



THE LIVING GOSPEL

COMMUNITY GROUP GUIDE

1 CORINTHIANS 4:1-13

This study guide is to help individuals and groups learn and apply the truths of Scripture to where you are in life right now. To get the most from this study guide, work through it on your own before gathering with your community group.

For commentary on the passage, see end of guide.

REFLECTION

- 1) What were the key takeaways for you from this weekend?
- 2) If you had to boil the message down to one point, what would that be?

BIBLE STUDY

The following questions will help you work through the passage.

Read 1 Corinthians 4:1-5

- 3) Who does Paul report to and what does that mean for the way he should relate to the Corinthians ?
- 4) How does this change the way the Corinthians should relate to Paul?

- 5) How does this change the way we relate to our church leaders?

- 6) Pastors aren't the only ones that should look for God's approval instead of the approval of other people. In what ways are you most prone to seek the approval of others instead of seeking God's approval?

Read 1 Cor. 4:6-13

- 7) How do Paul and Apollos act as an example to the Corinthians' church leaders and members who have exalted their own wisdom? (v. 6-7)

- 8) How does the Corinthians' attitude to their own spiritual state differ from that of the apostles'? (v.8-13)

- 9) At one point in the message, Pastor Spence mentioned "crucifying the American Dream." How does that idea connect to this passage?

- 10) What are the things in your world that are most likely to distract you from giving your whole life for Christ?

- 11) How does the gospel free us to forget ourselves for the sake of Christ?

- 12) What is one way can you begin forgetting yourself for the sake of Christ this week?

PRAYER

Prayer is an essential component of your life as a follower of Christ, and an integral part of any healthy church body. As we pray toward Easter as a church, we have a great opportunity to continue praying through our prayer guide from Community Group Sunday.

- 1) Fight to be in awe of Jesus (Psalm 119:18)**
- 2) Help me to be gritty in obedience (John 15:11)**
- 3) Help me live out everyday evangelism (Psalm 126:5-6)**
- 4) Help me to be fervent in prayer (2 Chronicles 7:14-15)**

COMMENTARY

1 Corinthians 4 completes the first major theme of the letter Paul writes to the Corinthians: the gospel and wisdom. Beginning in Chapter 1, he has addressed the problem of the Corinthians putting too much stock in leaders in the church, and exalting what they perceived to be the 'wise' and great ones in their eyes. All of this was done at the expense of exalting Christ, the cross, and God's wisdom in the gospel. Paul here now corrects their expectations of what they should look for in their leaders and themselves. They should look for faithful leaders who preach God's truth as given to them (1 Cor. 4:1-2). This is how they should judge their leaders, since ultimately God will judge every church leader by this standard (1 Cor. 4:3-5). He also corrects how they should judge themselves and their own spiritual progress in the faith, in light of the gospel and God's calling on both church leaders and church members to follow in Christ's footsteps. All they have received about God's truth is by God's grace, so they cannot boast in their own great spiritual prowess or wisdom to others (1 Cor. 4:6-7). Furthermore, they are not called to arrogant, self-satisfied spiritual boasting in this world, as some church leaders and people in Corinth had become, but were called to follow the apostles' and Christ's example of humility, care, service and sacrifice. This is where true spirituality is found and where real spiritual growth and usefulness for God's kingdom lies (1 Cor. 4:8-21).