

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

I CORINTHIANS 3

I Corinthians 3

Brief highlights and review of chapters one and two are necessary to properly understand our chapter for today, October 6th.

Chapter one review: The Apostle Paul begins with one paragraph of praise to God for the Corinthian believers and how God had richly blessed them with spiritual gifts and knowledge, and that God who called them is faithful to bring them to the finish line in the race He has set before them.

"I always thank my God for you because of the grace He has given you in Christ Jesus. For in Him you have been enriched in every way, in all speech and all knowledge, because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. Therefore, you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly await the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will sustain you to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful." I Corinthians 1:4-9)

The Corinthians were gifted by God like no other we read about in the New Testament with spiritual gifts and knowledge. As we examine even the highlights of these chapters together, we must state a Biblical truth to begin our study.

PRINCIPLE ONE: *"The greater the gifting and the greater knowledge one has, there greater is the need for supernatural grace to exercise the gifting and knowledge in an atmosphere of agape (unconditional love) gifting and knowledge without love is useless and tends to lead one into selfishness and pride."* (I Corinthians 13)

Paul warns them of divisions and of dividing into sects who claim allegiance to a particular Bible teacher. He explains that he and any of the apostles, or any other teacher, are merely vessels God uses for His pleasure and to do His will and that each teacher and mentor has a particular function within the body of Christ in general and in particular.

Paul had experienced a fruitless time in the academic and philosophical epicenter of Athens. While on his journey to Corinth, he concluded that no matter where he traveled, he would not fail to preach Jesus, the Messiah, and that He was crucified/died for our sins, was buried, and rose again

from the dead after three days and that was witnessed by hundreds of people. He further stated the way a Jew views validation of God's activity among them and how the Gentile/Greek views God's activity in relation to validation of the divine.

PRINCIPLE TWO: *The Semitic mind and the Greek/Gentile mind looks for authentication of life events differently. Jews seek validation for the Divine through supernatural manifestations such as miracles of healing, casting out demons, raising the dead, or other manifestations that attest to God at work. Greeks/Gentiles seek logic and natural understanding (does it make sense) as something is presented.*

"Jews demand signs and Greeks search for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (I Corinthians 1:22-23)

This is important because the message of the Gospel is that it is good news for all, and to all, as to how a man is made right with God. *It is through faith/trust in God's provision.* However, how that message is presented to a person(s) is different for people groups and mindsets as it relates to the authentication of the message.

Paul closed chapter one with a reality that must have hit the knowledgeable and arrogant Corinthians hard. The reality that God does not call many in this world to come to trust Him for salvation who are wise according to the flesh or mighty, "powerful-Greek *dunamis*," and not many who are noble "good-DNA-Greek *eu-genes*." But instead, God has chosen the unlearned, "foolish-Greek-moron" and the "weak" and those who have been rejected, cast away, or who are discards of culture and society to salvation so that He receives the glory, acclaim, and honor.

Chapter two review: Paul lays the foundation for why they should be encouraged by the salvation in Jesus that has been given them. Paul did not come in flowery rhetoric and speech, as he had used in Athens with no fruit; rather, he came in weakness and with stammering speech, which was natural for him. This lack of rhetorical speech and fancy talk should demonstrate to them that they believed because of the nature of the message preached and not in His presentation in the expected rhetoric.

1 Corinthians 3- continued

Finally, in 1 Corinthians 2:6, he gets to the heart of the issue with the easily led astray Corinthians. The message of the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah is spiritual in nature, not having its origin in man's wisdom or from any earthly source, but rather its origin is heavenly and the means of communicating that heaven, the spiritual message is by God's Holy Spirit in speaking to the spirit of a man. Man is a tripartite being. He is body, soul, and spirit. Our physical being, our body (*Greek-soma*), is how we relate to the physical world around us through our five (5) senses: sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. Our soul (*Greek psyche*), which is our mind-intellect, emotion, and volition-will.

The apostle reminds the Corinthians that it was the grace of God and not because of their specialty, giftedness, status in the world or any other reason that they were chosen, but God's Spirit worked through Paul and others to bring the change of heart and life they had experience in Jesus.

Chapter three begins with an incredible rebuke to them as the people in the church were living, that is, thinking and acting like the rest of the world or as mere lost people. He challenges them to think, live, and behave like they are from another world and not to be controlled by earthly, fleshly thoughts and behaviors, but to be controlled by God's Spirit, Who had given them life. He further warned them about putting men above God and giving praise to mere men instead of focusing on the God who brought the men to them to share the life-giving and life-changing message of the Gospel of Jesus.



Prayer and Action Steps

Father, thank You that the Spirit of God drew me and called me to be saved and to know You personally. May I never trust what I can do without You, but trust in You with all my heart and lean not to my own understanding. Amen