

1 Corinthians 3 v 1 - 23

1 Dear brothers and sisters, when I was with you I couldn't talk to you as I would to spiritual people. I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in Christ. 2 I had to feed you with milk, not with solid food, because you weren't ready for anything stronger. And you still aren't ready, 3 for you are still controlled by your sinful nature. You are jealous of one another and quarrel with each other. Doesn't that prove you are controlled by your sinful nature? Aren't you living like people of the world? 4 When one of you says, "I am a follower of Paul," and another says, "I follow Apollos," aren't you acting just like people of the world?

5 After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God's servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. 6 I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. 7 It's not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. 9 For we are both God's workers. And you are God's field. You are God's building.

10 Because of God's grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it. But whoever is building on this foundation must be very careful. 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ.

12 Anyone who builds on that foundation may use a variety of materials—gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw. 13 But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person's work has any value. 14 If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. 15 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.

16 Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you? 17 God will destroy anyone who destroys this temple. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

18 Stop deceiving yourselves. If you think you are wise by this world's standards, you need to become a fool to be truly wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. As the Scriptures say,

"He traps the wise

in the snare of their own cleverness.”

20 And again,

“The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise;

he knows they are worthless.”

21 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.

Questions:

When you were a child, what did you make that you were proud of?

1. In verse 2, what did Paul mean when he said that he had “to feed you with milk, not with solid food”?
2. What had Paul and Apollos done in Corinth? Can we think of any modern day examples of this?
3. What is the difference between respecting a Christian leader and the problem Paul is dealing with here?
4. In verses 7 & 8, who’s work is most important? What are the implications of this for how we perceive what we do in our lives?
5. What did Paul mean when he said in verse 10, “, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder.”?
6. What do verses 8 and 12 to 15 tell us about judgement? Do we think this is something we are sufficiently aware of in the church today?
7. How does becoming a fool make us truly wise?

Can you think of one thing you can do this week to build well on the foundation we have in Christ?