

1 Corinthians 3:1&amp;F

11/25/18

Sunday Morning

1. The book of 1 Corinthians is one of the most practical books
  - a. James is called pragmatic – 1 Corinthians is too
2. Today we are looking at one of most important topics in Scripture
  - a. Not sure if any topic is more important to the Church of 21<sup>st</sup> today
3. To introduce our Scripture I would look at Matthew 13
  - a. Matthew 13 compliments 1 Corinthians 1-3

**Matthew 13:1** That day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea.

<sup>2</sup> And large crowds gathered to Him, so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach.

<sup>3</sup> And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow;

<sup>4</sup> and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.

<sup>5</sup> "Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil.

<sup>6</sup> "But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

<sup>7</sup> "Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out.

<sup>8</sup> "And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.

<sup>9</sup> "He who has ears, let him hear."

<sup>10</sup> And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them<sup>(crowd)</sup> in parables?"

<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered them, "**To you** it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.

**V.18** "Hear then the parable of the sower.

<sup>19</sup> "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.

<sup>20</sup> "The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

<sup>21</sup> yet he has no firm root in himself, but is *only* temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.

<sup>22</sup> "And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

<sup>23</sup> "And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

- b. I have given you these extra verses to confirm what is said In 1 Corinthians
4. For the Church today there is no greater topic than the one we are covering
- a. Evangelism is a frequent topic in church
  - b. Tithing is a frequent topic
  - c. Discipleship is a frequent topic
  - d. Many other issues are important also
5. It is imperative that we do a spiritual inventory (personally)

**1 Corinthians 3:1** And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ.

V.2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able,

V.3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?

**V.9** For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ.

- 1. "could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh"
  - a. Until now Paul has divided men into 2 categories
    - i. The saved man & the lost man

**1 Corinthians 2:12** Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,

**V.14** But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

- b. Now Paul will divide believers into 3 categories
- c. There are 4 categories of believers – we will look at all 4
  - i. Each believer in this room falls into one of those 4 categories
- d. The terms used are biblical – but in Scripture they are used interchangeably at times
  - i. But the categories are clearly defined by context
- e. The first category mentioned is "spiritual men"
  - i. That is the type believer we should all strive to be
- f. That group is spoken of by Christ in Matthew 13
 

**Matthew 13:23** "And the one on whom seed was sown on the **good soil**, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."
- g. This same type believer is mentioned John's gospel
 

**John 15:1** "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

**V.4** "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me.

**V.8** "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and *so* prove to be My disciples.
- h. A mature believer always produces fruit
  - i. The most recognizable fruit is found in Galatians 5

**Galatians 5:22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,  
<sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

**i. Summary: Category #1. "spiritual believer"**

**j. Category #2. "the infant believer"**

V.1 x And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ.

1. "but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ"

a. He **didn't** say they were infants

i. He said he could **only communicate** w/ them as infants

b. The second kind of believer is the **infant** believer

i. Being an infant believer is **not** a sin

ii. An infant believer is a new believer

**1 Peter 2:2** like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

iii. Never put a new believer in a place of authority

iv. I personally don't believe they should be giving their testimony

1. They need to mature a little before doing anything

v. A new believer shouldn't do anything at all b/c it exposes them to attack

**1 Timothy 3:6** and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.

c. Growing from infancy to maturity is mentioned in both Matthew 13 & John 15

**Matthew 13:23** "And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

k. In John's gospel

**John 15:1** "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

<sup>2</sup> "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears **fruit**, He prunes it so that it may bear **more** fruit.

**V.8** "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear **much** fruit, and *so* prove to be My disciples.

d.

V.1 x And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ.

V.2 *I gave you milk to drink, not solid food*; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able,

1. "I gave you milk to drink, not solid food"

a. There is a **vast difference** between milk & solid food

i. Milk is defined for us in Scripture

**Hebrews 6:1** Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, **not** laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

<sup>2</sup> of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

<sup>3</sup> And this we will do, if God permits.

b. Milk is where new believers start

c. In teaching Bible there is a place for both milk & solid food

V.3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, *are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?*

V.4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not **mere** men?

1. "are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men"

a. "fleshly" – σαρκικός -

b. The **fleshly** or **carnal** person is **not** the same as the "**natural** man"

i. The **natural man** **can't** be anything other than what he is

ii. He is lost & has no choice in what he is

c. The **third category** is the **fleshly/carnal** believer

- d. The fleshly/carnal man is a believer & has a choice but **willfully** makes the wrong choice
  - i. This is someone who **chooses** to live like the world
- e. Every believer lives in one of two spheres – it's like living in one of two circles
- f. The world interferes with some believers & **smothers** their walk w/ God
- g. This is also described in Matthew 13
  - Matthew 13:22** "And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth **choke** the word, and it becomes unfruitful.
- h. And in John 15
  - John 15:2** "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.
- i. The world, flesh & devil keep him from moving into spiritual sphere
- j. Or a believer can also be **dragged** out of the spiritual realm & back into the world after having left it
  - 2 Timothy 4:9** Make every effort to come to me soon;
  - <sup>10</sup> for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens *has gone* to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.
- k. You **don't** have to do bad things to be carnal/fleshly
- l. A carnal Christian is someone who **chooses** to do their own thing
  - i. They make a decision to live for themselves
  - ii. Or – they make a **decision** to not make a decision to live for Christ
  - iii. They don't see anything wrong w/ living **somewhat** like the world

- iv. No one grows up spiritually w/out **effort** on their part – if you haven't been **purposeful** about growing – you haven't grown!

**Romans 12:2** And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed**<sup>(imperative mood)</sup> by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

- v. Just as a person has to physically exercise to build muscle – they must spiritually exercise also

**Hebrews 5:13** For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.

<sup>14</sup> But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

- m. The Corinthians weren't in the Word enough to know what God thought

- i. Therefore Paul couldn't communicate w/ them on a mature level

V.3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?

V.4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men?

2. "are you not walking like mere men"

- a. Can a believer live like a lost man? Yes! (to his own detriment)  
b. We will see later in this chapter what the costs are

2. There is a **4<sup>th</sup> type of believer not mentioned here**

- a. That is the "weak" believer  
b. That believer is not the same as the carnal/fleshly believer  
c. This is someone who really wants to do what God wants them to but they are weak & can't seem to stay the course  
i. It can be caused by lack of exposure to Bible teaching  
ii. It can also be caused by a quirk in their personality

- iii. They really want to do what God wants – but their conscience, upbringing, etc. – interfere
- iv. I think they are referred to in Matthew 13 also
  - Matthew 13:20** "The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;  
<sup>21</sup> yet he has no *firm* root in himself, but is *only* temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.
- v. We see them referred to in Romans also
  - Romans 14:1** Now accept the one who is **weak** in faith, but not for the purpose *of* passing judgment on his opinions.  
<sup>2</sup> One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables *only*.  
<sup>3</sup> The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.
- vi. The person who is legalistic is a weaker brother
- vii. Legalism is wrong & against the principles of grace – but someone snared in legalism may simply be a weak believer

V.5 **What** then is Apollos? And **what** is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, **even as the Lord gave opportunity** to each one.

V.6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth.

V.7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

V.8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

V.9 For we are God's fellow workers; *you are God's field, God's building*.

1. "you are God's field, God's building"

a. Conclusion: There are **4 types** of believers

i. #1. The **spiritual** – #2. **infant** believer – #3. **carnal** – #4. **weak**

b. But a saved man should never be considered the same as a lost man

What kind of a believer are you? Don't be condemned – be challenged!



