholarship and all kinds of stuff. If you don't see it the way we see, then you know, you are really out of it. They are all puffed up. That whole issue, it's sad, but it continues to the present day in the church. And rather than seeking for the unity in the body of Christ, knit together in love, there is always that dividing. This is a line. You are on one side or the other. It's sad, very sad, that people have to get in such a position of bigotry that they can't see the other side. They are puffed up. Paul said, you should not be.

⁷*For who makes you differ from another? What makes your differences? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?* If I have anything of value, any gift, any talent, any knowledge, special knowledge, I don't have it because I am good or so smart, I have it because it has been given to me of God. Whatever I have, it's has come to me as a gift from God. And if it is a gift of God to me, then how can I boast about it as though it was me rather than God's gift to me? How can I be lifted up and say, well, you know, I have this ability or that ability or whatever? Whatever I have, has been given to me by God. Therefore it is not something to be puffed up over as though I didn't receive it. It comes as God's gift. And if you have received it, how can you glory as though you didn't receive it, as though you are something yourself?

So Paul now sort of speaks in a satire to them. ⁸*You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us* (This is sort of their opinion of themselves.)--*and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you!* You think that you have got it all. You're rich. You're full. You reign as kings. He said, I wish you really did reign that we also might reign with you!

⁹*For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, (Or at the bottom, the under rowers) as men condemned to death;* In other words, to be called by God to be an apostle was almost a call to die for Christ. It was like God saying, I want you to die. It was like an appointment for death. As you study the history of

the early church, Fox's Book of Martyrs or Eusibious' Church History. Fox gets his information from Eusibious. As you study the early apostles, you find that all of them were martyred for Jesus Christ. They experienced violent death. Some of them being clubbed to death. Some being burned to death. Some being beheaded. Others being crucified. Some dragged through the streets by donkeys until their brains were dashed out on the pavement. They had horrible violent deaths, the apostles. The only one who escaped was John, the beloved, that is, escaped martyrdom, violent death. So Paul said, I think that we apostles are sort of last or at the bottom of the list because to be called to be an apostle is like having an appointment for death.

for we have been made a spectacle to the world, (Now in that time of Paul, in the time of Paul, Christians were made a spectacle to the world. The Christians were fed to the lions in the arena for the entertainment of the Romans. They became a spectacle to the world. They were entertainment for the world) *both to angels and to men.*

So Paul said, ¹⁰*We are fools for Christ's sake,* (Because following Christ in those days pretty much insured the death sentence. It was a capital crime in Rome to not pay allegiance to Caesar by declaring "Caesar is Lord." But the Christians felt a compunction against declaring Caesar to be Lord. They insisted that Jesus Christ is Lord! They refused to say that Caesar is Lord. Unfortunately, government, when it gets in power, usually wants to force you to declare that Caesar is Lord. More and more in the United States, that whole attitude is coming, of bowing to government. And more and more laws are being formed to which we are being required to bow and submit, to declare that Caesar is Lord. But the early believers refused to declare that. They declared that Jesus was Lord! Thus they were looked upon as fools.)

Fools, Paul said, for Christ's sake, *but you are wise in Christ!* (You Corinthians. We are fools for Christ. We have given Him our all. We'll sacrifice our lives for Him, but you'll play it safe. You'll compromise in order to get along with the world and to live in peaceful co-existence.)

We are weak, but you are strong! (You look down upon us. You exalt yourselves.)

You are distinguished, (Again in your own eyes.) *but we are dishonored!* ¹¹*To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless.* ¹²*And we labor, working with our own hands.* It's interesting that Paul felt it necessary in order to defend himself against the false charges that were being made by these people, who were taking sides, taking sides against Paul. Paul felt it sort of a necessity to affirm to them again the price that he paid to bring to them the gospel. The price that he paid in order to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, the things that he suffered.

