**1 CORINTHIANS 3**

**MATURING, PLANTING, BUILDING**

Paul has been speaking to the Corinthian church about two kinds of people: Mature, or spiritual people In 2:1; and the Natural man in 2:14 . The first group are believers who have grown up in the Lord. The second group are unbelievers who have not even been born again…

In chapter three he will deal with a third group – The carnal believers. They believe but are lukewarm and worldly.

**DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCH**

**1 Corinthians 3:1** And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual **(Mature)** *people* but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.

* We will find that the letter to the Corinthians is constructive criticism from the Apostle.
* HE considered himself to be their spiritual Dad… AND… They had failed to launch… They were far too immature for Paul’s liking.
* Instead of being challenged by the words of God – they were offended. Instead of leaving worldly things behind… They still enjoyed partying… Instead of living moral lives, some of them were tolerating immorality in their families and they were calling it liberty… when really it was just lust.
* Paul is going to challenge them to grow in the Lord. He will ask them to keep their flesh under control.

2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able *to receive it,* and even now you are still not able;

3 for you are still carnal. ***(Ruled by sin)*** For where *there are* envy, **SIN** strife, **SIN,** and divisions **SIN** among you, are you not carnal and behaving like *mere* men?

* **COURSON** - In addition to an inability to take in the meat of the Word, carnality manifests itself in envy, strife, and division. Envy always wants something else, which leads to strife—always finding something wrong, which leads to division—always looking for something new. This is what was happening in the church at Corinth as carnal believers fought with and split from one another.
* **Chuck Smith** has mentored us Calvary Chapel Pastors to NOT become guilty of keeping our congregations in an infant stage by feeding them milk… But to teach the entirety of the bible verse by verse!
* **Acts 20:27** For I ***(Paul)*** have not shunned to declare to you the whole ***(all, any & every)*** counsel of God.
* The Word of God is SO important… So is planting it…

**THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANTING SEEDS**

4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I *am* of Apollos," are you not carnal?

* Carnality is Jealousy, strife, and divisions… When it happens in a church – it is heartbreaking and damaging.
* The Corinthian church was dividing by calling out men as their leaders rather than the Holy Spirit…

5 Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?

6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but **God who gives the increase**.

* Speaking to Peter about this Jesus said in **Matthew 16:18** And I also say to you that you are Peter, **(Petros - Fragment of a rock)** and on this rock ***(Petra - foundation)*** **I will build My church,** and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
* WHO builds the church? JESUS! It belongs to Him. See Verse 11…
* What is our responsibility? Listen…

8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one, ***(Unified…)*** and each one will receive his own reward ***(Probably in heaven)*** according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, ***(He worked the soil of your hearts***) *you are* God's building. **HE BUILT YOU!**

* Finish this sentence OUT LOUD… **(Everybody play…)**
  + Simi Valley Unified \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Did you say Church?

**THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH**

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder ***(Architect)*** I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. **(NOT Peter – Can you imagine?)**

12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, **(Permanent)** wood, hay, straw, **(Temporary)**

**FIRE TESTED FAITH**

13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

14 If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

* Emotions and a man’s personality are wood, hay & straw…
* But the Word of God is gold, silver & precious stone…
* WHICH should we minister to people with? **THE WORD!**
* Again, what is MY responsibility? Listen…. I love this verse…

**ARE YOU A TEMPLE?**

16 Do you not know that you are the temple ***(Shrine)*** of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

* Think of it CCSV… Our bodies are shrines of the Lord Jesus Christ…
* Every Child of God has the Holy Spirit living within you.
* I like to reckon it to expensive things that you buy that come with a case…
  + If you buy a guitar at a toy store… It does NOT come with a case. BUT… If you buy a Taylor, or a Gibson, or a Martin guitar it will most assuredly come with a very nice case…
  + If you buy an engagement ring at Walmart… Go to Zales.
  + If you buy binoculars at a toy store… Go to REI.
  + You are precious to the Holy Spirit… YOU are His case.
  + Every where you go… HE goes. Everything you do… HE is there. **SO… His constant presence comes with a warning…**

**WARNING**

17 If anyone defiles ***(morally corrupt)*** the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.

* Bible teachers have taken this verse and run wild… Does it mean:
  + Suicide? Immorality? Smoking? Eating French fries? Addiction? Addiction to French fries? NO… NO… NO… NOPE
* **COURSON** - The Greek word translated "destroy" doesn't mean "damned." It means "diminished." Taken in context, Paul is saying he who defiles the church by either overtly or subtly causing division within the church, by coming down on the church, or by pulling away from the church will himself be diminished. His ability to know the Lord, walk with the Lord, and be used by the Lord will decrease perceptibly. Why? Because the Lord is very protective of His church. He is madly, outrageously, head-over-heels in love with His bride.
* **GUZIK** - If you defile the church, God will **destroy** you. God’s temple - His church - is **holy**, and it matters to God how we treat His holy temple.
* Our bodies are members of the body of Christ, His Church. SO… We do well to treat OUR body and others well because… We are all members of one body – The Body Of the Lord.

**DON’T KID YOURSELF…**

18 Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, ***(They think they have everything under control WITHOUT God’s help)*** let him become a fool ***(Humble)*** that he may become wise.

* We have a friend who likes to talk about his portfolio, his business, and his toys… I have NEVER heard one single word from his mouth about thanking God, knowing God, or serving God…
* He thinks he is incredibly wise and clever… But he is really just a lucky fool for now… I pray for him to surrender his life to Christ before he meets Him on judgment day. God will not care that his Apple stock just split again… ***WHY NOT?***

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "HE CATCHES THE WISE IN THEIR OWN CRAFTINESS"; **JOB 5:13**

20 and again, "THE LORD KNOWS THE THOUGHTS OF THE WISE, THAT THEY ARE FUTILE." **PSALM 94:11**

21 Therefore let no one boast in men. 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. 23 And you *are* Christ's, and Christ *is* God's.

**NLT** - So don't boast about following a particular human leader. For everything belongs to you—22 whether Paul or Apollos or Peter, or the world, or life and death, or the present and the future. Everything belongs to you, 23 and **you belong to Christ**, and Christ belongs to God.

**WHO DO WE BELONG TO? Let’s live like we do, Amen?**