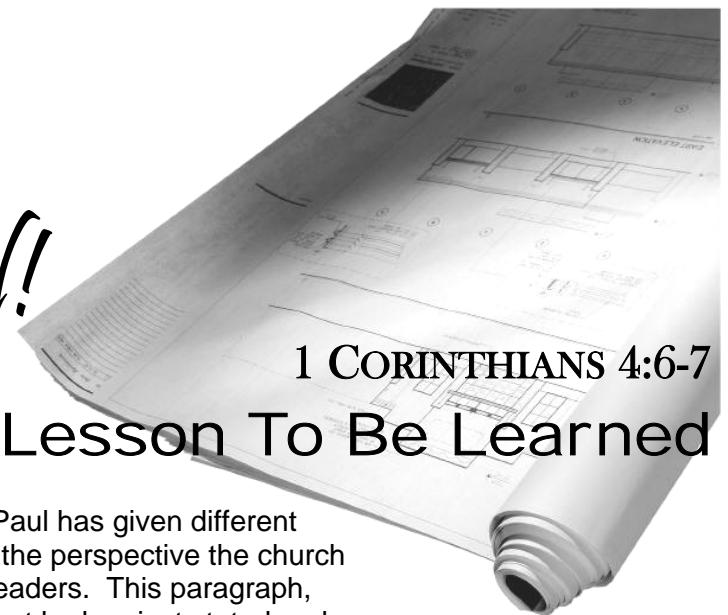




Blueprint for the Church:

Live the Gospel!

Small Group Study Guide



1 CORINTHIANS 4:6-7

Lesson To Be Learned

From the beginning of 1 Corinthians 3 Paul has given different illustrations and metaphors to describe the perspective the church is to have about themselves and their leaders. This paragraph, 1 Corinthians 4:6-7, is a summary of what he has just stated and an introduction to his next major point. His main point is to show the foolishness in pride and boasting and thereby reveal that the **Blueprint for the Church** as a people who are humble and grateful.

1. Paul begins, “now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sake.” As a review, go back and read through 1 Corinthians 3:5-4:5 and identify the “things” that he was teaching. In particular, answer the following questions: (1) How is the church congregation described; (2) How is the church leader described; (3) How does this show the foolishness of boasting - either on the part of the congregation in their leadership or the leadership in their abilities?

1 Corinthians Text:	Metaphor for the Church Congregation	Metaphor for the Church Leader	Reason for foolishness of pride and boasting
3:6-9			
3:10-15			
4:1-5			

¹Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eardmans Publishing, 1987), p. 171.

2. Based on the chart, in what ways does boasting and having pride in another within the church “reflect a total misunderstanding of grace, and quite miss the ‘humility of God’ expressed in the Crucified One?”¹

Don't Forget:
Discuss the Sermon Notes from this week

3. Paul uses rhetorical questions in 1 Corinthians 4:7 to expose the folly and the sinfulness in boasting and pride existing in the church. Consider the question and answer the questions below:
- “For who regards you as superior? This question seems to point to the sin of presumption; to take it upon one’s self to make decisions or judgments without permission from the rightful authority. Give examples of how the sin of presumption can rear its ugly head in the way members in the church might treat one another? In the way they may treat their leaders?”
 - “What do you have that you did not receive? This question seems to point to the sin of ungratefulness; to assume that what one has or who one is, is based upon one’s own merit. Give examples of how the sin of ungratefulness toward God and His grace can rear its ugly head in the way members in the church might treat one another? In the way they may treat their leaders?”
4. It would be wrong to leave this text without considering our own hearts. We must ask ourselves, both collectively and individually, “is there a sin I must repent of?” To answer this question, we must consider the difference between pride and humility. To be proud is to consider oneself to be self-sufficient and to exalt in one’s own abilities or accomplishments. To be humble is to consider oneself dependent upon God and to exalt in the One who has given you all you have. Or to put it another way, “the meaning of pride basically is ‘I’m for me!’ When everyone is pulling first of all for himself, fellowship and harmony are torn in the process.”²
- How would you describe the atmosphere of your life? Do you have a spirit of submission and grace or a spirit of self-sufficiency and boasting? Explain your answer. Is there broken fellowship and harmony between you and others? Are you willing to go and seek reconciliation with those individuals?
 - How would you describe the atmosphere of this church? Does this church exhibit a spirit of submission and grace or a spirit of self-sufficiency and boasting? Explain your answer. Is there broken fellowship and harmony, factions and divisions, which you see evident in this church?
 - Let us consider even a broader perspective. What is your attitude toward other churches? In what ways do you, or this church, tend to view our church as being better than other churches? In what ways do we tend to pull for “us first” and thereby tear apart, or at least do nothing to promote fellowship and harmony in the body of Christ?

²John MacArthur,
*The MacArthur New
Testament Commentary:
1 Corinthians*
(Chicago: Moody
Publishing, 1984), pp. 108.