

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS
for the Week of June 11, 2017

<p>LIFE TOGETHER IN A DIVIDED WORLD <i>Fools for Christ</i> 1 Corinthians 4:1-13</p>
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1. “*God wants you to be happy, rich, and successful!*” True or False? Why? What scriptures support your claim?

If you disagree with the statement above, how would you fill in the blank below:

“*God wants you to be* _____.”

2. **Read 1 Corinthians 4:1-7.** How do you tend to respond when people criticize you?

Why does Paul say that he isn't that concerned with the judgment or criticism he might receive from others? Is he being arrogant here? Why or why not?

What is the difference between a “clear conscience” and being “innocent” in 4:4? What is Paul's point here?

3. When to listen to whispers of criticism and when to dismiss them as irrelevant and time-wasting – these are decisions which need wisdom and good judgment. How does this passage help us discern and evaluate criticism of ourselves, or those in church leadership? What are some *wrong* approaches to evaluating or judging the work of church leaders?

What might be a *right* approach?

4. What is the key test for God's ministers according to this passage?

5. **Read 1 Corinthians 4:8-13.** What qualities do you think most Christians look for in a leader? How should Christian leadership differ from most leadership in the broader world?

6. Is Paul being sarcastic in these verses? Why? What is he hoping the Corinthians will realize?

7. In verse 9 Paul draws the picture of a Roman general returning to the city after winning a great victory. The Roman army would march in parade through the streets and pass under a triumph arch, carrying the booty they had captured. At the back of the procession came a bedraggled and weary gang of prisoners. Usually the day would end with the prisoners being killed or sold into slavery. It was a public display of glory, power and victory, a celebration of the fact that Rome had triumphed again. Where does Paul place himself in such a procession? *Why?* What does this say about Christian leadership in ministry?

8. How in 4:9-13 do you see the crucified Messiah as Paul's model for ministry?

9. If Paul needed to make this point to the Christians in ancient Corinth, what do you think he would say to comfortable Western Christians today?

How challenging is it for *you* to be a "fool for Christ" at home, at work, and among your friends and colleagues? How can your group pray for you this week?