

"TO THE CHURCH OF GOD WHICH IS AT CORINTH"

PAUL'S LETTERS TO THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH



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

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

BE MORE THAN MERE MEN

- What does Paul mean when he says that he could not speak to the Corinthian Christians as spiritual men?
 - To what does he compare them?
 - What are infants in Christ not able to receive?
 - What sorts of things would be milk?
 - What kinds of things would be solid food?
- What were Paul's proofs that they were still fleshly and infants — mere men?
 - What, therefore, would be proofs of being spiritual men?
 - Do those proofs still apply to today?

WHO ARE THESE MEN THAT YOU ARE MAKING SUCH A BIG DEAL ABOUT?

- What did the resumes of Apollos and Paul look like?
 - Yet what does Paul boil them down to being really?

one. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. ⁷ So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. ⁸ Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. ⁹ For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

¹⁰ According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. ¹¹ For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality

- What is this "opportunity" that Paul speaks of?
- So what is Paul's point in verse 1?
- Who is more important, the one who plants, the one who waters, or the one who causes the growth?
- What does he mean to say, when he says, "he who plants and he who waters are one"?
 - How will they be rewarded? On the basis of resume or labor?
 - What does it mean to be "God's fellow workers"?
 - To whom would this apply today?

YOU ARE GOD'S BUILDING

- What is the foundation upon which the church must be built? (v. 11)
 - Remember: 1 Cor. 2:2 "For I determined to know nothing among you except _____, _____, and Him _____."
 - So what does Paul mean when he says, "another is building on it"?
 - Who would this be?
 - What sort of care (v. 10) must the one building on the foundation of Christ take? (vvs. 12, 13)
 - What's the difference between gold, silver, precious stones and wood, hay, stubble?
 - Obviously, he's not talking about building a physical building with "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw", so

of each man's work. ¹⁴ If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

¹⁶ Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷ If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

¹⁸ Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become

what are the real materials for building the church?

- What will test each man's work and materials?
- What is this fire he speaks of?
- Who **today** are the other builders?
- If any man's work is burned up, what sort of loss will he suffer?
 - Will he still be saved?

THE TEMPLE OF GOD

- Is Paul saying **here** that our body is a temple of God or that the church is a temple of God?
 - So what is his warning about destroying the temple of God?
 - In what way was the temple of God being destroyed?
 - What does this say about strife, division, enmities, disunity, false doctrine, etc.?
 - What would it say about those who would persecute the church and try to destroy it?

GET A LITTLE FOOLISH TO BECOME WISER

- What was their fleshly, infantile, worldly "wisdom" doing to the church?
 - What are some "foolish" things (God's foolishness) that Paul is calling them to? (think about what he has rebuked them about)

wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written, "He is THE ONE WHO CATCHES THE WISE IN THEIR CRAFTINESS"; ²⁰ and again, "THE LORD KNOWS THE REASONINGS of the wise, THAT THEY ARE USELESS." ²¹ So then let no one boast in men. For all things belong to you, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come; all things belong to you, ²³ and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God.

- What would God's foolishness do for the church?
- What are some ways you can think of in which God has caught the wise in their craftiness?
- Can anyone outwit God?
- Why is boasting in men truly foolishness?
- What does Paul mean that Paul, Apollos, and Cephas all belong to all of them?
- How come "the world or life or death or things present or things to come" all belong to us?