**1 Corinthians 3**

*Returning to the main admonition regarding factionalism, Paul calls the Corinthians “carnal” because of their striving. He emphasizes that men are only workers, and that Christ is the “foundation.” He warns them against worldly wisdom and boasting in men. (Synopsis by Stan Cox)*

1. Reported Problems **(1:10-6:20)** *– “For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren…”* **(1:11)**.
   1. Division **(1:10-4:21)**.
      1. Party spirit in Corinth *(Continued)* **(v. 1-4)**.
         1. When Paul first labored among them he could only teach them things which pertain to the milk of the word. Their carnality remained even to the time of writing the letter. They should have grown, but they didn’t **(v. 1-3a)**.
         2. Their carnality is evidenced by their current behavior. Division is a product of carnal mindedness **(v. 3b-4)**.
      2. The position and work of preachers **(v. 5-17)**.
         1. Planting and watering **(v. 5-8)**.
            1. Preachers are simply ministers (servants). They may serve in different capacities, but only God gives the increase. Thus, they are nothing, but God is everything **(v. 5-7)**.
            2. Preachers are unified in their goal. However, each one is rewarded for his individual labor **(v. 8)**.
         2. Building **(v. 9-17)**.
            1. Preachers work with and for God. The saints belong to God. The preacher is nothing. God is everything **(v. 9)**.

Paul laid the foundation in Corinth. The foundation is Christ, and there is no other **(v. 10-11)**.

Others will build on the foundation. Their work will be tested, and will manifest a reward or loss. Their reward or loss will not cause them to lose their salvation **(v. 12-15)**.

* + - * 1. Those who defile this building – the temple of God – will be destroyed by God **(v. 16-17)**.
    1. Avoid worldly wisdom and glorying in men **(v. 18-23)**.
       1. Those who think themselves wise because of worldly wisdom deceive themselves. God deems worldly wisdom foolish **(v. 18-20)**.
       2. Their boasting in men is foolish, for all things belong to them for the service of God. They belong to Christ, and Christ to God **(v. 21-23)**. *Questions on the back.* 🡪

**Questions**

1. What are the *“gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw”* **(v. 12)**?
2. What is the reward received by the one who’s work endures if it is not his own salvation? **(v. 8, 14-15)**
3. Why is it foolish for the Corinthians to boast in men according to **verses 21-23**?

**Another Question to Consider**

How do **verses 9-11** contrast with the Catholic doctrine which places Peter as the foundation, and first Pope? What relation does this text have with **Matthew 16:16-19**?