

3/4/12

1Corinthians 3

Paul having exposed the fallacy and deception of worldly wisdom in contrast to the wisdom of God to save sinful man by the gospel, moves on to expose the carnality of the Corinthian by worldly wisdom.

They were boasting in men, each choosing their party, believing they belonged to them, instead of seeing them as the servants of God for all believers in the church.

3:1-4 The Corinthians were carnal.

3:1 The confrontation of their tragic state.

- 1) Paul calls them brethren, so they were born-again.
- 2) Paul could not talk to the as spiritual mature believers but as carnal, as to babes in Christ.
 - * The word carnal “sarkinos” literally means made of flesh.

3:2-3a The refusal to grow spiritually.

- 1) Paul fed them with milk, not solid food. vs. 2a

a) The unadulterated milk of the word. 1Pet. 2:2

b) Paul was not the one at fault!

2) Paul noticed that they should of been further along in the growth and development but they were in an arrested state spiritually by their own choice, still unable to receive solid food. vs. 2b-c

* Everyone unskillful in the word of righteousness with milk. Heb. 5:11-5:2

3) Paul says they are still carnal “sarkikos” which means that which is characterized or dominated by the flesh and after the flesh. vs. 3a

3:3b-4 The evidence of their carnal state is incriminating.

1) Envy, strife and division of men, works of the flesh. vs. 3b-d

* Those living in them as a habit of life, Paul said they would not inherit the Kingdom of God! Gal. 5:19-21

2) Alive, but living as dead men who are not regenerated. vs. 3e

3) Their party splits exposed their carnality. vs. 4

* Reported by the house of Chloe. 1Cor. 1:11-12

3:5-9 The vessels and instruments of God are men.

3:5 The identity of the men God uses.

- 1) They are ministers “diaknoi” servants, waiters on tables.
 - a) The idea behind this type of servant is the people, in this case the Corinthians.
 - b) The word is used for deacons in the church. 1Tim. 3:8, 10, 12, 13
- 2) The men are vessels through whom they believe, they themselves were not responsible for the belief of others.
- 3) The men were enabled for their service, as God gave to each one. Rom. 12:6; 1Cor. 3:10; 4:7
 - * The disciples were always arguing who was the greatest among them! Mk. 9:33-34, Lk. 22:24-27, Jn. 13

3:6-7 The diversity of roles men play in service of the gospel.

- * Paul used the illustration of agriculture.
- 1) One planted, Paul, as a farmer. vs. 6a
 - 2) Another watered, Apollos, as a farmer also. vs. 6b
 - a) Both planted and watered in the past, indicative aorist active.
 - b) There is no competition in the Kingdom of God!

c) The reverse took place at Ephesus. Acts 19:1

- 3) But God alone determines and gives the increase, man is the mere instrument. vs. 6c
 - * The tense is the indicative perfect active, indicating an act begun in the past and is ongoing indefinitely, in contrast to man’s part.
- 4) Neither one can take credit or glory, nor given credit or glory by any man for the work of salvation, for it is God who does everything through men, then God gives the increase! vs. 7
 - a) God is placed at the end making Him emphatic.
 - b) The word gives is a present participle, indicating quality of the action engaged by God, the increase.

3:8-9 The unity of oneness in the labor of the gospel.

- 1) Both are one in the work of God, the one who plants and waters. vs. 8a
- 2) Each will receive their reward according to the labor they were called to, not the outcome or quantity of results! vs. 8b
- 3) The oneness of the workers. vs. 9
 - a) Both Paul and Apollos, who water and plant were fellow-workers, co-laborers of God, depending on God,

to reach sinners in the field of lost humanity and each other. vs. 9a

* They did not belong to the

Corinthians in their party splits!

b) The Corinthians were God's field. vs. 9b

1)) To be sown and watered, in order to save souls, to bring about the fruit of the harvest of souls.

2)) The parable of the vineyard and the branches, apart from Him we can do nothing. Jn. 15

c) The metaphor now changes to that of a building, God adds to the building living stones, a spiritual house. vs. 9c

1) Eph. 2:20-22; 1Pet. 2:5

2) The metaphor now changes from agriculture to architecture, a building to make the transition of the church as the temple of God.

3:10-17 The reward for the laborer of God.

3:10 The call of Paul to Corinth.

