

I Corinthians

Chapter 3

Let's open with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

Again we thank you for your word. We pray for understanding as we begin yet another chapter of this great book. Open up our hearts and minds and help us to grow by your word. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen!

Chapter 3 is the ministry of the gospel. It's a very important chapter. When we entitle it ministry of the gospel, it's the receiving end of the gospel. It's for people not only to be saved, but in this instance growth. Here is where Paul focuses on the maturity of these believers in Corinth which didn't get very far.

C.O.

I Corinthians 3
The Ministry of the Gospel

In Verses 1 through 9, he says that this is the problem in the church.

1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

10/24/2017
Page 2 of 10

He says, And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to carnal, and that's our word Sarkinos, even as unto babes in Christ.

There is nothing wrong with that. That's normal.

2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for up to now, you were not able to bear it, neither yet now are you able.

3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

For you are yet carnal: That's Sarkikos, abnormal. for as there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal, Sarkikos, and walk as men?

Literally, walking according to man. Everything is done in the human. There isn't anything spiritual at all.

I want to point out to you that even a Christian can walk according to man and do things the human way rather than the leading of the Spirit of God.

So he brings out the division in Verse 4:

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

For one says, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are you not carnal?

You see, they are of Christ but they call themselves names and divide themselves up from the rest of the body of Christ.

He then says concerning this inspiration:

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

He says, Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers, and that's the word Diakanos where we get our word Deacon. But ministers by whom you believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

And you should know that the word increase, Auxano, is actually the word growth. There are preachers that use this to motivate people for the increase of the church in numbers. But it has to do with growth.

I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the growth.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

For we are labourers together, literally fellow workers, with God: you are God's husbandry, and that's the word for cultivated field.

You are God's cultivated field. You are God's building.

He's using construction terms, farming terms. The laborers are out planting the seed and watering. The workers are out building and framing the house. But he says we're just the laborers. It's God that gives the growth. That is what counts!

M.V.

I Corinthians 3:10

So then he describes for them this process of growth. There are three things: The foundation, the edification, which is a construction term that means to build a house, and the instruction.

First of all the foundation: Paul says:

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

10/24/2017
Page 4 of 10

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds thereon.

So he's talking about him coming in and evangelizing. And he's talking about Apollos coming through and teaching. In fact, Apollos was the first pastor in Corinth after Paul left.

So he says I have laid the foundation, but another has built thereon. But let every person take heed how he builds thereon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Literally in the Greek text, it says "For other foundation can no man lay alongside of that. The word "than" means alongside of. You can't lay another foundation alongside of Christ. He's the only one!

So now the building in Verse 12 to 15:

You see, Christ is the foundation, and he says:

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

Now if any man build upon this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, and stubble;

So no matter what is used, the gold, silver, and precious stones represent the work of God's Spirit, and the wood, hay, and stubble represent the work of man.

M.V.

I Corinthians 3:13

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

He says no matter which of these elements you build on, every man's work shall be manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire;

This is not the fire of Hell. But as I told you before, there will be a judgment called the Bema seat of Christ. It's not the White Throne Judgement, but every Christian will stand before the Bema seat of Christ.

And that's the judges' stand at the Colosseum games. Everyone will answer to their walk with Christ.

And it's going to be interesting because everyone's work is going to be tested in fire literally!

And the fire shall test every man's work of what sort it is. The word "try" is the work Dokimadzo where you pass the metals through the fire and it burns off the dross. And so every man's work is going to be tested.

Paul says that there is no other foundation other than Christ. So everybody that has received Christ, you can't lay another foundation. You only have one. But what you need to watch for is what you build on that foundation.

Picture yourself standing there at the pearly gates, and Peter's there of course. I always picture the golden arches like at McDonald's, but I'm sure that won't be there.

But we get hooked up to this thing that pulls us through like a car wash pulls a car through the carwash, but instead of water, it is fire. And when we come out the other end, that's what we're going to be throughout eternity.

Look what he says: And fire shall test every man's work of what sort, or kind it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work abides which he has built with, he shall receive this reward.

M.V.

I Corinthians 3:15

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

If any man's work shall be burned, and notice this: he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire.

We're going to suffer loss. All of the things that were the human effort, anything that is not done by the Spirit of Christ, is going to burn. Not only in our natural life, but even in things that we call "The things of the Lord."

If it's not the Spirit of God, it's going to burn, no matter what it is. And what we have on the other side, that's our reward.

I am introducing that to you here, but it is also found in 2 Peter Chapter 1 Verses 1 through 11. Peter is giving his "Swan song" in that he's ready to die, and he says in these 11 verses, I'm going to give you the gospel.

Number one: A person who is saved is a person who is interacting with the divine nature. That's number one.

Number two: A person who is saved is involved in the growth processes. And he lists various stages of the growth processes.