In 2 Corinthians, chapter twelve, Paul gives quite a long list of the things that he suffered for Jesus Christ. Writing again to the Corinthians, it was necessary, Paul felt, to sort of affirm to them that he really paid the price to serve the Lord, to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. Even to the present time, there was hunger and thirst, physical depravation, naked and buffeted. I have no certain dwelling place. I don't have a home to go home to. In labor, working with his own hands, Paul determined he wasn't going to be chargeable to the people, to the churches, but he was going to take them the gospel freely. He would work with his own hands to provide for himself and those who were with him.

And yet Paul said, *Being reviled, we bless;* (Jesus said that. Bless those that curse you. Do good to those that spitefully use you. Paul is here obeying the command of Jesus. People would revile him, Paul would bless them.)

being persecuted, we endure; (We allow it. We put up with it.)

¹³*being defamed, we just plead, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.* People either loved Paul or they hated Paul. Those that hated him, those that were his detractors, really did their best to destroy him in the minds of others.

¹⁴*I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you.* These people that are causing the divisions, these people that are saying all of these ugly, nasty things, you are listening to them. You are forming your opinions. I don't write this just to shame you, I just want to warn you about these things.

¹⁵*For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in*

Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Beautiful! You may have a lot of instructors come along and give their credentials, you know. They try and put me down, but you can't get away from it, I'm the one who brought you to Jesus Christ. I'm the one who first brought the witness of Christ to you. I'm the one who brought you into the family of God. You are my children in the faith, and that you can't escape. You may go out and you may listen to others. You may be ensnared in some of their doctrinal positions and be carried away and have all of these instructors, but you have only one father and I've begotten you in Christ Jesus.

I hear of those who were born again here at Calvary Chapel and they, you know, they sort of go roaming around to hear others. Many of them become parts of other bodies of Christ, which, you know, doesn't really affect or bother me, except that some of them get caught up with some teachers who start promulgating weird doctrine. Then they come back to instruct me. I'll say where did you get this junk? Did you get this by reading the Bible? Yes, I was reading. I say, you are lying to me. You will never come to that position just reading the Bible. Someone has to give you that twisted version. Just by purely reading the Word of God, you would never come to that position. It's not obvious. It's something that has to be read into it. Someone has taught you that way.

I think of the Jehovah's Witnesses, and my heart goes out to these people. They have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge. Their teachers, whom they rely upon, have deceived them and led them astray, concerning the person and the work of Jesus Christ. And yet they have such sincerity. They have such zeal. Their instructors are always saying, well the Greek language says. But they don't know the Greek language! What they say, concerning the Greek language is often so absolutely wrong. Their interpretations of the Scriptures are so wrong! To try to interpret that Jesus is Michael the Archangel. How can you get that out of the Scriptures? To deny that Jesus is God, you have to deny John, chapter one, Colossians, chapter one, Hebrews, chapter one. You have to deny the words of Jesus, Himself, who said, I and the Father are one! You have to deny the words of God. For unto the Son, God said, Thy throne, Oh God, is forever and ever. So God called Him God.

So yet, they say, if you read the Bible for two years, without the help of our book, you'll be in darkness. But if you will read our books for two years, you really don't need the Bible, you'll be in light. Something is wrong when you just can't read the Bible and be in light. So the people, though, have been told these things. And much of what they are being taught is true. They look it up and say, wow, look at that! The church has been teaching this, but look. The church is teaching that Jesus was born December 25. That's His birthday. No, that was taken from the pagan celebration of Saturnalia. That's been worshipped in pagan Babylon. Wow! You know the churches have been deceiving you. They feel that they are enlightened, but sadly they are being led into darkness. My heart goes out because I have talked to these people. I really don't doubt their sincerity at all. To think that there are those who are deceiving them, making merchandise of them, sending them out to sell the books and the magazines, as they make merchandise of these people, to me is tragic! It is tragic to demand their tithes. It's tragic.

You have many instructors, Paul said, but you don't have many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel! You have been born again through the gospel, which I have brought to you. I'm your spiritual father.

¹⁶*Therefore I urge you, imitate me.* Be followers of me. Some of these will lead you astray, be followers of me.

