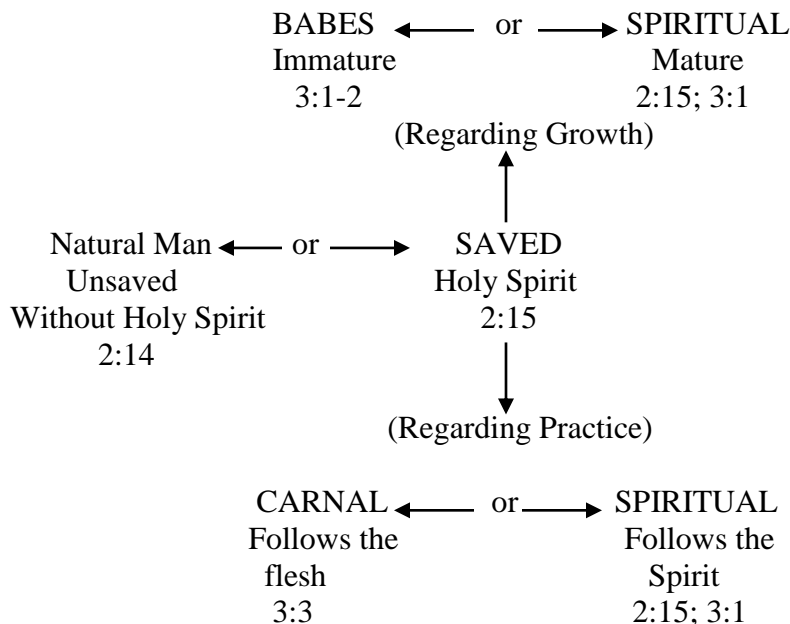


## 1 Corinthians 3:1-9 Divisions - Carnality - True Servants

After instructing the Corinthians on the Spirit's ministry Paul now points out to them that they are not viewing ministry from a spiritual point of view.

### Verse 1

*Brethren* – Paul is speaking to believers. He calls them babes in Christ. They are in God's family by faith alone but their problem is that they are walking by the flesh and not the Spirit. The following diagram is helpful to understand the categories that Paul mentions:



### Verse 2

*Milk...solid food* – The milk of the Word is desirable for all new believers (1 Peter 2:2) and is necessary for growth. However there comes a time when all believers should grow past the stage of milk only to the meat of the word (Hebrews 5:12-14)  
*Even now you are not able* – Paul expected them to be past the stage of milk yet they were not. They had remained in their state of immaturity.

### Verse 3

*You are still fleshy* – The flesh is a synonym for the old man or old nature. In Galatians 5:16-26 Paul contrasts the Spirit walk and the flesh walk.

*Jealousy and strife* – Paul lets them diagnose themselves. Jealousy and strife are clearly works of the flesh (Galatians 5:20).

*Walking like mere men* – It is shameful when we as believers walk by the flesh. However, the possibility to do so is clearly a reality.

### Verse 4

Partisanship is a display of human wisdom and thus the flesh.

### Verse 5

The proper perspective is that all believers are servants. We are wrong to elevate someone because of their giftedness or their influence in our lives.

### Verses 6-7

*God was causing the growth* – God may use people in various roles in ministry but He is the One who ultimately determines the outcome.

### Verse 8

*He who plants...waters are one* – They are equal and in harmony, not competition.

*His own reward* – At the judgment seat of Christ we will individually receive our reward.

*According to his own labor* – Notice that it is our labor that is rewarded, not the fruit of our labor.

### Verse 9

*Fellow workers* – We all work together for God! God (*Theos*) is first in the Greek word order in each of these phrases for emphasis.

*God's field* – Referring back to verses 6-8

*God's building* – Looking forward to verses 10-15