

1 Cor. 3:5-17

I Cor 3:5-9

- I. A proper view of Christian leaders. (Using an agricultural metaphor) (5-8)
 - A. The leaders are just servants, doing God's business. (5-7)
 1. The leaders are just servants. (5-6)

Therefore how can the Corinthians take pride in the leaders when they are just servants and thereby ignore the master whose servants they are?

 - a. They are servants. (5a-c)
 - 1) Rhetorical question: What are these leaders? (5a-b)
 - a) Who is Apollos? (5a)
 - b) Who is Paul? (5b)
 - 2) Answer: They are servants, through whom you have believed. (5c)

Not "in whom", but "through whom"
 - b. They each perform tasks assigned by God. (5d-6)

How can the Corinthians take pride in what the leaders did when this was not of their own doing or their own initiative?

 - 1) In General terms: Each is given their task by the Lord. (5d)

The differences the Corinthians highlighted were from God
 - 2) Specific: They performed their individual tasks. (6)
 - a) They did the tasks of a hired laborer. (6a-b)

How can the Corinthians take pride in the hirelings and ignore the boss/owner?

 - (1) I (Paul) planted. (6a)
 - (2) Apollos watered. (6b)
 - b) The point: *God* is the one who did that which really matters- *He* gave the growth. (6c)
 2. The implication: God is the one who really matters. (7)

Therefore the Corinthian's loyalties are grossly misplaced if they are focussed on anyone but the God who gives growth.

 - a. Negatively: The servants don't really matter. (7a-b)

Therefore why should the Corinthians pay them so much attention?

 - 1) The one who plants isn't really something. (7a)
 - 2) Neither is the one who waters. (7b)

b. Positively: The God who gives growth is the one who really matters. (7c)

B. The leaders are in unity. (8)

(Therefore how can those claiming to follow them be in disunity?)

1. The one who plants and the one who waters have unity of purpose. (8a)

2. However, each is responsible and gets rewarded according to his own labor. (8b)

II. The Reason: The leaders and the church *both* belong to God. (9)

Again, doesn't it seem a little skewed for the Corinthians to focus on Paul and Apollos?

A. The leaders belong to God: We are God's fellow-workers. (9a)

B. The church also belongs to God. (9b-c)

1. You are God's field. (That which is being cultivated)(9b)

2. You are God's building. (That which is being built)(9c)

I Cor 3:10-15

- I. The continuing leadership of the church. (Shifting to an architectural metaphor) (10a-c)
 - A. The founding of the church. (10a-b)
 - 1. Comparison: As an expert master-builder. (10a)
 - 2. I (Paul) placed the foundation according to the grace given to me by God. (10b)
 - B. The continuing leadership of the church: another built upon the foundation. (10c)

This refers to Apollos, but shifts focus to the current leadership of the church.
- II. The implication for the current leaders: an exhortation and warning. (10d-15)
 - A. The exhortation in general terms: Let one be careful how one builds on this foundation. (10d)
 - B. Specifically: How one should build. (11-15)

A slightly veiled rebuke for the current leaders of the Church who are not living up to these instructions, as evidenced by the division.

 - 1. There is only one foundation: No one is able to place another foundation, beside the one already placed, which is Jesus Christ. (11)

Any activity that takes away from Christ, such as division-lionizing other leaders, is certainly not building God's church. Also implied, The church's ministry should show continuity with Paul who placed the foundation; and his ministry was not characterized by the problems they are experiencing.
 - 2. One must build with the proper materials, because each persons work will be tested. (12-15).
 - a. Condition: If anyone builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or straw. (12)

There is probably only two categories here, good materials and bad materials; precious ones that will survive fire, and cheap materials that will be burned up
 - b. The result: A warning to the current leaders. (13-15)
 - 1) The warning in general terms: The work of each *will* be revealed for what it truly is. (13a)
 - 2) Specifically: Each worker will be rewarded or punished- depending on the work. (13b-15)

Therefore, everyone must be very careful what type of work they contribute to the church, whether self-centered factionalism, or God-centered servanthood.

- a) Everyone's work will be tested and proved by fire. (13b-d)
 - (1)The day will make the work known. (13b)
 - (2)The reason: The work will be tested by fire. (13c-d)
 - (a)The work will be revealed by fire. (13c)
 - (b) Fire will test and prove what kind of work it is. (13d)

- b) The Result: Each worker will receive the appropriate recompense. (14-15)

Notice this section is not talking about salvation- Heaven or Hell issues. There seems to be other types of rewards and punishment in mind for those who (it is assumed) already have eternal salvation secured

- (1)Good work. (14)
 - (a)The Condition: If someone's work remains. (14a)
 - (b)The Result: He will receive a reward. (14b)
- (2)Bad Work. (15)
 - (a)The Condition: If someone's work is destroyed. (15a)
 - (b)He will suffer loss, but not himself be destroyed. (15b-e)

A severe warning for those Corinthian leaders who are leading the church in a manner that will not stand up to God's standards in judgement

- ((1)) He himself will suffer loss. (15b)
- ((2)) But he will be saved. (15c-e)
 - ((a)) He will be saved. (15c)
 - ((b)) But only as one running out of a burning building, saving only himself. (15d-e)

I Cor 3:16-17

I. You should know that you are God's temple, His dwelling place. (16)

A. Rhetorical Question: Don't you know that...(16a)

B. What they should know. (What Paul is reminding them) (16b-c)

1. You are the temple of God. (16a)

He is here referring to the church as a whole, although each Christian is said to be the temple of God in ch. 6

2. The Spirit of God lives in/among you. (16b)

Again the reference is to the church as a whole.

II. Therefore: God will severely punish those who destroy His temple. (17)

This is what Paul has been leading up to: A severe rebuke and warning to those Corinthians who are causing division and other problems in the church.

A. God zealously protects his temple. (17a-b)

1. Condition: If someone destroys the temple of God. (17a)

2. God will destroy that one. (17b)

Therefore those who are causing division in God's temple in Corinth had best change their ways or prepare to be destroyed.

B. The Reason: The temple of God is holy; and you are that temple. (17c)