



1 Corinthians

WALKING **RIGHT SIDE UP** IN AN **UPSIDE DOWN** WORLD

WHAT DOES GOD THINK?

1 Corinthians 4:1-6

DO YOU EVER STRUGGLE WITH BEING JUDGMENTAL?

All pastors should be ministers of God's grace. For the sake of the Gospel of Grace and in need of personal grace ourselves, this should be visible in two ways:

- 1.*** The content of our messages. ***We teach all of God's Word***, exposing people to the truth of Christ.
- 2.*** Our own personal character in Christ. ***We live what we teach from God's Word.***

ABILITY VERSUS USABILITY

Many people have ***ABILITY***, but they are ***UNUSABLE*** because they do not live what they teach; or worse yet, live the complete opposite of what they teach.

- Paul wrote, *think of pastors as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries—the vessels through whom God works, jars of clay with treasure inside.*
- Ministers of the gospel message are merely God's imperfect servants delivering His perfect message of grace, simply faithful and available for Jesus.

WHAT DOES THE LORD THINK OF ME? v. 3-4

Didn't Paul care what others thought? Of course he did.

- He was not claiming unaccountable authority that allowed him to say and do anything he felt like doing.

Paul points out two significant temptations to be resisted by anyone in ministry:

- The first is to rely too heavily on the approval or disapproval of others.
- The second is to rely on self-rationalizations.

NOT OUR JOB, MAN! v. 5

SPIRITUAL INSIGHT ALERT: Actually, God will sort out every last word, thought, deed, or action in heaven! And He ***WILL NOT*** consult you or me, not our friends and family, not the church, not the US Supreme Court.

- But in the here and now, God, by His Word and Spirit, looks right smack dab into the center of our hearts.

Hebrews 4:12-13

- We are judged solely by the perfect and inspired Word of God, by the Spirit of God. ***1 Cor. 2:10-11***

ONLY GOD CAN JUDGE PERFECTLY

People can see only the outside, but God can discern a person's heart—the actual motivation behind the words. **1 Samuel 16:7**

- It is true, we are to graciously and **IN LOVE** confront those who are sinning for the purpose of restoration, not destruction. **Galatians 6:1-4**
- Grace should abound to all—and from all—if we are all His grace kids. ***Judge less, pray more!***

SO, HERE'S THE DEAL v. 6

- We all have personal preferences—likes and dislikes—about everyone and everything.
- Make sure that your deepest loyalties are to Christ and not to His human agents; just pray for the human agents.
- **Matt. 7, 18** and **Gal. 6:1** are clear on how to clear the air if you have issues with humans—and you will. 😊
- The big issue here is and always will be:

WHAT DOES GOD THINK . . . OF YOU?