

1 Corinthians 4:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

Analysis

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. The Greek zeteitai (ζητεῖται, "is required/sought") emphasizes an active standard being applied. Pistas (πιστός, "faithful/trustworthy") is the supreme qualification for stewards—not eloquence, popularity, or impressive results, but reliability in handling what belongs to another.

This verse dismantles the Corinthians' evaluation criteria. They assessed teachers by rhetorical polish and philosophical sophistication (2:1-5); Paul insists the only metric that matters is fidelity to the gospel entrusted. A steward's success is measured not by how many followers he attracts or how innovative his teaching appears, but whether he accurately represents his master's interests. The passive construction ("it is required") points to an objective divine standard, not congregational opinion polls.

Historical Context

In Greco-Roman households, stewards (oikonomoi) managed significant assets and slave labor. Their masters demanded faithful accounting; embezzlement or negligence brought severe consequences. Paul applies this commercial metaphor theologically: apostles are managers of divine revelation, accountable ultimately to Christ (v. 4), not to human tribunals. The Corinthian church's forensic language ("judged," v. 3) reflects their eagerness to evaluate teachers—a practice Paul resists.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does faithfulness to God's Word look like in your specific ministry context, even when it's unpopular or counter-cultural?
2. How do you measure spiritual 'success'—by visible results and human approval, or by faithful obedience to what God has revealed?
3. In what areas might you be compromising gospel clarity for the sake of relevance or acceptance?

Interlinear Text

ὁ δὲ λοιπὸν ζητεῖται ἐν τοῖς οἰκονόμοις ἵνα
G3739 G1161 **Moreover** **it is required** in G3588 **stewards** that
G3063 G2212 G1722 G3623 G2443

πιστός τις εὑρεθῇ
faithful a man be found
G4103 G5100 G2147

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 25:21 (Faith): His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Luke 12:42 (Faith): And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

Matthew 25:23 (Faith): His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Proverbs 13:17 (Faith): A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health.

Numbers 12:7 (Faith): My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

Colossians 4:17 (Parallel theme): And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

1 Corinthians 7:25 (Faith): Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

2 Corinthians 2:17 (Parallel theme): For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

Colossians 1:7 (Faith): As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

2 Corinthians 4:2 (Parallel theme): But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commanding ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.