

***I Need a Spiritual Family***  
**“A Spiritual Family Pursues Rewards Together”**  
**1 Corinthians 3:5-4:21 – May 4, 2014**

**Our Sermon Series**

<b>I Need a Spiritual Family</b> <i>A Study of the Book of First Corinthians</i>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Message Title</b>	<b>Bible Text</b>
April 6	A Spiritual Family Resolves Conflict	1 Corinthians 1:1-17
April 13	A Spiritual Family Embraces the Cross	1 Corinthians 1:18-31
April 27	A Spiritual Family Embraces the Spirit	1 Corinthians 2:1-3:4
May 4	A Spiritual Family Pursues Rewards Together	1 Corinthians 3:5-4:21
May 18	A Spiritual Family Deals with Sexual Immorality	1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 6:9-20
May 25	A Spiritual Family Does Not Sue Each Other	1 Corinthians 6:1-8
June 1	A Spiritual Family Embraces Marriage & Singleness	1 Corinthians 7:1-40
June 8	A Spiritual Family Builds Each Other Up	1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1
June 15	A Spiritual Family Worships Together	1 Corinthians 11:2-34
June 22	A Spiritual Family Uses Their Spiritual Gifts	1 Corinthians 12:1-14:40
May 11	A Spiritual Family Loves Each Other (Mother's Day)	1 Corinthians 13:1-13
April 19/20	A Spiritual Family Believes in Heaven (Easter)	1 Corinthians 15:1-58
June 29	A Spiritual Family Gives	1 Corinthians 16:1-24

To get sermon-based small group discussion questions developed by Life Way specifically for these messages, please contact Christi Jeffries at [cjeffries@whatisgrace.org](mailto:cjeffries@whatisgrace.org)

**Summary of 1 Corinthians 3:5-4:21**

Paul and Apollos are merely servants with God-given assignments which God will judge us on. Therefore, you Corinthians don't pass judgment on us (whether through boasting or criticism). Don't be arrogant in your attitude toward us. I am your spiritual father giving you a loving admonition.

**Five Truths about Rewards from 1 Corinthians 3:5-4:21**

**1. \_\_\_\_\_ is the One who gives us our Kingdom work assignments. We are His servants (3:5-6a)**

- Paul was the evangelist (“I planted”). Apollos was the gifted teacher (“Apollos watered”).
- **1 Corinthians 12:4-11** (The Message) – *God’s various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God’s Spirit. God’s various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God’s Spirit.... Each person is given something to do that shows who God is.... All these gifts have a common origin, but are handed out one by one by the one Spirit of God. He decides who gets what, and when.*

- Our job is to be faithful (4:1-2).
- Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)
- **Matthew 25:23** – *His master replied, “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”*
- **Application #1** – With God’s help and power, I choose to be content with the spiritual gifts and ministry assignments that God has given to me. I will be faithful with the “little thing” He has entrusted to me.

**2. God is the One who causes Kingdom work to \_\_\_\_\_ – not us (3:6-7)**

- In arguing over whether Apollos or Paul was a better leader, the Corinthians were acting as though Paul and Apollos were actually the ones bearing the fruit. Not so! God is the one who causes ministry fruit to grow! That is why boasting is excluded (3:21; 1:29,31).
- And, if this principle is true, then this becomes a HUGE reason to base your ministry first and foremost in prayer!
- **Psalms 127:1** – *Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain.*
- **John 15:5-7** – *I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.... If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.*
- **James 4:2** – *You do not have, because you do not ask God.*
- **Application #2** – Because God is the One who causes things to grow, I will make my first priority talking and listening to God and asking Him to make things grow.
- Samuel Chadwick – “The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, and prayerless religion. Satan laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when he sees the weakest Christian on his knees.”

**3. God will \_\_\_\_\_ us for our Kingdom work for Him (3:8)**

- “wages” = *misthos* = reward, wages
- **Matthew 5:12** – *Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*
- **Matthew 6:1-6** – *Be careful not to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love*

to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

- Application #3 – If you could choose between being rewarded by God or by people, which would you choose?

#### 4. Rewards are based on the \_\_\_\_\_ of our Kingdom work for the Lord (3:9-15)

- Paul uses a building analogy. Jesus Christ is the foundation of the building. We are the builders. We can build (invest our time and resources) with one of two types of building materials:

Building material	<b>Wood, hay, straw</b>	<b>Gold, silver, precious stones</b>
Response to fire	Burns up. Doesn't last.	Withstands fire. Lasts.
Eternal value	Doesn't count for eternity	Does count for eternity
Major categories of life investment	Things of the world (1 John 2:15-17)	God's Word (1 Peter 1:24-25) People's souls (Matt. 25:46)
Specific examples	Cars, boats, houses Money Educational degrees Trophies Positions, titles Fame, popularity	Study/sharing God's Word Talking and listening to God Sharing faith Helping/serving others Spiritual relationships Missions

- 1 Corinthians 4:5 = key verse in evaluating eternal value of something.
- John MacArthur: "God has a day planned when He will both bring to light the things hidden in darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts. Those two phrases refer to the attitudes of the inner man, which only God can see. The rewards given will not be based on the degrees behind our name, the numbers we have preached to or witnessed to, the programs we have planned or directed, the books we have written, or even the number of converts won to Christ through us. It will be based on one thing alone: the motives of our hearts. Thus, our single purpose in life should be that, 'whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, we do all to the glory of God' (1 Cor. 10:31). That motive should determine everything we think and do."
- Video: "Live on Purpose" [3:05] can be found at [sermonspice.com](http://sermonspice.com)
- Three key judgments

<b>Judgment</b>	<b>One Judged</b>	<b>Nature</b>	<b>Scripture</b>
Cross	Jesus	Jesus judged in our place receiving our punishment for sins.	1 Peter 2:24; 3:18
Great White Throne	Unbelievers	Judged for sin and works.	Rev. 20:11-15
Bema Seat	Believers	Held accountable and rewarded.	1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10

- Five crowns awarded to believers

<b>Scripture</b>	<b>Crown</b>	<b>Who receives?</b>
1 Corinth. 9:25	Crown that will last forever	Those who finish the race
1 Thess. 2:19-20	Crown of joy	Those who lead others to Christ
2 Timothy 4:8	Crown of righteousness	Those who have longed for Christ's appearing
1 Peter 5:4	Crown of glory	Leaders of God's flock who shepherd well
Revelation 2:10	Crown of life	Those who are faithful thru persecution (martyrs)
James 1:12	Crown of life	Those who love Christ (context = persevere thru trials)

- Seven things that Scripture says God will reward (word study of *misthos*):
  - Secret \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 6:1-4)
  - Secret \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 6:5-6)
  - Secret \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 6:16-18)
  - Persecution for being a Christ follower (Matt 5:10-12; Luke 6:22-23)
  - Receiving Christ followers and serving them (Matt 10:40-42; Mk 9:41)
  - Loving your enemies and doing good to those who cannot do good back to you (Luke 6:35)
  - Sharing the Gospel with others (John 4:34-38)
- Application #4 – With God's help and power, I am going to steward my life and time and resources wisely for maximum eternal impact. Lord, what adjustments do I need to make in how I use my time, money, talents, gifts, and experiences in order to steward them for maximum eternal impact for Your glory?

#### 5. What will we \_\_\_\_\_ with our rewards?

- Revelation 4:10-11** – *The twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and worship Him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they were created and have their being."*
- Application #5 – Lord, I worship You right now! And I want to worship You in all of eternity throwing my crowns before You as the One who is worthy!