¹⁷*For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.* Now Timothy was sort of Paul's gopher. Paul would send him to the places that he couldn't go personally. He was a tremendous asset to Paul. Converted under Paul's ministry in Lystra, and in Acts chapter nineteen, we probably have the occasion when Paul sent Timothy to them. In Acts nineteen, Paul was in Ephesus. And he said, so he sent into Macedonia, two of them that ministered unto him, or that were serving him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time.

Paul, writing to the Philippians said (Philippians 2:19), But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one like-minded, who will

sincerely care for your state. Timothy, Paul said, has my heart. There is no one that really has my heart quite like Timothy. He is like-minded to me. So I am sending him to you. So, Paul is sending Timothy to Corinth, here, because he will affirm to them the manner of living of Paul and the things that Paul taught to them. He's my beloved son and he is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my ways, of the way I live, of the sacrifices that I have made for Jesus Christ. Of the way I live in a life of full commitment to the things of the Lord and the things that I teach everywhere in every church.

¹⁸*Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you.* In other words, these people are just looking for Paul, at Paul, for something to accuse him about. You know, he's too proud to come. He is sending Timothy, you know, what doesn't he come himself? And there are those who are ready to find fault over anything. Some of you are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you, sending a subordinate.

¹⁹*But I will come to you shortly, (I do plan to come to you.) if the Lord wills,* Now here is what James tells us (James 4:13-15), Well tomorrow we are going to do this and so forth. It would be better to say, if the Lord wills, tomorrow this is what we will do. No man knows what a day might bring forth. So here is Paul practicing what James tells us we should do. Keep open, keep flexible to the will of God. Don't get set in a rut. Don't, you know, get your programs so established that it can't be altered or changed should the Lord desire to do so.

When I used to play ball, I played in the infield, third base, we would talk to each other, the shortstop and I, the batter would get up there. We would usually say, hang loose. By that we meant, be flexible. Be ready to go in any direction if the ball comes through the infield. Be ready to move! Don't get rigid. If you get set there, and in a rigid position, then you can't field the ball always. If you are staying loose and all, you are right with it. You are able to move quickly, to respond and react to where the ball may be going. Hang loose.

That is sort of a good thing for us as Christians, just to hang loose. Don't get set in a rigid position. God may have something else for you tomorrow, something that you have not even thought of or considered. So if the Lord wills, this is what we will do. This is our plan. My plan is to come to you shortly, if the Lord wills.

and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, (The empty words.) but the power. ²⁰*For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power.* So these people puffed up with all their vain words. We will demonstrate the power of God. They can have their vain words. We will demonstrate the power of God.

²¹*What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?* I'll be coming, but would you rather I would come with a rod, or would you rather I just come in love and a spirit of gentleness? So Paul is dealing with the problems. We said when we started the Book of Corinthians, it is known as a corrective epistle. Paul had received word of the things that were going on in Corinth.

Now it is really rather tragic that movements of God can become diluted so quickly. God moves in an area. People are touched. People are converted. But it seems like the work of God becomes diluted very quickly because there are always those who come in and want to capitalize on what God has done. They really don't have the people at heart. They want to somehow capitalize and make merchandise and live off of what God has done. Thus the work of God quickly becomes diluted because you get an influx of those whose hearts aren't really in the Lord and in the things of the Lord, but how they can best manipulate and capitalize off of the things of the Lord. And that's always the case.

Paul when he was meeting with the Ephesian elders, he said I know that after I depart, grievous wolves are going to come in. Not really sparing the flock but seeking to draw men after themselves, whose God is their own belly. They are only looking out to fleece the flock of God. They are not real shepherds. There will even rise up from among you who will seek to gather people after themselves. So Paul warns them. He said, I've warned you with tears, concerning this. It was just a tragedy of the early church. That as Paul would go around and establish the works, there would be those that would be ready to move in right after Paul had gone to subvert the ministry of Paul and to draw the people after themselves. Here was Paul so careful not to take money, not to be accused of just being a mercenary, just here for the money. They really didn't appreciate him. These other guys would come in and they would start fleecing them and all. They

would start saying these things about Paul and soon the people would start to return from Paul, and here these guys were just taking advantage of them.

