

Jesus the Cornerstone: I Peter 2:7b,8 :

. . . the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.

The Corinthian Church was a five year old Church, and should have been growing but were not. Paul has been chastening them for their lack of maturity. He continues by saying there is no other Foundation on which to build but Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 3:11) and no man can end any where else than in Christ.

1. From I Corinthians 3:13:

(a) How will every man's works of building on the foundation of Jesus Christ, and their motives, be tried for what sort (worth) it is? _____

(b) When do you think these works will be tried? _____

Of each man's work, 'sooner or later,' it will be made obvious whether it is of worth or worthless (I Corinthians 3:13). Man's work will be tried by fire, in relation to the holiness of God. And . . . *if any man's work . . . which he hath abides or endures the heat of God's judgment, . . . he shall receive a reward* (I Corinthians 3:13-14; Galatians 6:4). Fire can either purify or destroy.

2. If any man's work shall be burned or destroyed in the fire, what will happen to the man himself if he is in Christ? (I Corinthians 3:15) _____

THIRD STUDY

CAUSES OF DIVISIONS

CARNAL MINDS HINDER GROWTH OF SPIRIT (I Corinthians 3:1-4)

Even though Paul is coming now to a place of severely charging the Corinthians, he does it in the spirit of love.

1. In I Corinthians 3:1:

(a) What does Paul say he cannot call his Corinthian brethren? _____

(b) What does Paul call those Corinthians? _____

Paul goes on to tell them he can only feed them with spiritual milk, and not with solid spiritual food because they are not able to digest anything stronger.

2. How does Paul describe carnality in I Corinthians 3:3? _____

Paul tells the Corinthian Church, "There you are, quarreling about whether I am greater than Apollos, and dividing the Church. Doesn't this show how little you have grown in the Lord?" (I Corinthians 3:4, LB).

CHRISTIANS ARE CO-LABORERS (I Corinthians 3:5-10)

Paul and Apollos were laborers together in the work there that brought the Corinthians to Christ.

1. In I Corinthians 3:6, Paul gives a breakdown about the 3 processes that brought them to Christ. Name them.

(1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____

Paul's work was to plant the seed of the gospel in their hearts; Apollos' work was to water it; but it was God, not either of them, who made this garden to grow inside their hearts. The garden belongs to God (I Corinthians 3:6). It's not so important who does the planting and watering, but God is important because only He can make things grow (I Corinthians 3:7).

2. Even though, he that plants and he that waters are nothing without God's aid (John 15:16); and only instruments in God's hands, and God gets the glory: does every man involved, receive a reward according to their labor? (I Corinthians 3:8; Psalm 62:12; Romans 2:6) _____

All who work in God's kingdom are co-laborers together with God. We are God's garden, we are God's building (I Corinthians 3:9). Our works will be estimated and rewarded like unto the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30.

We read in John 4:36-38:

... And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye entered into their labors.

3. What does Paul call himself in I Corinthians 3:10? _____

A *wise masterbuilder* (I Corinthians 3:10) is interpreted as a skilled chief constructor or architect. Paul is saying he has been given the grace of God, to lay the foundation (the first to preach Jesus to them), and others built upon it. He was not saying he was the designer or the overseer, directing the work. God had taught him how to become an expert in building the body of Christ.

4. Paul says in I Corinthians 3:10, . . . *I have laid the foundation*. Who do you think the "Foundation" represents? _____

JESUS CHRIST THE ONLY FOUNDATION (I Corinthians 3:11-15)

Paul was wise to teach the Corinthians as he did: starting with the crucified Savior. Jesus is the "Foundation"; the "Cornerstone"; the Gospel.

Jesus the Foundation: In Isaiah 28:16, we read a beautiful verse of Scripture:

... Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold. I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste (he that believeth in Him shall not be confounded; I Peter 2:6).