



It's Time to Grow Up!

RECAP

This week's focus: God wants you to grow beyond what you know.

When Paul first arrived on the scene in Corinth somewhere in the late 40's, the Corinthians began their journeys as Christ followers as we all do, as infants. So Paul gave them a steady dose of spiritual food that was the equivalent of what one would feed a baby, milk. But 4 or 5 years had passed since Paul had left Corinth, yet he was receiving word that there had been very little spiritual growth among them. They were still operating as spiritual infants. So here in Chapter 3, Paul takes off his kid gloves and begins punching them with the message: Grow up!

In the first four verses he highlights this issue of their immaturity and reminds them that while they are made of flesh, they should no longer be driven by the flesh, because they now house God's Spirit. Paul highlights things like jealousy and quarreling as a couple of traits that they should be maturing out of. They've been arguing over who's better at doing God's work between him and Apollos which Paul finds laughable.

So, Paul makes it clear that he and Apollos are simply doing what God had tasked them to do and at the end of the day, God is the one responsible for the growth. They both understood that God is the ultimate producer of life and that they were simply His vessels responsible to disperse that life to others.

After this Paul uses the metaphor of building a building. He makes it clear that Jesus is the only foundation upon which anyone can build. But, as for the rest of the structure, it is up to the individual builder to decide what materials they'll use to build upon that foundation. He lists six different building materials, three of which are strong enough to stand the test of a fire and three of which would burn up in a fire. His point is that we should build our spiritual homes with care, using only quality materials. In the greater context, Paul's point is that we should be bearing the fruit of the Spirit and not doing the works of the flesh.

After reminding the Corinthian believers that they themselves house God's Spirit and whenever they gather, they are the new representation of God's Temple, he closes the chapter with yet another encouragement that there is a difference between godly and worldly wisdom.

As you read this chapter and study these verses, pray that God will reveal to you areas in your life where He wants you to grow. Ask Him to give you an awareness of His agenda for you and a willingness to join His efforts in bearing the Fruit of the Spirit.



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SHARE (5-10 min)

1. Icebreaker Question: Who is the most famous person you have met? Who would you like to meet in person if you had the chance?

STUDY (about 30 min) Read 1 Corinthians 3

1. What stood out to you about the passage or message on Sunday? Is there anything that was unclear, or that you have questions about?
2. Identify an area in your spiritual life that you've seen recent growth (Think Fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22-23). Is there an area in your spiritual life where you are "driven by the flesh" (think acts of the flesh, see Galatians 5:19-21) Share it!
3. Read 1 Cor. 3:10-16. What two metaphors are used to relate to our spiritual lives? How are they similar? How do they differ?
4. Describe an experience in your life where you've witnessed the "pedestalizing" (elevating) of a spiritual leader. Did it help advance the kingdom, or did it set it back? Explain.
5. Verse 14 mentions a reward for those who build with top quality building materials but doesn't specify the reward. What might that reward be?
6. What does it mean for Jesus to be the foundation of the church, and His gathered people, the temple?
7. According to verses 16-17, what do God's people represent? How does that make you feel? What are the implications of this biblical reality?
8. As you think about this passage. How would you describe your spiritual growth? i.e. Seeker-Believer-Learner-Server-Leader.

SUPPORT (15 min)

Ask: Spend time praying that God would reveal His growth agenda for each person in your group. Pray humility and obedience to His Word as you each seek to grow in Christ.