

First Baptist Church of Progress Village
Wednesday Bible Study
1 Corinthians Chapter 3
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I. An honest assessment of Spiritual maturity.

1 Corinthians 3:1-2 (KJV) *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 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.*

A. The difference between a spiritual believer and a carnal believer is maturity.

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

B. Carnal means flesh and describes a believer who continues to chase self-serving desires.

1 Corinthians 3:3-4 (KJV) *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 while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?*

C. There are indicators that you are carnal, and each person should self examine routinely.

SELF CARNAL EXAM

- 1) Are you more focused on what other people will be doing, saying, wearing, going than on your own attitude and approach to worship?
- 2) Have you separated yourself from a ministry or group because you did not like another person in it?
- 3) Have you spoken against that person to discourage or “warn” someone else to influence them to avoid a group?
- 4) Have you ever not attended church service because you were upset by a person or group?
- 5) Have you ever stopped (or never start) serving in a ministry because of a specific person you didn’t care for?
- 6) Are you willing to serve with or under someone you do not favor even if you know you can?
- 7) Are you willing to serve in ministry if you aren’t leading or calling the shots?
- 8) If you don’t agree with a decision, do you withhold participation or support?
- 9) Do you align yourself with a particular person or group instead of the entire body of Christ?

The difference is not in the temptation, but in the action. Are you controlled by carnal / selfish thoughts or by spiritual / Godly thoughts.

1 Corinthians 3:5-6 (KJV) *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.*

D. Pastors and leaders are servants first and always and should not be used as tools for division.

1 Corinthians 3:7 (KJV) *So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.*

E. On our own our efforts are useless. Only God creates and only God allows growth.

James 1:17 (KJV) *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

F. It’s only good if it’s from God, and it’s only God if it’s good.

1 Corinthians 3:8-9 (KJV) *Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.*

G. We are all working together on the same team. Team Jesus! We have **diverse** roles in a **unified** purpose under the **control** of the Spirit.

SELF SPIRITUAL EXAM

- 1) Does your focus turn to God in difficult situations or people? (Where is God in this opposed to what is everyone else doing in this)
- 2) Are you humbled by your work and contributions to ministry or boastful?
- 3) Do you allow your talents to be used for kingdom work or always too busy? Plant, water, or harvest?
- 4) Do you give God glory for successes or take the credit for all your efforts?

II. A Final **Judgment** of our Works

1 Corinthians 3:10-12 (KJV) *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. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;*

A. This judgment determines the difference between work that is

- 1) **Worthy** – gold, silver, precious stones
- 2) **Unworthy** – wood, hay, stubble (straw)

1 Corinthians 3:13 (KJV) *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.*

B. Trying by fire is to review the **action** and **motivation** of the work we do in Jesus' name. "Burning" is not losing your salvation.

1 Corinthians 3:14 (KJV) *If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.*

C. What we **do** now determines what we **have** in eternity.

Examples of rewards in Heaven:

- 1) Incorruptible Crown – self control over the old nature (1 Cor 9:25-27)
- 2) Crown of Rejoicing – for Soul winners (1 Thess 2:19-20)
- 3) Crown of Life – for conquering temptation (James 1:12)
- 4) Crown of Glory – for faithful pastors (1 Peter 5:2-4)
- 5) Crown of Righteousness – for loving and faithful service until Rapture (2 Tim 4:7-8)

1 Corinthians 3:15 (KJV) *If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

1 Corinthians 3:15 (NLT2) *But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.*

D. Getting into Heaven is an amazing and wonderful gift of God. Being rewarded when we get there is a **result** of our **expressions** of gratitude for having been gifted!

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (KJV) *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*

E. Immature **behavior** leads to pre-mature **departure**.

1 Corinthians 3:18-19 (KJV) *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. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.*

Job 5:13 (NLT2) *He traps the wise in their own cleverness so their cunning schemes are thwarted.*

F. God's discernment leads to **success**, leaning to our own schemes leads to **failure**.

1 Corinthians 3:20 (KJV) *And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.*

Psalms 94:11 (NASB) *The LORD knows the thoughts of man, That they are a mere breath.*

G. Any thought not towards God's purpose is **wasted**. Only what you do for **Christ** will last!

1 Corinthians 3:21 (KJV) *Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;*

H. There is no place or reason to be **prideful**, because all we are, have, and will be is because of God.

1 Corinthians 3:22-23 (KJV) *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.*

I. Every moment we spend praising a man is time better spent praising God!

Next Week Read Chapter 4
(and catch up if you've not read 1-3)