

Message by John Johnson
September 29-30, 2007
How God Measures Success
1 Cor. 3:21-23; 4:1-5

More than most parts of the New Testament, to understand the letter to the Corinthians one must understand the cultural context. The church at Corinth was a body of believers enamored with self importance – rank, position, prestige. These were the values of the surrounding culture, and these values seeped into the church. In chapter 4, Paul continues his instruction to them about God's values.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Are there any specifics you recall from the message that were interesting or helpful to you?
2. Through the first few chapters of this letter, Paul chastises the Corinthians for their worldly values. Can you list some of their values? How do these compare to the values of believers today?
3. In 4:1, Paul says we are entrusted with the "secret things of God." What does he mean? (all that is part of the gospel of Christ and salvation)
4. Pastor John has repeatedly said over the past few weeks that believers are to be "cruciformed." How does he define this term? (to be shaped in the form of the cross)
5. One of Pastor John's main points was that to be successful in God's kingdom we must a) live as servants, and b) live as stewards, or managers. Where do you see these two ideas in the text? What do they mean?
6. How do we be good stewards of the gospel? (live it, share it, make it the driving force of our lives)
7. Based upon these truths, is it wrong then for Christians today to be successful, wealthy, or influential? (only if it doesn't affect their being cruciformed)
8. At the end of Pastor John's message he asked ...
"Whose praise are you living for?"
"Does our desire for man's approval drown out our need to hear God's 'well done'?"
9. How do you think the average Christian would answer those two questions?
10. How can we apply the truths of this passage to our lives?