But then when he gets to Verse 11 of 2 Peter Chapter 1, he gives a couple of verses there of how important it is to be going through these growth processes, and if these things are not taking place in you, then you are myopic, you're short-sided. You forgot where you came from. You forgot where God saved you from because he says in Verse 11 "For in this way will be your entrance into heaven."

I'll put it this way, and I'm convinced because the bible teaches it, but not many people want to emphasize it because "if," conditional, if indeed just what Christ does in me and the transformation that He makes in my life, that's what I'm going to be throughout eternity, so what should I be focused on? The spiritual things of Christ!

But most of the time as Christians we are thinking horizontal. We're building horizontally and not vertically. That doesn't mean that we can't build horizontally. But sometimes we put the emphasis on the physical work, the human work.

There are quite a few pastors that function in a way so as to leave a legacy for themselves. Their ministry is not successful unless there's monuments and fountains with water that weren't there before or something, leaving some kind of legacy to show that they were successful!

But I point out to you that "if," and I'll put it in a conditional phrase to give you the leeway to disagree, but if indeed what I'm telling you is true, that whatever changes and transformation that Christ makes in me, that's what I'm going to be throughout eternity.

Every day, what are my priorities? What's important?

We get so wrapped up in things, literally that are going to burn. It means nothing. And yet my function in heaven, and we're all going to be the same in that we're all going to have the same spiritual bodies, but everybody's going to be different depending on the transformation that has taken place.

It puts a little more emphasis on things rather than "You're a Christian that should go to bible study!"

No, I'm a Christian and I need to keep changing. The Lord needs to keep transforming me, changing me, because I have the mind of Christ. He's done all this for me and I waste it, and all the wasted time is going to burn!

Then he gives instruction:

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

You see, there's a believer. It didn't say "You believe in Jesus Christ," is said that God's Spirit dwells in you!

17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

For if any man defiles the temple of God, and that's the physical body, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Chapter 3 puts everything into perspective. God's Spirit dwells in my body. This is His temple and He's doing a work inside of me. He's changing me from the inside, and that work is going with me to heaven.

So it's nice to be able to save for retirement and look forward to retirement, but we have another retirement coming that we need to get ready for.

So as we continue on with the ministry of the gospel, you can see why Paul went to lengths to detail this for the Christians in Corinth, because five years after they're saved, they are still fleshly walking according to the human, and not by the Spirit of God.

And he says "You're wasting your time. We laid the foundation for you, and five years later, there's five years' worth of burning going on. God wants to make out of you, and in you, a dwelling place of His Spirit and a changed and transformed person, and continue to do that.

Still under the ministry of the gospel, but Verses 18 to 23, the precaution concerning limitations:

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

Paul talks about the deception. He says let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seems to be wise in this world, and this is the word age which is a little more specific, not just the world that we live in, but the age, the epic, the period of history in which we live, which for us would be the technological age.

If anyone seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise.

K.V.

1 Corinthians 3:19 Job 5:13
--

His instruction:

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness. That's the word Moria. It's where we get our word Moron from. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He takes the wise in their own craftiness.

So he quotes from Job 5:13, that the person of the world who thinks he's so wise, and God lets him get caught in his own trap.

K.V.

1 Corinthians 3:20 Psalm 94:11

And then from Psalm 94:11:

20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

Empty!

So therefore, the possession:

21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;

Therefore let no man boast in men. Did you catch that? Let no one boast in men, in people! For all things are yours;

22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

They are all yours!

23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

And you are of Christ; and Christ is of God.

I've mentioned this to you before. What Paul is saying is if he came into Corinth and people received Christ through Paul's preaching, and they say "I am of Paul," he says "Wait a minute, I'm just one of many. I planted, Apollos watered.

Whatever God does through Paul, whatever God does through Apollos, whatever God does through anybody, it's all yours!

Sometimes we limit ourselves to saying "You know, I've got to stick with my man right there, and you can't receive from the Lord through any other place." And that's not true!

God can minister to you in one place on a Sunday morning or Sunday night or Wednesday night, or whatever the case might be. There can be another bible study somewhere else that God leads you to that you get fed. It's all yours!

It's all of Christ. If the Lord is ministering to you, it is all of Him to you. It has nothing to do with ownership or possession or who you belong to or don't belong to. That's why he says that we should all be saying the same thing. We all belong to Christ.

"What are you doing over there?" Well, the Lord led me over there. "What are you doing over here?" The Lord led me!

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

10/24/2017
Page 10 of 10

He's not going to have us all being fed and led to go to the same place. He has other things for us. It's okay. Everything is yours, and we shouldn't limit ourselves, nor should we limit God. Anything God wants to give to me, I'll take it. I need it, and I'm not going to limit Him!

Let's close with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

Thank you so much for another time in your word. We desire to grow spiritually and we confess our dependency upon you to allow us to move forward. Your word is alive and powerful. We desire to know you more each and every time we study the scriptures. Teach us the true meaning of submission. Teach us what it means to follow you. Again we thank you for your provision. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen!