

Measured

I Corinthians 4:3, "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."

Our culture is obsessed with self image. So much of our problems and anxieties are attributed to poor or improper self image that it seems to be the end all of mental health. We are bombarded with the importance of instilling in our children a good opinion of themselves and taught that it is critical to their emotional well being.

Paul does not present this perspective. He does not argue for a good opinion of himself; he does not argue for a negative evaluation of himself. He reserves judgment for the Lord.

This is not to eliminate self examination or to argue against constructive criticism. We are instructed to "examine ourselves to see if we be in the faith," and to examine ourselves that we partake worthily of the Lord's table. What we are warned against is the human tendency to compare ourselves among ourselves and measure ourselves by ourselves.

Everyone we meet can be compared both favorably and unfavorably, depending on the mood of the comparer and the criteria of comparison. Paul's point is that only God can truly evaluate our work for Him and our value to the cause of Christ. Faith trusts Him to use us in the way He knows is best and prosper His Word as expressed in the service opportunities He has given us. We don't know what God has accomplished through us.

Serve with all your energy at each opportunity God gives you. Don't look back, second guess and measure your worth by comparison with others. It will never be an accurate evaluation and is therefore meaningless. If we measure ourselves by God's standard (Christlikeness), we will all fall far short of the mark, but the Lord knows if we have been faithful and THAT is the measure we are called to uphold.