

**HOLY MANY IN UNHOLY SOCIETY:  
A study in I and II Corinthians  
AMEN Bible Study 2013-2014**

**Gospel Humility: The Cure for Spiritual Cancer  
I Corinthians 4:1-21  
October 3, 2013**

*Questions for Sandy during this lesson? Send to: [amenquestions@2pc.org](mailto:amenquestions@2pc.org)  
If you'd like your question answered off line, let us know.*

**The gospel transforms proud people into humble servants by...**

- 4:1a      A. Changing how we view ourselves.  
*“This is how one should regard us, as servants (huperetes) of Christ”*
- :1b-2      B. Changing how we view our mission in life.  
*“and stewards of the mysteries of God.”<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.*
- :3-5      C. Changing how we deal with criticism.  
*“But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself.<sup>4</sup> For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me.<sup>5</sup> Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.”*
- :6-7      D. Changing how we view of all of our resources - Our abilities, opportunities, and blessings are all gifts from God.  
*<sup>6</sup> I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.<sup>7</sup> For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?*

:8-13 E. Changing how we view the cost involved in following Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> *Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you!* <sup>9</sup> *For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men.* <sup>10</sup> *We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute.* <sup>11</sup> *To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless,* <sup>12</sup> *and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure;* <sup>13</sup> *when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.*

:14-21 F. Changing how we resolve problems in our relationships.

<sup>14</sup> *I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children.* <sup>15</sup> *For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.* <sup>16</sup> *I urge you, then, be imitators of me.* <sup>17</sup> *That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.* <sup>18</sup> *Some are arrogant, as though I were not coming to you.* <sup>19</sup> *But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power.* <sup>20</sup> *For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power.* <sup>21</sup> *What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?*

### **Traits of the Self-Life**

*Please prepare your hearts and minds to receive communion by meditating upon this guide for confession.* Here are some of the features of the self-life. As you read, examine yourself in the presence of God and ask the Holy Spirit to help you **identify, confess, and hate pride, selfishness, and rebellion in your life.**

- Are you ever conscious of a secret spirit of pride: An exalted feeling in view of your success or position; because of your good training or appearance; because of your natural gifts and abilities?
- An important, independent spirit? Love of human praise; a secret fondness to be noticed; love of supremacy, drawing attention to self in conversation; a puffing up of self when you have had a free time in speaking or praying? The stirrings of anger or impatience, which, worst of all, you call nervousness or holy indignation; a touchy, sensitive spirit; a disposition to resent or retaliate when disapproved of or contradicted; a desire to throw sharp, heated flings at another?
- Self-will; a stubborn, unteachable spirit; an argumentative, talkative spirit; harsh, sarcastic expressions; an unyielding, headstrong disposition; a driving commanding spirit; a disposition to criticize and pick flaws when set aside and unnoticed; a peevish, fretful spirit: a disposition that loves to be coaxed and humored? Carnal fear; a man-fearing spirit; a shrinking from reproach and duty; a shrinking from doing your whole duty by those of wealth or position; a fearfulness that someone will offend and drive some prominent person away; a compromising spirit?
- A jealous disposition, a secret spirit of envy shut up in your heart; an unpleasant sensation in view of the great prosperity and success of another; a disposition to speak of the faults and failings, rather than affirming the gifts and virtues of those more talented and appreciated than yourself? A dishonest, deceitful disposition; the evading and covering of the truth; the covering up of your real faults; leaving a better impression of yourself than is strictly true; false humility; exaggeration; straining the truth? Unbelief; a spirit of discouragement in times of pressure and opposition; lack of quietness before and confidence in God; lack of faith and trust in God; a disposition to worry or complain in the midst of pain, poverty, or at the dispensations of Divine Providence; an overanxious feeling whether everything will come out all right? Formality and deadness; lack of concern for lost souls; dryness and indifference; lack of power with God? Selfishness; love of ease; love of money?

These are some of the traits that generally indicate a carnal heart. By prayer, hold your heart open to the searchlight of our gracious Father until you see His Spirit begin to eliminate these traits and replace them with His fruit (Galatians 5). The Holy Spirit will enable you, by confession and faith, to put your “self-life” to death. Do not patch over, but go to the bottom. It alone will pay. *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*  
–Psalms 51.10

O, to be saved from myself, dear Lord, Oh to be lost in Thee;  
Oh, that it might be no more I, but Christ that lives in me.