

How Does Your Garden Grow?

1 Corinthians 3:1-23

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Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.

A prime example of this was the first century church in Corinth. Problems that plagued the church in Corinth are essentially the same that plague the church today...saints who sin. In order to address the issue, the Apostle Paul wrote several letters to help the Corinthians get back on track to spiritual maturity.

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians was both a challenge and a call for individuals to continue their journey towards growing up in Christ. His goal was to correct specific sins that had impacted the church. But it was also a reminder that they were in the process of becoming mature in Christ.

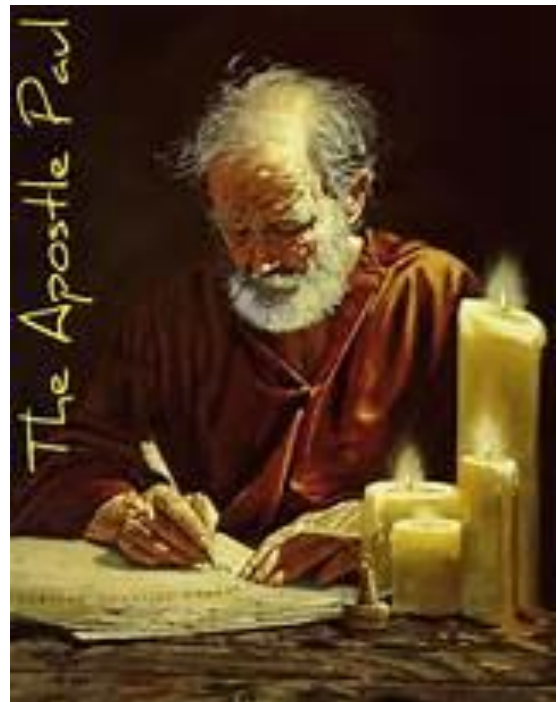
The hope we have from Paul's letter is that one day our struggles with sin will be over and we will stand perfected in the Lord. But for now, we must all ask ourselves...Are we growing up, or just growing old in the Lord?

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Spiritual growth is not an option but a mandate. The responsibility of every Christian is to become mature in Christ.

Throughout the New Testament, we find examples of spiritual immaturity, some being the result of spiritual warfare, but most due to personal sin.

The reasons Christians continue to sin (even though they have experienced the new birth), is because they still have a sin nature...a nature that will never be eradicated until they are in the presence of the Lord. In the meantime, the results become issues within the church.



🕒 EXAMINE His Word (Observation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the passage.

Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-23 (ESV)

3 But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ² I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³ for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? ⁴ For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?

⁵ What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸ He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. ⁹ For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

¹⁰ According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled[b] master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. ¹¹ For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now

if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—¹³ each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

¹⁶ Do you not know that you[c] are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

¹⁸ Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," ²⁰ and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile." ²¹ So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, ²³ and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

🕒 EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation) (For Community Group discussion)

What does God MEAN?

1. Who are the main characters mentioned in this passage? Note the actions and attitudes for each person.

2. In *verses 1-4*, how does Paul address the believers in the Corinthians church? List some of his descriptive terms.

3. In *verses 5-9*, how do believers and a church grow?

4. In *verses 190-15*, who is responsible for establishing our foundation of faith? What part does a believer play in building on this foundation?

5. In *verses 16-23*, how does Paul describe the wisdom of this age?

③ **EMBRACE His Word (Application)**

Why does this MATTER to me?

6. In *Hebrews 5:11-14*, how do believers reach spiritual maturity?

7. The following passages list several traits of mature believers. List all that you find:
 - ***Romans 12:9-13***

- *Galatians 5:22-23*

- *Colossians 3:15-17*

Summarize your thoughts on the passage

Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO...

8. List five suggestions that could help you and Clear lake Bible Church reach spiritual maturity.



SERMON NOTES