1) God had called Paul by His grace to establish the church at Corinth, through Christ crucified. vs. 10a

a) The point being by the leading, directing and enabling of God! 1Cor. 1:17, 2:2

b) The word given "didomi" is the aorist participle, to express a single past act of bestowal. Lenski

2) Paul as a wise master builder laid the foundation, he planted the church, with the gospel of Jesus Christ crucified. vs. 10b

* Paul was a wise skillful master-builder, an architect and superintendent of the work.

3) Another build on it, Apollos. vs. 10c

4) Paul gives a strong warning, that every man needs to watch how they build on the foundation of Christ. vs. 10d

a) Not Paul, Cephas or Apollos.

b) People build by emotionalism on the foundation of Christ.

c) People build on Christ by health and wealth.

d) People build on Christ by psychology.

e) People build on Christ by "Church Growth methods", "Seeker Friendly models" and "Emergent Church heresies".

f) People use the gospel as their platform to launch their agenda, vision or plans, that are not of God, nor biblical.

3:11 The sole foundation God allows.

- 1) No person can lay no other foundation, but Christ by the gospel for a church.
- 2) Christ the only name and way. Acts 4:12; Jn. 14:6

3:12 The various materials that a man can build with.

- 1) Gold, silver and precious stone are durable and eternal, this is divine wisdom, the gospel.
- 2) wood, hay and straw are temporal and natural and perishable, human wisdom.

3:13 The Bema Seat of Christ will reveal the quality of the work. 2Cor. 5:10, Rom. 14:10

- 1) The true character of the work will become clear.
- 2) The fire will test the quality of the work, which is the motives of the heart. 1Cor. 4:5
- 3) There are five crowns that are mentioned in the New Testament that are to be given to the believer.
 - a) The incorruptible crown. 1Cor. 9:24-27
 - b) The crown of righteousness. 2Timothy 4:7-8
 - c) The crown of rejoicing. 1Thess. 2:19
 - d) The crown of glory. 1Pet. 5:4
 - e) The crown of life. Ja. 1:12

3:14-15 The outcome of the judgment of the believer.

- 1) Those things that endure will receive a reward.
- 2) Those things that are consumed by the fire are the person's loss, yet they are saved as by fire due to the fact that salvation is a gift of God. Eph. 2:8-9

3:16 The logical conclusion in view of the divisions in the church by some.

- 1) They were to understand that they were the temple of God, collectively and corporately, this is the context, later he will also speak of the individual as the temple of God. 1Cor. 6:19
* Both places the word is "naos" the inner shrine!
- 2) The Spirit of God dwells in the church body. Eph. 2:20-22; 1Cor. 1:19; 2Cor. 6:16

3:17 The warning to those who fracture the body of the church.

- 1) If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him.
 - a) The word defiles and destroy "phtheiro" are the same, it means to mar or to bring to a worse state referring to those who were dividing the body.

b) In view of the collective body being the temple of God, Paul warns those who are dividing it and fracturing it.

2) The reason was that they were the temple of God collectively and holy.

* God does deal with individuals. 1Cor. 11:30-32; Heb. 12; 1Cor. 5:5

3:18-23 **The wisdom to avoid, worldly wisdom.**

3:18 The danger with worldly wisdom.

1) It deceives man by his own doing.

* Those who were part of the divisions were self deceived, for that is not the nature of Christ or His church.

2) It is wisdom to become a fool for Christ over being wise in this world.

a) Be wise preach Christ crucified, the wisdom and power of God with simplicity.

b) Be a fool in the eyes of the world.

3:19-20 The conclusion of God on man's wisdom.

1) God declared it is foolishness and He catches the wise in their own craftiness or cunningness. vs. 19

* Quoting the book of Job. Job 5:13

2) God declared that the thoughts of the wise are futile, vain, empty, senseless

and worthless in terms of being able to know or understand anything spiritual or God. vs. 20

* He is quoting the Psalms. Ps. 94:11

3:21-23 The conclusion of the matter was to yield to God's wisdom, the gospel.

1) Let no one boast in man, referring to any one man, for all endowed are God's instruments for the benefit of the body.

vs. 21

2) The range goes beyond the church as well, they were to learn from all. vs. 22

3) They belonged to Christ and Christ was God's, so they had everything at their disposal. vs. 23