

1 CORINTHIANS

SEEING EVERY PART OF LIFE THROUGH THE GOSPEL

31 Jan 2021

Chapter 3

Verse of the Day:

For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Co 3:11).

Review: Who, What, When, Where, Why?

What's Going On Here?

The Corinthians had shown spiritual immaturity ("mere infants in Christ") in wanting to follow human leaders, whether Paul, Cephas (Peter), or Apollos. The apostle reminds emphatically that it is not man but God who is the true tiller of spiritual soil and builder of His church. It is important, then, that workers in God's employ build up the Christian congregation, or the temple of God, on the basis of the Word of God. Those who construct the church on the sure foundation of the Gospel of Christ will see their work survive. But those who build otherwise interfere with the orderly growth of the church and bring themselves and their work under divine judgment.¹

Divisions in the Church

3 But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ²I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? ⁴For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?

⁵What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. ⁹For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

¹⁰ According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. ¹¹For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— ¹³each one's work will become

Infants – opposite of the mature & wise Christians in 1 Cor 2:6.

What would you consider *milk vs solid food* (e.g. Hebrews 5:11–6:3)?

Consider Ephesians 4:11–16 how do Christians mature and how do mature Christians act?

[c.f. LW v 51 p 77](#)

How would you describe Paul and Apollos' respective tasks of planting and watering?

While their tasks differed, Paul and Apollos served one purpose. What was that purpose (c.f. 3:5, 8)?

Read Luke 6:47–49. In what ways does Jesus provide a solid foundation?

What construction methods (c.f. 1 Cor 1:10-11, 17, 2:1-5) did Paul, as the "master builder", use? Why?

¹ Engfehr, Lois M. (1997). *God's Word for Today: 1 Corinthians* (p. 17). St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House. Reproducible by purchaser only. © 2009 Concordia Publishing House.

manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

¹⁶Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? ¹⁷If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

¹⁸Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. ¹⁹For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," ²⁰and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile." ²¹So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, ²²whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, ²³and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

Considering the test of fire: Can you name some examples of "Christian" building materials that would be considered gold, silver, & precious stones?

What are some examples of materials that would be considered wood?

What about hay and straw?

How can verses 16-17 be viewed as Law and how can they be viewed as Gospel?

Reflection Questions:

Reflect on your own spiritual growth. In what areas do you need most to grow through a more intensive use of the Word in your daily life? In what areas do you feel you have grown the most? How can you grow spiritually?

Consider your own role in God's kingdom. What specific tasks has God assigned to you?

Examine your own priorities in life. How are you spending your time, talents, and treasure in ways that will endure beyond this life into heaven? Are any changes of priorities in order? Explain.

644 [The Church's One Foundation](#)

The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
She is His new creation
By water and the Word.
From heav'n He came and sought her
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.

Text: Public domain