

The Blessed Mess: Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians

Sermon Notes

Good Authority (1 Corinthians 4:14-21)

Lead with Affection, Not with Shame

I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. – 1 Cor. 4:14-15

Lead by Example, Not Just Explanation

I exhort you, therefore, be imitators of me. For this reason, I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church. – 1 Cor. 4:16-17

Lead with Courage, not with Cowardice

Now some have become arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant but their power. For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power. What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness? – 1 Cor. 4:18-21

For Further Thought and Discussion

Getting Started

1. What was helpful to you in this week's sermon? What didn't you understand?
2. Why do you think Paul explains to the Corinthians why he has written to them so strongly at this point in the letter?

Going Deeper

3. Please read 1 Cor. 4:14-15. How does Paul lead the Corinthians with affection and not with shame? Why is affection necessary for good authority? How is Jesus the best example of this kind of authority? What is one way you can become more affectionate in your leadership?
4. Please read 1 Cor. 4:16-17. How does Paul lead the Corinthians by example and not just by explanation? Why is leading by example necessary for good authority? How is Jesus the best example of this kind of authority? In what way do you need to become a better example for those whom you are responsible to lead?
5. Please read 1 Cor. 4:18-21. How does Paul lead the Corinthians with courage and not cowardice? Why is courage necessary for good authority? How is Jesus the best example of this kind of authority? How do you need to become more courageous in your leadership?

Application

What is one thing you will apply from this discussion?