

Session 4: Live for Christ—A Mission Worth Living For

1 Corinthians 3

1 Corinthians 3:1-9, “Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. ³ You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? ⁴ For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere human beings? ⁵ What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. ⁶ I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. ⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. ⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. ⁹ For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building.”

Paul now accuses the Corinthians of being still at the physical stage. Paul uses two words to describe them....*Sarkinoi and Sarlokoi*.... *Sarx*...means flesh. Greek adjectives ending in *inos* means made of something or other (Texas term “stuff”).

So....Paul tells the Corinthians that they are made of flesh (not in itself a rebuke....all men are *sarx* =of flesh); but,

We are not to stay that way.

Do you know people, even churches that never move on?

Christians should always be striving for greater faith, greater knowledge of the Word, and a greater glimpse of our reason to being on planet earth!

Paul states that the Corinthians were not only *sarkinoi*....but that they were *sarkikoi* (NOT ONLY MADE OF FLESH BUT DOMINATED BY FLESH; DESIRES THAT PLEASE MAN...NOT GOD).

What is it that makes Paul level such a rebuke at them?

It is:

- Their party spirit
- Their strife
- Their factions.

Party spirit, strife, factions....brought on by glorification of human leaders.

In the garden one man may plant and another waters...but neither can claim to have made the seed to grow. That belongs to God and God alone.

God uses human instruments to bring to men the message of His truth and love; but it is He alone who wakes the hearts of men to new life.

As He alone created the heart, so He alone can re-create it

This passage also tells us what our mission should be....to doing the work of the Lord through the gifts that God has given us.

Promises to those who do:

- **Receive our own reward according to our own labor.**
- **We will know that we belong to God....we are the building in which God fills with all kinds of spiritual wisdom and spiritual riches.**

Can you name some spiritual wisdom and riches that God gives eagerly to those who desire to follow Him....and make good in those desires by presenting our bodies as living sacrifices, holy acceptable unto Him?

1 Corinthians 3:10-15, *“By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.”*

Paul speaks here from personal experience. Very few places did Paul stay past the laying down of the foundation of the elementary teaching of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World...the fundamental truth that Jesus was who He said He was...that is the Son of God, the one who is the First Resurrection....the Promised One.

Paul was most of the time on the move....He stayed 18 months in Corinth and 3 years in Ephesus...but that was not the norm. He stayed less than a month in Thessalonica...and that was typical of Paul. He always thought that there was so much ground waiting to be covered; there were so many people who had never heard the name of Jesus Christ.

Wherever Paul went, he laid the same foundation. That was the proclamation of the facts about and the offer of Jesus Christ.

It was Paul’s goal and objective....to introduce people to Jesus Christ because it is in Him, and Him alone, that a person can find three (3) things:

- (1) **He finds forgiveness of sins...(Nobody...not anything can do this, only a faith in Jesus Christ).**

(2) **He finds strength for the present...**(To be able to wade through torrential rains that try to sweep you up and wash you downstream...never to live a happy, contented life). God's strength is perfect....and He wants to give us His strength through Jesus. *"....If anyone serves, it is with the strength God provides..." 1 Peter 4:11*

(3) **He finds hope for the future.**

A hope that gives us reason to cope...with life's situations. The Christian no longer lives in a world in which he is afraid to look forward but in one where God is in control and working together all things together for good.

He lives in a world where death is no longer the end.

There will be a Day...that Day Paul refers to is when Christ will come again. Then...comes the final test. It is not a test to see if you can enter heaven. It is a testing of our works....what we have done for Jesus.

Two things to not worry here....

(1) **Whether you will live with Jesus forever....because if you are standing with Jesus on this day of testing, it is not a day in which God will test your DNA.**

That day...is when your DNA must match Jesus....Jesus must be blood kin (a brother to you).

This day is when your works will be tried in fire.

Are you ready for that testing?

Note: Christian DNA

D = Dead to sin

N = New in Jesus

A = Atoned for by the Blood of the Lamb (Jesus)

= BLOOD BROTHERS

(2) **About tomorrow....It is a known fact...we will be with Jesus forever when we stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ.**

Two things that you might have to worry about....

(1) **What we say....in this life...**

(2) **What we do....in this life...**

We need to act like Jesus is with us at all times....because He is.

