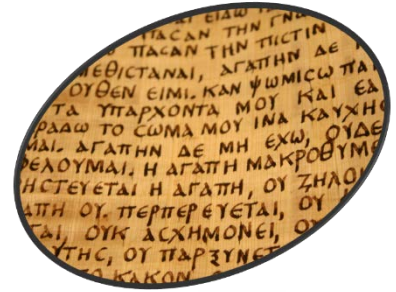


1 Corinthians – “Unity in Christ”

Lesson #4



I. Babies!

a. Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-4

b. Paul calls the Corinthian Christians “flesh-like” and babies (immature).

What is he trying to convey to these people? (vss 1-2)

i. See Hebrews 5:12-13; John 16:12

c. What are some signs of our sinful flesh – and the eventual outcome? (vs 3)

i. See Galatians 5:19-21; Romans 6:23

d. How does the 3rd Petition of the Lord’s Prayer apply?

i. **The Third Petition.**

1. *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

ii. **What does this mean?**

1. *The good and gracious will of God is done even without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.*

iii. **How is God’s will done?**

1. God’s will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God’s name or let His kingdom come; and when **He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until we die**. This is His good and gracious will.

iv. **What is the specific focus of this petition?**

1. We ask that God, in keeping with His will, would never allow Satan, the world, and our sinful flesh to take God’s name and faith from us.¹

a. See Romans 7:18a; 1 Thessalonians 4:3

e. It seems reasonable to “follow” a person we know and respect, but what does Paul warn? (vs 4)

i. See John 20:29

II. Who gets the credit here?

a. Read 1 Corinthians 3:5-9

b. What’s the difference between “through whom” and “in whom”? (vs 5)

c. A better reading from verse 6 comes from the NASB Bible, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth.” Why is it better?

d. Note the unity of God’s servants in verse 8, and what is the reward?

¹ Luther. (2017). [Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation](#) (p. 253). St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.

III. **Spiritual building**

a. Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-17

- b. What does Paul mean that he laid a foundation? How did he do it? (vs 10)
 - i. See 1 Corinthians 2:2
- c. Can we personally build upon our own foundation?
- d. What sorts of things are gold, silver, etc. versus wood, straw, etc.? (vs 12)
 - i. “preaching, teaching, and pastoral care that rest upon the Gospel” versus “the combustible items signify teaching and methods motivated by human ‘wisdom’”²
- e. What loss does a person suffer when their works are burned up? (vs 15)
- f. What does Paul mean by you all are the temple of the Lord? (vss 16-17)
 - i. See Ephesians 2:21-22; 1 Peter 2:5
- g. What is Paul warning about in verse 17?

IV. **Bragging rights?**

a. Read 1 Corinthians 3:18-23

- b. The qualities of a great person in Corinth were intelligence, speaking ability and wisdom... how does Paul address this attitude in verse 18?
- c. How do we “boast in men”? (vs 21)
- d. A possible explanation for, “All things are yours” (vs 21)
- e. What does Paul mean by “Christ is God’s”? (vs 23)
 - i. See Philippians 2:5-11

V. **Next time...**

a. Read 1 Corinthians 4:1-21

² Lockwood, G. J. (2000). [1 Corinthians](#) (p. 118). Saint Louis: Concordia Pub. House.