

Sermon Discussion Questions

November 20, 2016

I Corinthians 1:4-31

“Gospel Preparation for Your New Pastor”

1. In what ways do verses 4-9 remind us of our GOSPEL IDENTITY? Pick out key verbs in these verses that describe what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. What is the pattern of Paul as he writes his epistles (*Romans 16/12; I Corinthians 16/1; II Corinthians 13/1; Galatians 6/5; Ephesians 6/4; Philippians 4/2; Colossians 4/2*). [Note: the first number indicates the total number of chapters and the second number indicates his transition to application and exhortation].
2. The world’s formula for identity is: PERFORMANCE + APPEARANCE = ACCEPTANCE (identity). The gospel formula is: ACCEPTANCE (in Christ) = PERFORMANCE + APPEARANCE. Discuss the statement: “Most Christians strive (through performance) to become what they are not; the gospel tells us to be (our activity) who God says we already are (our identity).”
3. In what ways do the Corinthian Christians manifest GOSPEL INCONSISTENCY (vs. 10-17)? How do their actions betray the unity that they have in Christ? How does their boasting about who baptized them reflect this gospel inconsistency? In what ways have you (or CPC) engaged in speech or conduct that is inconsistent and incompatible with the grace of the gospel? What does repentance look like in this regard?
4. In what ways does Paul’s response reflect his GOSPEL CENTRICITY (vs. 17-24)? Compare and contrast the concern, *lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power* (vs. 17b) with Paul’s discussion of the *power of God* (vs. 18, 24). In what ways might you unknowingly “empty the cross of its power” in your own life and relationships? What does repentance look like in this regard?
5. In what ways do vs. 28-31 remind us of the importance of GOSPEL HUMILITY? In what ways does pride minimize the power of the cross and in what ways does humility maximize the power of the cross? How have you seen this dynamic manifested in your own life? What does Scripture teach us about *boasting* (*Jeremiah 9:23-24; Galatians 6:14*).
6. Pastor Bob suggested a kind of “10 Commandments of Receiving Your New Sr. Pastor” listed below. He calls this GOSPEL PRACTICALITY (taking Biblical principles and applying them to the specific context of receiving Clay Smith and his family). Ponder and discuss them.
 - (1) You shall have no other gods before God (*Exodus 20:3*).
 - (2) You shall not make for yourself any graven image or idol (*Exodus 20:4*).
 - (3) You shall not take God’s name in vain (*Exodus 20:7*).
 - (4) You shall remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy (*Exodus 20:8*).
 - (5) You shall honor your new pastor (*I Timothy 5:17*).

- (6) You shall pray for your new pastor and his family (protection & power, *Eph. 6:19*).
- (7) You shall not compare your new pastor to any previous pastor (*I Cor. 1:10-12*).
- (8) You shall not complain (*James 5:9*).
- (9) You shall extend grace to your new pastor (*Colossians 3:12-17*).
- (10). You shall follow the leadership of your pastors and elders (*Hebrews 13:17*).