

1 CORINTHIANS

Lesson Six: Cure for Division

First Baptist Church Chappell Hill, July 11, 2021

Local Church as a Temple

1 Corinthians 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? **17** If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

- Recall that 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 used a construction project (like building a temple) as a metaphor for the ministry
- These two verses make that metaphor more explicit as Paul says the local church in Corinth is a **temple of God**
- V. 17: “defile” and “destroy” are the same verb *ptheirō*
- *What is the warning?* If someone wants to defile / destroy the local church, God will destroy that person
- *Why such a warning?* Because the temple is holy
- *What are some implications?*

Don't Be Deceived

1 Corinthians 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. **19** For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. **20** And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

- Paul gives a warning about worldly wisdom — reject worldly wisdom in order that you can become wise
- V. 20 tells us worldly wisdom is empty (vain), yet many Christians including church leaders operate from this wisdom
- How is it Christians may live on the basis of worldly wisdom?
- What are the results? (cf. James 3)
- V. 19 quotes Job 5:13; V. 20 quotes Psalm 94:11

No Boasting in Men!

1 Corinthians 3:21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; **22** Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; **23** And ye are Christ's; and Christ *is* God's.

- The **therefore** looks back at the self-deception of worldly wisdom and begins a warning
- Do not boast in men! — be it someone else or yourself
- By implication, boast in God, the source of everything you have

No Premature Judgments

1 Corinthians 4:1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. **2** Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. **3** But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. **4** For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. **5** Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

- V. 1-2 — those like Paul who minister for Christ are responsible to Christ to be faithful stewards of God's Word
- V. 3 — Paul is unmoved by the fact that some of the Corinthians are critical of him
- V. 4 — even Paul does not judge his motives, leaves that to the Lord
- V. 5 — therefore premature judgment (good or bad) is useless

The Cure for Their Divisions

1 Corinthians 4:6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and *to* Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think *of men* above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. **7** For who maketh thee to differ *from another*? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it*? **8** Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

- V. 6 — throughout chapters 1-4 on division Paul used himself and Apollos (and Peter earlier) rather than naming individuals in Corinth — so apparently the Corinthians were boasting about and following different men in their church
- In V. 6 “learn” is *methanō* (verb form of disciple)
- V. 7 — there is no rational basis for boasting — why?
- V. 8 — sarcasm because they had the principle of “humiliation now exaltation later” turned around backwards