In the end....ever who is standing before God at the Judgment Seat of Christ will be saved. In the mercy of God, even the inadequate builder will be saved, because the blood covered him of his sin....

They accepted the grace of God.....but it will be hard for them to look in the face of God.

Paul saw in the Corinthians....very weak, carnal, immature Christians. They had accepted the Gift...but did not have any interest in giving it to someone else. If they tried to give it....who would want it? Their lives were no different than the world...

If you can't sell your livingthen who will understand what you are giving?

If your life is not grounded in truth and Godly living, then who would understand about a changed life?

They needed revival....
How long has it been since you have seen revival...true revival in our churches?

Prayer....testimonies...songs that have spiritual directive...Holy Ghost power preaching.....will lead us to revival! It will humble us and seek God with all our heart and soul!

Do you want it? Pray and seek His face....

**Want Wisdom?? Don't pull your wisdom tooth! (Just kidding)...
That makes about as much sense as thinking that the wisdom of man can be counted on as tooth...I mean truth!**

Paul's View on Christian Wisdom....What we have learned so far:

<u>Key Point</u>	<u>Passage</u>
1. Christian Wisdom Exists Among Mature Believers	2: 6
2. Christian Wisdom Is Not To Be Confused With the World's Wisdom	2:6, 8
3. Christian Wisdom Centers on God's Redemptive Plan Through the Ages	2:7, 9
4. Christian Wisdom Is Revealed To Us by the Spirit	2:10 – 12
5. Christian Wisdom Is Imparted To Others By Those Who Have Been Taught By The Spirit.	2:1
6. Christian Wisdom Is Folly to the Unspiritual Person	2:14—16

Another Book on Godly Wisdom is found in Proverbs:
Proverbs 2:6—"For the Lord gives wisdom, and from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.

In Proverbs...Wisdom...is God's truth. Even at times it is like God's Spirit talking to the person who is seeking counsel. Read Proverbs 8.

1 Corinthians 3:16 – 22, *"Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple. ¹⁸ Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become 'fools' so that you may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: 'He catches the wise in their craftiness'; ²⁰ and again, 'The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.' ²¹ So then, no more boasting about human leaders! All things*

are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours,..”

To Paul the Church was the very temple of God because it was the society in which the Spirit of God dwelt.

If men introduce dissension and division into the Church, they destroy the temple of God in a double sense:

- (1) They make it difficult, if not impossible, for the Spirit to operate.**
Immediately when bitterness enters a church, love goes from it. It is difficult for truth to be spoken and heard rightly in that atmosphere.
- (2) They split up the Church and reduce it to a series of disconnected ruins.**
No building can stand firm and four square if sections of it are removed.
The Church’s greatest weakness is its divisions.

Root Cause of the problems in the Church at Corinth:

- **The worship of intellectual, worldly wisdom.**
- **Pride in the human mind...causing them to evaluate and criticize the way in which the message is delivered and the correctness of the rhetoric in lieu of thinking only of the content of the message itself.**

The trouble about this intellectual pride is that it is always two (2) things:

- (1) It is always disputatious.....meaning “engaged in controversy; inclined to disputes.”**
It cannot keep silent and admire; it must talk and criticize.
It is never humble enough to learn; it must always be laying down the law.
- (2) Intellectual pride is characteristically “exclusive.”**
Its tendency is to look down on others rather than to sit down beside them...and work things out.
It tends to cut men off from each other rather than to unite them.

No man can teach a man who thinks that he knows it already

Some quotes on intellectual wisdom of man....not man seeking God’s wisdom:

“He is the wisest man who knows himself to be very ill-equipped for the study of wisdom.” Plato

“They would doubtless have become excellent scholars if they had not been so fully persuaded of their own scholarship.” Quintilian...referring to some students.

“He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not is a fool; avoid him. He who knows not, and knows that he knows not is a wise man; teach him.” Old Proverb.

Paul wants this thing of worshipping or yielding their allegiance to some man...to stop immediately. Paul is saying to them....Man is only as big as God allows him...and God only allows any man to be humble and contrite in heart if he wants to please the Father.

“Humble yourself in the sight of God....and He will lift you up.”

(Kind of a humbling experience....isn’t it?)