In the early years of our ministry we used to have evangelists that would come maybe once or twice a year to hold a special week meeting in times of Spiritual renewal. We had this one evangelist who came that had quite a reputation of being able to hold good campaigns and you know, he was always telling how many people were saved, you know, and so forth in the campaign. So he was well known and we invited him to come. He was a great speaker. He was funny with a lot of good jokes. He was entertaining and dramatic. But we could see that he was also very interested in money. Now he put up a list of needs that they had so that the people could bring in sugar and all this kind of stuff. And I happened to be in his trailer and I saw a ten-pound bag of sugar, yet here was sugar on the list. That was my first suspicion. But then he started of poor mouthing and one night as we were praying in the church together, I heard him praying, Lord, You know that I need desperately a new pair of shoes. And Lord, You know my size is nine and one half. I like black shoes, Lord. The next day one of our sweet people brought him a pair of black shoes. He came to me and said, look, what they have done. Oh, praise the Lord! Oh, God has provided. I've been praying for these shoes and God has...I said don't thank the Lord, I said go thank those people, you've made your need known very obviously.

But then he had an old wire recorder. It wasn't working. It needed a part to be fixed. And tape recorders were just coming in. Wire recorders were on the way out. He was telling me he wanted me to buy a new tape recorder. He had one all picked out that he wanted to get. And so I discovered that one of our families, an elder in the church, had invited him over for dinner. He wanted to sell him his wire recorder. He made the guy a deal. Well, the part that was needed wasn't being made anymore. And yet he was going to rip off this guy. I called the elder and I said, are you aware that wire recorder that he is selling you doesn't work right and needs a part that you can't get? Now, the elder turned on me. He said this young pastor is just jealous of the evangelist because he is so good and all of this. He is just jealous. All I was doing was trying to warn him, but he turned on me, against me. I felt so horrible. I mean I was only trying to warn him that, you know, what he was buying is not going to work. Later on when he tried to get it fixed and couldn't, then things changed again, but tragic, that when you give yourself freely, often it isn't appreciated.

I had a good friend who was a pastor of the Baptist church in the city where I was ministering. He took some special courses to get a license in family counseling. He started charging fifty dollars an hour for family counseling because he was licensed counselor. So I sort of, when we were out playing golf, chided him, you know, how do you get away with fifty bucks an hour for counseling? He said, I would counsel free but when you counsel free, people won't follow it. If they have to pay fifty bucks an hour to get the counsel, then they follow it. So I only charge them so they will follow what I'm counseling them, because, man, I'm paying for it. I better do it, you know! But he said if you counsel them free, they won't listen to you. They won't follow it. I said, you know, that's interesting. There is probably a lot of truth to it.

People don't appreciate it always when someone freely gives. Paul came. He freely gave to them. They didn't fully appreciate it. And others would follow Paul. They would start taking advantage and manipulating and all. Soon their loyalties were taken away from Paul as these people were trying to attract disciples to themselves. So that was an extra burden on Paul and his ministry. It would be hard. And it was something that Paul was deeply concerned with. He warned them day and night with tears over these kinds of things that will happen.

So Paul is writing to the Corinthians. He wants to minister in love. He wants to come to them in the spirit of meekness. He doesn't want to have to come and correct a lot of these guys that have puffed up, creating the divisions and all. He's calling on them to not be carnal, to not be like babies, but to mature and to grow up in Christ. May God help us to grow up and be mature in the things of the Lord.

Father, we thank You again for Your Word. How we thank You, Lord, for the example that Paul has given to us of a true servant of Jesus Christ. And Lord help us to indeed follow that example that Paul has set of what it is to be a servant of our Lord. And Lord, may we serve You with a heart of love, thanksgiving, and full commitment. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

