

# 1 Corinthians 3

## Misunderstandings about preachers

### **How does the religious world look at preachers?**

- Titles: Rev. (see *Psalm 111.9*)
- Father (see *Matt. 23, 6-9*)
- Pastor (see *Eph. 4.11, Acts 20.28*) (refers to elders)
- Priest (see *1 Pet. 2.9*) (all Christians are priests)
- "Clergy" (supposedly a special class of Christians)
- Special clothes
- Special treatment
- But some ministers are evil workers (*2 Cor. 11.13-15*)

**Read Acts 10.26** – Peter to Cornelius: "*Stand up, I too am just a man*"

**Read Acts 14.15** – Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, when they stopped the people from calling them "gods" (so different from many denominational preachers today)

We have seen many cases of people who were converted to a preacher (not to Christ) – they usually leave when the preacher leaves, and they follow him to his next congregation

## 1 Corinthians 3.1-9

**V1** – **When are babies cute?** When they are clean, fed, and asleep

-**Do they have things that detract from their cuteness?** Yes....

-**When is it wrong to be a "babe" in Christ?** When we should have matured in the faith

**V2** – *Heb. 5.11-6.2* – the same message

-**In what sense are new converts like babies?**

-*John 3.3-7* – We must be born again

-*Romans 6.4* – We are raised to walk in newness of life

**V3** – A sign of "natural" thinking? Jealousy, etc.

**V4** – They were bragging about the divisions!

**V5** – **Why should preachers not boast of their converts?** They should give the glory to God

**V6-7** – **A reference to one of the parables of Jesus?** Parable of the Sower (*Luke 8.4-15*)

-This is important for later in the chapter

-**In what sense had Paul "planted"?** He had started the church in Corinth

-**In what sense had Apollos "watered"?** He had preached there

-**But who brought about the growth?** God

-**What was Paul's philosophy of being a missionary?** *Rom. 15.20* – He would not build on another man's foundation

**V8** – **"One"?** – On the same side

- V 9** – What a great honor we have to be God's "fellow-workers"!  
-It is not a burden to sacrifice our lives to the Lord's church! It is an honor and a blessing and a joy  
-What better way could we spend this life!

## **1 Corinthians 3.10-17**

- V 10-11** – **Is the church the building?** No (we do not eat in the "church")  
-The church is not made up of the roof, the walls, the foundation, etc.  
-Notice the emphasis on the grace of God  
-**What is the foundation of the church?** **Read 1 Peter 2.4-5** – Jesus Christ is the living cornerstone

- V 12** – **If we convert people to the church who later prove to be unfaithful, what about us?**  
We are not responsible for their actions  
-**Is there an order to these items?** They are listed in descending value (gold, silver, and gems, then wood, hay, straw (fire separates these two groups)

- V 13** – The Lord will cleanse the church by fire, and the true church will be revealed (*Matt. 3.11*)  
-Remember the story of the 3 little pigs

- V 15** – If we convert someone who later falls away, we still have our reward

- V 16-17** – Not suicide, but a reference the person who divides the church  
-There are many people today who see nothing wrong with dividing the church and taking a group away, in rebellion the elders and their wishes  
-They need to read and seriously consider *Hebrews 13.17*  
-Suicide – See *1 Cor. 6.19-20*

## **1 Corinthians 3.18-23** – a summary of *1 Corinthians 1-3*

- V 18** – **Explain v 18** – Wisdom comes from admitting our lack of knowledge

- V 19** – A description of the wisdom of the world

- V 20** - See *Ecclesiastes 12.9-14* – The lesson that Solomon learned

- V 21-22** – The Corinthians had everything, but they needed to have a great congregation

## **A Summary of 1 Corinthians 2-3:**

NATURAL MAN

Wisdom of men

SPIRITUAL MAN

Wisdom of God

Feeds on spiritual milk (*Heb. 5.1-6.2*)

Dog-eat-dog competition  
-jealousy and strife (*1 Cor. 3.3*)

Must be fed

Wanting to be blessed

Does not want to grow

Sees the church as a "religious club"

Applies worldly wisdom to church  
problems (handled in a business  
or military sense)

Avoids hardship

Boasts in church programs

Judges others

Feeds on spiritual meat

Committed to cooperation and unity in the church

Can feed self

Wanting to be a blessing

Anxious to grow

Sees the church as the body of Christ

Applies the Bible to church problems

Rejoices in suffering

Boasts only in the cross of Christ (*1 Cor. 1.31*)

Leaves the judging to God

Revised 2013-01-22