

MOTIVES OF THE HEART

Sabbath School Bible Studies

Five Questions for Life Change

Study Text: 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

The Marks of a Steward

Open

1. Make a list, and agree together the top 10 most recognisable global brands. Why are they successful? What is it about their product that makes them distinctive? Why are they successful, when other companies have failed? If there is a Christian brand, what is it?

Dig

2. Back in AD 55, Paul felt the need to write a letter to the members in Corinth, to help get the dysfunctional church back on track. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 is a 'this is how we should be' statement. When he describes Christians as "stewards of the mysteries of God" (4:1), what does he mean?
3. In the context of the letter, why does Paul raise the trust issue (4:2)? Why is trust such an important matter for the Christian? Think about this in a variety of life situations: in the home, in the work/business environment, in politics, and in the church. When trust breaks down in the church, what's the result?
4. "As servants of Christ" (4:1). The word 'servant', is from the Greek word, 'huperetes', originally meant a rower (a slave) on the lower deck of a large ship. The slave would row in time, at the command of the master. What does it mean to be a servant of Christ? Is to become a 'slave of Christ', taking the meaning too far?

Reflect

5. "And they'll know we are Christians by our love": the title of a 1960's gospel folk song. While it's the answer we're looking for, how does it connect with 1 Corinthians 4:1-2? If we are 'stewards of the mysteries of God', shouldn't we rather be singing, "And they'll know we are Christians by our truth"? Read John 8:32 and then 1 Corinthians 13. Prayerfully reflect as you reconcile the two statements.

To get the most out of this inductive Bible study:

Read the study text together (taken from the adult Sabbath School Lesson study).

Use question 1, as the icebreaker, an introduction to the discussion.

Use questions 2, 3, and 4, to dig as deep into scripture as your group wishes to go.

Question 5 is for reflection/application.

Surround the study with prayer.