ABOUT BEING FAITHFUL

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TEXT: 1 Cor 4:1-5

1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.
2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.
3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.
4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.
5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

INTRODUCTION.

Definitions

1.. He asked: *'Let a man so account of us* …estimate or conclude of us -
2. *as ministers of Christ*; … as rowing men, oarsmen, servants
3. *stewards of God* … overseers, men charged to keep the house or manage the treasury or men responsible with the gospel
4. *the mysteries of God* … revealing the secrets of the Scriptures
5. *faithfu*l … trustworthy
6. *small* … little in size or mild in relativity or short in terms of time; no big deal

Observations

It seems that everybody has a view of what a preacher should be and do.
Preaching is not a 'gift' though one may 'gifted' in his abilities to speak well.
It is probable that there are different ministries for men of various callings.
It is conceivable that men will dare to judge the preacher by men of other skills.
It is interference when men want to place pastors, or to guard their sermons.

It is confusion when want to judge a man in his abilities. Life and time change all of us.
It is Godly when a man is faithful, even to the end.

I. **A Steward Should Be Found Faithful**.

A. God calls men and women, even children to render services unto Him.
Whenever He calls and whenever we accept the call, He expect us to be faithful to the call.
Whether to salvation: be faithful.
Whether to minister to the sick: be faithful.
Whether to serve to serve as pastors: be faithful
Whatever the service: be faithful.

B. Expect to be judged or criticized.
When criticism is favorable, criticism is freely accepted.
When criticism is negative; it is easy to be offended.
When criticism becomes judgmental, it is easy to want to quit.

II. A Steward Must Learn How To Handle The Critics.

A. To Paul, it was a small thing.
Criticism from men was little in size or mild in relativity or short in terms of time; no big deal

B. Paul may have been his own critic at times, but he was not good at it.
Men can become their own worst critic. We may become too hard against ourselves.

Consider:
Life and services can last for a lifetime.
Youthful ministers may be very energetic.
Elderly ministers may work harder and get less done.
Elderly ministers may desire as much as when they were young but the production may be less.
We may trend toward personal degradation of our own services.

III. Paul Evaluated His Self-Judgment.

A. He admitted, he didn't know how to judge himself.
For I know nothing by myself
yet am I not hereby justified

B. He decided to leave the judging up to the Lord.
he that judgeth me is the Lord.

Consider:
There are many factors to be considered.
1. age
2. health
3. circumstances
4. tools

IV. Paul Did What He Could Do.

A. He became 'not the man he used to be'.
So it is or shall be with you and me.

B. He would judge nothing until the Lord comes.
The Lord will see everything in perfect lighting.
Nothing will be hidden in darkness.
The Lord will be his critic,
Every man will know he has had a fair judgment. He will receive his fair praise.

CONCLUSION:

Our eyes and hearts may be as big as ever but our abilities may be limited.
Our services may turn from the one serving to the one being served.
Our steps may become unsteady through no fault of our own.
Our stewardship may end even as Paul stated in his letter to Timothy, (II Tim 4:5-8).

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.
6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.
7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:
8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Be faithful 'til the Lord comes or until he calls you home!