

“MARKS OF A GODLY LEADER”

(1 Corinthians 4:6–13)

The Mark of Humility (vv. 6–7)

- **Paul’s Example** - The mark and measurement of a Godly leader is he practices what he preaches.
 - **God’s Word, not human opinion, is the standard for ministry and judgment.**
- **The Danger of Pride and Comparison**
 - **Everything we have—talent, position, influence—is a gift, not a reason to boast.**
- **The Lesson:**
 - Humility flows from recognizing God as the source of every blessing.
 - “Pride forgets grace; humility remembers it.”

The Contrast Between the World’s Greatness and God’s Servants (vv. 8–10)

- **The Corinthians’ Illusion of Greatness**
 - Paul uses holy sarcasm to expose their spiritual pride and self-satisfaction.
- **The Apostles’ Reality of Suffering**
 - “We are fools for Christ, but you are wise... We are weak, but you are strong.”
- **The Lesson:**
 - The world—and even the church—often confuses comfort with blessing and status with spirituality.
 - True greatness in God’s kingdom often looks like weakness in the world’s eyes.

The Mark of Perseverance (vv. 11–13)

- **The Apostles’ Hardship**
 - “Hungry and thirsty... poorly clothed... homeless... working with our own hands.”
 - **Ministry is not about privilege but perseverance.**
- **The Apostles’ Christlike Response**
 - “When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we respond graciously.”
- **The World’s View vs. God’s View**
 - The world may reject faithful servants, but God exalts the humble (cf. James 4:10).

Application: Living the Cross-Shaped Life

- **Stay grounded in Scripture** — “Nothing beyond what is written.”
- **Reject pride and comparison** — Remember, all is received from God.

- **Embrace humble service** — True discipleship involves sacrifice and endurance.
- **Reflect Christ’s character** — Bless, endure, and respond graciously.
- **Remember God’s approval matters most** — The world’s rejection is not God’s rejection.

Key Verse:

“When we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we respond graciously.”

— 1 Corinthians 4:12–13a

- **The measure of greatness in God’s kingdom is not how high we rise, but how low we are willing to stoop to serve others. To follow Christ is to embrace humility, endure hardship, and trust that God will one day honor what the world despises.**

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

Observation

- According to verse 6, what instruction does Paul give about “not going beyond what is written”?
- In verse 7, what three rhetorical questions does Paul ask to confront pride and comparison?
- How does Paul contrast the Corinthians’ self-perception with the apostles’ reality in verses 8–10?

Understanding

- Paul says that humility comes from remembering that everything is received, not achieved. What gifts, abilities, or positions in your life do you sometimes forget are from God?
- Why do comparison and pride so easily creep into Christian life and ministry? What practical steps help you fight the temptation to compare yourself to others?
- In what ways do believers today confuse comfort or success with spiritual maturity?
- The apostles experienced hunger, hardship, mistreatment—and still responded with blessing and endurance. How does this challenge our expectations about what following Jesus should look like?
- What is one area this week where you can intentionally demonstrate humility, perseverance, or Christlike grace toward others?

Loving Outward:

- Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
- Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
- Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?