

1 Cor 3 pt. 3 v. 16-23 Correction continued

Paul has spent a significant amount of time correcting error in the church at Corinth, he will continue in this trend. This is important as it informs our attitudes towards teaching God's word and focusing on what matters.

If this stuff didn't matter - division, self-righteousness, self-promotion, judgment, sexual immorality, marriage, spiritual gifts, love, the resurrection, the Lord's supper, all things Paul addresses throughout this letter - it wouldn't be here. We could all just figure it out. And indeed some, having strayed from the foundational teachings of God's word, do teach that.

In that sentiment we get a taste of an Old Testament condition -

[Jdg 21:25 NKJV] 25 In those days [there was] no king in Israel; everyone did [what was] right in his own eyes.

But! This is important. It matters, and Paul's heart is to raise this fledgling church into maturity by the grace of Christ.

Last week we left off with a challenging teaching found in v. 16&17 -

[1Co 3:16-17 NKJV] 16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and [that] the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which [temple] you are.

In which we discussed the misuse and mis-teaching of this verse in a very legalistic and out of context sense whereby we justify our own fabrications of holiness and become kind of puffed up with this notion, said smugly, "yes, yes, I am the temple of God...peasants."

That is not the point Paul is demonstrating. He is speaking to workers, ministers, teachers, warning them regarding their relationship with God's special people - do not abuse, mistreat, or deal falsely with God's temple.

Think of the tremendous recklessness it would take for one who calls their self a servant of Christ to look upon a vessel filled with God's holy spirit with the intent to deceive, or take advantage of, to defile that holy, sanctified, vessel - God's child.

*in the opinion of the Jews, the temple was corrupted or "destroyed" when anyone defiled or in the slightest degree damaged anything in it, or if its guardians neglected their duties (Strong's)

God will destroy him! Our Father takes seriously His role as a Dad, he loves us without bounds, enough to give His only son in our place, for our sakes. He will not allow His children to be taken advantage of without recourse. As any parent ought to feel about their children.

v.18 - let no one deceive himself - a word to workers, note - we are all called to work in the Kingdom one way or another.

Don't be deceived by yourself - the fight isn't always external, sometimes our fiercest enemy is our self.

[Rom 7:18-19 NKJV] 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but [how] to perform what is good I do not find. 19 For the good that I will [to do], I do not do; but the evil I will not [to do], that I practice.

The particular struggle Paul addresses here for the Corinthians is one of “seeming to be wise.” Or “seeming to be...”

[Gal 6:3 NKJV] 3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

We deceive ourselves by counting our own selves more wise in our own eyes than others, more knowledgeable, more qualified to dish out spiritual guidance. Don't be deceived - we are saved by grace, any semblance of wisdom or knowledge we have gained is by God's gracious hand.

*a note on “seeming”

[Gal 2:6 NKJV] 6 But from those who seemed to be something--whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man--for those who seemed [to be something] added nothing to me.

During his time in ministry Paul had come across men who “seemed to be something but added nothing to him.”

We will all endure such people, who for one reason or another, have deceived themselves into a position of self importance and have forgotten Christ's mandate to their own detriment:

[Jhn 13:13-17 NKJV] 13 "You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for [so] I am. 14 "If I then, [your] Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 "Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

become a fool that he may become wise - directive towards action, abandon the wisdom of the world for God's wisdom. This doesn't mean be ignorant, or be stupid, or be a weirdo. It is also, not necessarily self-deprecating. It is the natural state of believers clinging to God's wisdom. We learned in 1:18 - [1Co 1:18 NKJV] 18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

[1Co 4:10 NKJV] 10 We [are] fools for Christ's sake,...

Can we bear that in our daily lives?

v.19 - the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God -

[Isa 55:8-9 NKJV] 8 "For My thoughts [are] not your thoughts, Nor [are] your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9 "For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

It is written - scriptural pattern of using God's word as our guide for measuring wisdom.

[Job 5:11-13 NKJV] 11 He sets on high those who are lowly, And those who mourn are lifted to safety. 12 He frustrates the devices of the crafty, So that their hands cannot carry out their plans. 13 He catches the wise in their own craftiness, And the counsel of the cunning comes quickly upon them.

*Sometimes we think we're so clever - especially those who are on the fringes of faith - who have a weird concept of how God operates - as if our own scheming plans can prevail against the sovereignty of God.

v.20 - referencing Psalm 94:11- those that the world calls wise - God says their thoughts are futile, or vain:

1. devoid of force, truth, success, result
2. useless, of no purpose

Let's get some context from Paul's reference.

[Psa 94:6-12 NKJV] 6 They slay the widow and the stranger, And murder the fatherless. 7 Yet they say, "The LORD does not see, Nor does the God

of Jacob understand." 8 Understand, you senseless among the people; And [you] fools, when will you be wise? 9 He who planted the ear, shall He not hear? He who formed the eye, shall He not see? 10 He who instructs the nations, shall He not correct, He who teaches man knowledge? 11 The LORD knows the thoughts of man, That they [are] futile. 12 Blessed [is] the man whom You instruct, O LORD, And teach out of Your law,

v.21 - simple enough - don't boast in men

v.22 -all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Peter - we don't have to be wed to one teacher in all of christendom. we ought not find our comfort in any one man outside of Christ - these guys are servants, fellow workers. our salvation is from Christ alone. the same holds true today. world, life, death, things present, things to come - all are yours — the gravity of these things is immense. The scope of these things is tremendous but they are ours. This verse should have the affect of demolishing any anxiety we carry. By Christ's hand all things are yours. Be good steward of those things. Know that all these things are in our hands only because they are in Christ's hands.

v. 23 - you are Christ's, Christ is God's.

The alignment and unity of God is unmatched in our world. From the highest being over all creation to us His often wayward children.

[Jhn 17:22-23 NKJV] 22 "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 "I in them, and You in

Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

So we find some encouragement in the middle of rebuke. Our God is so gracious to us.