

# We Are Scum

Long Beach Alliance Church • March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009 • Pastor Chris Lankford

To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless; and we toil, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure; when we are slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things, even until now.

~ 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 4:11-13 (NASB)

## 1) The Irony Of Profound Absurdity

A) Illustrating just how far followers of Jesus Christ can get from healthy followership, Paul steeped his comments in biting and pointed irony as a sort of “shock therapy” (1st Corinthians 4:8ff).

B) The Corinthians are characterized as “filled,” (literally ‘having enough’) and “rich” (4:8). They are a satisfied group who have no real needs!

C) Paul notes that the Corinthians “have become kings,” or better, “you have come into your reign” (4:8). Paul is not referring to status (kings), but a twisted perception of function.

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C) Paul notes that the Corinthians “have become kings,” or better, “you have come into your reign” (4:8). Paul is not referring to status (kings), but a twisted perception of function.

**D) The Corinthians were confused between a more “futurist eschatology”\* and a “realized eschatology.” This confusion has historically plagued followers of Christ.**

**E) Paul exploded the concept of the Corinthian’s behavior of “reigning as kings” by highlighting the condition of the Christ-appointed leaders of the church -- the apostles (4:9).**

**F) The apostles have been “exhibited” (‘put on display’) as “men condemned to death” (4:9). The imagery is of the conquering Roman legions, bringing their prisoners back to be exploited and killed in the arena for gladiators and wild beasts.**

## **2) A Spectacle Or An Example?**

**A) In a series of dramatic contrasts, the condition of the church is compared to the condition of the apostles, pointing out the differences between authentic and counterfeit followership (4:10-13).**

**B) These harsh words are shared, not to “shame” (4:14), but rather to inject a sense of realism to his beloved children in his role as their spiritual father (4:15).**

**C) And for what purpose? To live as followers of “Christ, crucified.” Until the end of this age, we must die to our self-interests, and live for Christ. Our leaders provide a biblical example. Everyone is called to “imitate” Christ-followership!**

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\* “Eschatology” is the study of “those things which come at the end.” Thus, eschatology is the study of the future course of history, especially the events which will bring about “the end of the current age,” or, “the end of the church age.” God’s future judgment and fully realized kingdom are extensively studied within the normal boundaries of “eschatology.”

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