### 1 Corinthians

## Chapter 4

1Therefore, you should think [of us] as just the Anointed One’s assistants [or in Greek, galley rowers], and as housekeepers of God’s mysteries. 2And when it comes to housekeepers, all that’s required of them is just to be found faithful!  
  
  
3Now, it really isn’t too important to me if I’m being judged by you, or by some human court… For I don’t even judge myself, 4since I’m unaware of anything against myself.  
  
However, this doesn’t mean that I’m righteous, because Jehovah is my true judge.  
  
5So, recognize that we shouldn’t be judging anything before its time.  
For when the Lord’s Day arrives, the secret things that are done in darkness [will be brought] into the light and the secret thoughts of hearts will be put on public display… Then each ones’ commendations will come from God.  
  
  
6Now brothers, if I’ve overstated these things about Apollos and me, I’ve done it for your own good so that you’d learn the rule:  
  
 Don’t go beyond the things that are written!  
  
And don’t get all puffed up by showing more favor for the one than for the other!  
  
7[After all,] who really knows us… And what do we have that wasn’t given to us? So since these things were just given to us, why should you be boasting over things that you received as gifts?  
  
8Are you already satisfied?  
  
Are you already rich?  
  
Have you started ruling without us?  
  
Oh, I wish that you had already started ruling so that we could be ruling along with you! 9For I think that God has put us (the Apostles) last on display as men who are condemned to death…  
  
Yes, we’ve become theatrical spectacles in this world to both men and angels!  
  
10Yet, while we’re viewed as fools because of the Anointed One, you’re wise in the Anointed One… We’re weak, but you’re strong… We’re dishonorable, but you’re the glorious ones.  
  
11Why, down to this very moment, we’ve been hungry, thirsty, almost naked, beaten up, homeless… 12and we’ve had to work for a living.  
  
But when we’re being shouted at, we praise; when we’re being persecuted, we bear it; 13and when we’re being slandered, we offer encouragement.  
  
Yet until now, we’ve been considered the world’s refuse and scum!  
  
14Understand that I’m not writing this way to shame you, but to teach you as my beloved children. 15For although you could have thousands of tutors in the Anointed One, you don’t have many fathers… And since I [am the one who] became your father in the good news through the Anointed One, 16I beg you to start imitating me!  
  
17This is why I’m sending Timothy to you.  
  
He’s my loved son, and faithful in Jehovah. He will remind you of my ways that I’m teaching in all the congregations everywhere, through the Anointed Jesus.  
  
  
18Now, I know that some [of you’ve become] all puffed up as though I weren’t coming to you. 19But I’ll be there shortly (if Jehovah desires it), and I won’t pay any attention to what those who are puffed up have to say. Rather, [I’ll pay attention] to their power, 20because the Kingdom of God doesn’t have anything to do with words, but with power.  
  
21So... Which would you prefer?  
  
Should I come to you with a stick, or with a loving and mild spirit?