

## Take the Right Exam!

1 Corinthians 3:18-4:5

### Introduction:

- A. When you finish your education, you might think that you don't have to deal with exams anymore.
- B. We cannot get away from exams!
  - 1. The apostle Paul wrote that his character, actions, and even motives were being examined by others (1 Cor 3:18-25), but he did not let that bother him because he was 1\_\_\_\_\_ as God wanted.
  - 2. 1 Cor 4:1-5 gives four sources from which we might be examined – take the right exam!

### Source #1 – C\_\_\_\_\_ (1-3a)

- A. Many Christians examined Paul
  - 1. Some 1\_\_\_\_\_ what they saw (1:12 – *I am of Paul*)
  - 2. Others c\_\_\_\_\_ him, comparing him to other leaders (1:12 – *I am of Apollos*).
- B. Paul stated that he and all spiritual leaders ought to be viewed as servants or ministers of C\_\_\_\_\_
  - 1. The word translated as servant or minister is not the usual word, which is diakonos (where we get our word d\_\_\_\_\_).
  - 2. The word in this verse literally means underr\_\_\_\_\_.
    - a. Originally referred to those who manned the oars in the b\_\_\_\_\_ of a ship
    - b. It came to be used to refer to any person who willingly put themselves under the o\_\_\_\_\_ of another.
- C. Paul stated that he and all spiritual leaders ought to be viewed as s\_\_\_\_\_ of God's mystery.
  - 1. The word, steward, literally means, house-m\_\_\_\_\_ and refers to one whom a house owner entrusts his household affairs.
  - 2. God had entrusted His mystery, the g\_\_\_\_\_ (see 2:7), to Paul and others because he found them t\_\_\_\_\_.
- D. Paul writes, *it is a very s\_\_\_\_\_ thing to be judged by you.* – Why? Because he was doing as God wanted.
- E. Application
  - 1. How do you handle criticism by other Christians?
    - a. Destructive criticism – Someone is t\_\_\_\_\_ you down.
      - 1) If you are doing as God wants, they have the p\_\_\_\_\_.

- 2) If you are doing as God wants, don't let it change what you do!
- b. Constructive criticism – Someone suggests a solution (always w\_\_\_\_\_ this kind of criticism)
2. When you criticize another Christian
  - a. Never let it be destructive
    - 1) Criticizing them behind their b\_\_\_\_\_
    - 2) Chewing them out to their f\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Always make it constructive – a godly result

### Source #2 – Councils of the world (3b)

- A. Paul also saw it a small thing to be judged by a human c\_\_\_\_\_
  1. The word is translated as human court or man's judgment
  2. The word is literally, *human d\_\_\_\_\_*, and was used to refer to a specific time where people came together to pass judgment on another.
  3. Therefore it can refer to a court of law, a religious council, a political council, etc. – Paul was scrutinized by all of them and was greatly mis\_\_\_\_\_.
- B. Application
  1. How often are evangelical Christians misunderstood by the media and by groups because of their stance on same sex lifestyles?
    - a. Their criticism – Evangelicals hate homosexuals
    - b. Your clarification – Hate the s\_\_\_\_\_, but l\_\_\_\_\_ the sinner.
    - c. Their response – If they cannot accept your clarification, they have the problem.
  2. How often do a group of friends pressure someone in their group to do something wrong for the sake of friendship? (see Rom 12:2- never prove your friendship, prove God's w\_\_\_\_\_).

### Source #3 – Conscience (3c, 4a)

- A. Paul states that in some many words that his conscience is not his g\_\_\_\_\_.
1. Rom 14:22,23 – whatever is not of f\_\_\_\_\_ is sin. You can have a g\_\_\_\_\_ conscious for doing something that is not in itself wrong in God's eyes but if you believe that by doing it you are disobeying God, then it is an act of d\_\_\_\_\_.
2. You can have a c\_\_\_\_\_ conscience, but that does not mean you are not guilty of any sin.

- B. God can u\_\_\_\_\_ our conscience to convict us of sin, but our conscious is not to be our ultimate guide.

**Source #4 – Christ (4b, 5)**

- A. God is the only one that can truly examine accurately our h\_\_\_\_\_ and minds (Chr 28:9; Ps 139:23; Jer 17:10; Rom 8:27; Rev 2:23)
- B. Therefore, we should not pass judgment on people’s hearts but let the Lord be the examiner and be concerned about our own hearts.
1. When Jesus comes again, He will uncover the m\_\_\_\_\_ of our hearts.
  2. When Jesus reveals our pure motives, praise for the motives will come from \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 5).
- C. In the meantime, be responsive to the bad motives that Christ uncovers in us through His w\_\_\_\_\_ (Heb 4:12). This is the right exam to take.

**Conclusion -** Will you exit this building with a bare heart before God, determining to let Him have the final judgment on your attitudes, actions, and motives? Take the right exam!