

Series: 1 Corinthians  
Title: BE NOT PUFFED UP  
Text: 1 Corinthians 4:6-7  
Date: December 13, 2015  
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

**1 Corinthians 4: 6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think *of men* above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. 7: For who maketh thee to differ *from another*? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it*?**

## A FIGURE

Paul declares why he has been saying these things about himself and Apollos—**1 Corinthians 4: 6: And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes;...**

Paul used himself and Apollos as a picture to teach the Corinthian believers not to think of God's preachers more highly than they ought. He said, "We are not anything! Only God is!"

1 Corinthians 3: 5: Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

If you are a child of God then you are a servant—a minister—not to be served but to serve your brethren, even those who are puffed up against you and unjustly judging you. But we cannot give the increase. Only God can bless the word and increase his child in grace.

1 Corinthians 3: 6: I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7: So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

If you are a child of God you are not anything and I am not anything. But God is everything!

## THE PURPOSE FOR THIS FIGURE

Next, Paul declares why he said these things about himself and Apollos—**1 Corinthians 4: 6...that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.**

Do not think of sinners above that which is written in the scriptures. Paul is speaking of the old testament scriptures because at the time he wrote this the new testament scriptures were not yet. What is written about us in the old testament? This is what the scriptures declare of every sinner born of Adam. This is what the scriptures declare is the natural state and the state of the old nature in every child God saves.

Psalm 146:3: Put not your trust in princes, *nor* in the son of man, [the sons of men] in whom *there is* no help.

Isaiah 2:22: Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?

Jeremiah 17:5: Thus saith the LORD; Cursed *be* the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. 6: For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and

shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land and not inhabited. 7: Blessed *is* the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.

The apostle Paul quotes from the old testament scriptures when he says “as it is written.” Here are various scriptures from the old testament scriptures which declare what all men are in our flesh.

Romans 3: 10: As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12: They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13: Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15: Their feet *are* swift to shed blood: 16: Destruction and misery *are* in their ways: 17: And the way of peace have they not known: 18: There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Paul showed that he and Apollos were not anything, “**that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.**”

## WHO?

Then Paul asks the question “who”—**1 Corinthians 4: 7: For who maketh thee to differ *from another*?**

The LORD hates “a proud look.” Pride is a deceiver. Pride is the heart of all division and strife. But what do we have to be proud of? By nature there is not any difference between you and another sinner. We prove that by answering sin with sin. In our natural born state we are no different from anyone else. Even as believers, in our flesh, in our old sinful nature, we are still no different than any other sinner. As a regenerated believer, Paul said this about himself:

Romans 7:18: For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. 19: For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20: Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21: I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22: For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25: I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

God alone makes his child to differ. It was the sovereign election of God that put a difference between God’s people and the rest of mankind.

2 Thessalonians 2:13: But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 13: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is Christ’s accomplished redemption makes his people differ from this world.

Revelation 5:9...thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation...

It is the grace of the Holy Spirit's effectual call that makes the child of God to differ from the rest of Adam's sinful generation.

Titus 3: 3: For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another. 4: But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6: Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7: That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

It is the preserving grace of God who keeps us differing from other sinners.

1 Peter 1: 5: Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

WHAT?

Next, Paul asks the question "what"—**1 Corinthians 4: 7: and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?**

Believer, what do you have that God did not freely give you by his grace and cause you to receive?

Are you a new creature? We did not do anything to make ourselves new. A new spirit was freely created within us by Christ through the preaching of the gospel. He said,

John 6: 63: It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

Have you repented? Do you believe on Christ? We did not create faith and repentance in ourselves. Christ gave us repentance and faith.

Acts 5:31: Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

Ephesians 2: 8: For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: 9: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Have you been justified? Sanctified? Made righteousness of God? We received all freely from God by the Lord Jesus Christ, by the Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 6: 11: And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Do you bear fruit? This too was given to you and not created by ourselves.

Galatians 5:22: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23: Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Every good work is given us of God's grace and not anything we can boast in because good works are not of us but we are God's workmanship.

Ephesians 2: 10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Everything that comes to pass in providence is the gift of God to his people.

Romans 8: 28: And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

Do you have eternal life? Eternal life is the gift of God freely given to us by God's grace and not of ourselves.

Romans 6: 23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our inheritance of eternal glory with Christ is God's gift. We are kept and shall be resurrected...

1 Peter 1: 4:...To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

What do we have that we did not receive? Nothing. For the believer everything in nature, in grace, in time and in eternity is the free gift of God's grace.

Therefore understand this. When we are offended by others, when we unjustly, hastily, rashly judge one another, when we exalt one sinner over another, we are glorying in our own flesh and in the flesh of others as if we did not receive any of these things freely from God. We are glorying in our flesh as much as if we preached and believed "I am saved by my works!" When we unjustly judge brethren, exalting one over another, when we shut the door upon another unjustly judging them reprobate, we are saying with the Pharisee, "...God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." (Lu 18:11)

## **WHY?**

Therefore, Paul asks "why"—**1 Cor 4: 7:...now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it*?**

Believer, if God made us to differ, if everything we have we received from God, why do we glory as if we did not receive everything from God? May God teach us confess with Paul "by the grace of God I am what I am." (1 Cor 15: 10) May God make us wait on the Lord to make his just judgment in his time. May we be made to cry out,

Psalms 115:1: Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake.

Jeremiah 9:23: Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: 24: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD.

**AMEN!**