

Choose Your Leaders Wisely

1 Corinthians 4

March 22, 2026 | Pastor Michael Foster

⇒ Leaders who seek to please you OR Leaders who seek to please God (vv. 1-5)

⇒ Leaders who make you feel special OR Leaders who care for your soul (vv. 6-7)

⇒ Leaders who shine and impress OR Leaders who serve and sacrifice (vv. 8-13)

⇒ Leaders who are “influencers” OR Leaders who are “fathers” and “mothers” (vv. 14-21)

FOR FURTHER ACTION/REFLECTION

- Memorize 1 Corinthians 4:2
- Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, Philippians 2:5-11, Matthew 20:24-28, Galatians 1:10, Hebrews 13:7-8, 1 Peter 5:1-4
- Read “Humble Sarcasm” – bit.ly/humblesarcasm
- Read “The Heart of Leadership” – bit.ly/Theheartofleadership
- Read “4 Thoughts on Spiritual Fatherhood” – bit.ly/4TSpiritualFatherhood
- Read “You are what you imitate” – bit.ly/Youarewhatyouimitate
- Listen to “The Wonderful Cross” – bit.ly/TheWonderfulCross
- Listen to “Lead on O King Eternal” – bit.ly/LeadonOKingEternal
- Listen to “Power of the Cross” – bit.ly/PoweroftheCross1
- Read *Spiritual Leadership* by Sanders

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you the most from the message?
2. Share about a spiritual leader in your life that has been a good model for you. What qualities of that leader do you seek to imitate?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 4:1-2. How does this “servant” and “steward” model of leadership compare with the leadership models of our world? What might be some qualities of a leader who strives to be a humble servant and a faithful steward?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 4:3-5 and Galatians 1:10. How do we balance the truth that God alone is our ultimate judge with our need for others to be able to warn, correct, and restore one another (Galatians 6:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:14).
5. Read 1 Corinthians 4:6-7. In what ways might we look to our leaders to puff us up? What is the difference between being “puffed up” and being “built up” or edified? Share an example that highlights a difference.
6. Read 1 Corinthians 4:8-13. In your own words, summarize what Paul is seeking to say through this sarcastic rebuke of the Corinthians.
7. Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25. How might these verses serve to help us evaluate whether a leader is worth following.
8. Share about a time when a leader in some context functioned in a way very different from the way of Christ – perhaps a coach, teacher, or spiritual leader.
9. Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-17. Do you have someone who has functioned like a spiritual father or mother to you. If so, explain. What is something that a mentor of this kind provides for you that an online teacher or digital influencer cannot?
10. Who in your life has the “right” to bring the “rod of discipline” (v. 21) or speak a hard truth to you? If no one comes to mind, what is stopping you from seeking that kind of relationship?
11. How would you advise for someone to go about developing a mentoring relationship?
12. In a world of influencers, how can we make sure that we are learning from qualified leaders whose lives we know well enough to imitate? What would the culture of a church be like if there were many mentoring relationships multiplying across the church?

