

Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Lesson 6

Wisdom, foolishness; spiritual, natural; solid food, milk. Thus the contrast of the lives of one who is walking with the Lord and one who is not. The believers in Corinth had fallen into foolish and natural behavior which resulted in being limited in their spiritual diet. Oh, believer – may you not settle for simple milk when the awesome treasures of the Lord are so readily available to you.

DAYS ONE and TWO: Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheets and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they were about?
 - a. 1 Corinthians 3:1-9 has been divided into two sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

Verses 1-3

Verses 4-9

How would you title each section? Record your titles on the **Chapter & Paragraph Division Titles Chart** provided with your Observation Worksheet.

2. At the right-hand side of the same chart are columns labeled **Key Word** and **Symbol**. They have been provided for you to record the key words and the symbol you have chosen to represent each one. Record the key words listed below and their symbols on the chart.

Used in prior homework lessons: *God, Jesus (Christ), Paul*, the recipients of the letter, and *Spirit*

New to this lesson: *carnal*

Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in 1 Corinthians 3:1-9. Remember, as you mark the words *God, Jesus, and Paul*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to them. You do not need to mark every word that refers them – only those that you feel are significant.

3. Make a list of what the text reveals about God.

4. Now, using the chart provided with your Observation Worksheets, add any information you feel is pertinent about the **Author(s)**, the **Recipients**, **Problems** and **Commands**.

DAY THREE: Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

1. Paul now pinpoints the core cause of division among the Christians in Corinth. Spell out the one word that is used four times in these verses to identify the cause:

(They were) _ _ _ _ _!

- a. Define the word *carnal* from Paul's description of these believers in 1 Corinthians 3:1-4:

verse 1

verse 2

verse 3

verse 4

- b. Simply stated the word *carnal* indicates that Jesus is not Lord of the believer's life, but that self-will rules and reigns. Although the believer is indwelt by the Spirit, he is mastered by the flesh. What do these verses teach about the *flesh* or *carnal* walk?

Romans 8:7,8

Romans 13:14

2 Corinthians 7:1

Galatians 5:19-21

Challenge: Do a word study on the word *carnal*.

2. What is the cure for walking in the *flesh* or *carnal* plane according to:

Romans 6:6

Romans 6:11

Romans 6:13

Romans 13:14a

Galatians 5:24-26

- a. Summarize the cure using your own words.

3. Because of their *carnality* Paul was limited in what he could say to them. What did he write in 1 Corinthians 3:2a?

a. Spiritually speaking, what is the difference between *milk* and *solid food*?

1.) Recalling from 1 Corinthians 1:7 NIV, the believers in *Corinth* did not lack any *spiritual gift*. One would assume they would be able to receive *solid food*. What do you think enables a believer to receive *solid food*?

4. Instead of division, strife, and contentions marking the lives of these Corinthian believers, what should have been obvious marks of their Christian Character? See Galatians 5:22,23

a. We know if we walk in the Spirit the *fruit of the Spirit* will be produced in our lives. What must we do to be *walking in the Spirit*?

1.) How does John 15:4,5 help us answer this question?

DAY FOUR: Read 1 Corinthians 3:4-8

1. Paul claimed that he could not address the believers in Corinth as *spiritual*, but instead, had to address them as *carnal*. According to 1 Corinthians 3:4, what was specifically going on?

a. Some translators have rendered the phrase *are you not carnal* as, “are you not walking as unregenerate men”. Paul and Apollos were good men. Why might it seem to be a good thing to claim to follow a godly man, yet in God’s eyes not be the right thing to do?

2. *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos?* Answer Paul’s question from verse 5.

a. Define the word *ministers* in one word from Romans 1:1a

3. Use the following chart to record what is revealed about each of the following from 1 Corinthians 3:5-9:

Verse	Paul	Apollos	Lord-God
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

4. Look closely at the phrase, *as the Lord gave to each one* in verse 5. How does this phrase coincide with Romans 12:6-8?
 - a. *What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe--as the Lord has assigned to each his task* (1 Corinthians 3:5 NIV). What does this say to you about anyone's ministry for the Lord?

- 1.) How does this speak to you as a *servant* of the Lord?

5. What is the difference between *planted* and *watered*?

- a. Sometimes we get to be the one who *plants* and sometimes we get to be the one who *waters*. Both are equally important. How does this fact encourage you?
- b. However, verse 7 states *neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters*. Who is the One who actually produces from the *planting* and *watering*? Verses 6b, 7b

- 1.) Using your own words, describe our part and God's part in bringing a person to Christ?

*The generous soul will be made rich,
And he who waters will also be watered himself.*

- Proverbs 11:25

DAY FIVE: Read 1 Corinthians 3:8-9

1. He who *plants* and he who *waters* should not be divided. Their goal is the same. What word does Paul use to describe them in 1 Corinthians 3:8a?
 - a. Since the *planter* and the *waterer* are one, what message should that give to the people they have ministered to?

- 1.) As servants of the Lord who minister to others, what message should verse 8 give to us?

2. According to 1 Corinthians 3:8b, on what basis will each of us be *rewarded*?
 - a. Read John 4:36-38 and explain how this passage relates to 1 Corinthians 3:7-8.
 - b. God "*will give to each person according to what he has done.*" (Romans 2:6 NIV). We are not rewarded according to our accomplishments or the fruit of what we have done. How does this verse encourage you to *plant* or *water*?
 - 1.) Why do you think God cares more about what we do than the fruit it yields?
3. Notice the words *we are* and *you are* in 1 Corinthians 3:9. Who are Paul and Apollos and who are the believers?
 - a. Describe what it means to be a *fellow worker* with someone.
 - b. We are God's *field*. Read Isaiah 27:2,3 and express what it means to you to be called His *field* (vineyard).
 - c. All believers are part of *God's building*. How is teaching and discipling another believer like building a building?
4. What word is used three times in 1 Corinthians 3:9?
 - a. What does this say to you?

*We are His house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets.
And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus Himself.*

- Ephesians 2:20 NLT

DAY SIX: Review 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

1. What might be some indications in your own life that you are living *carnally* rather than *spiritually*?
2. What are the benefits of living *spiritually* rather than *carnally*?
3. Using Hebrews 5:11-14, describe the *carnal* and *spiritual* man.
4. If you were one of the believers in Corinth embroiled in division, hearing this part of Paul's letter, what do you think your reaction might be?
5. Share an example from your life when you experienced the fruit of being a *fellow worker* with another believer.
 - a. What can we do to promote this kind of unity when we are working with others in ministry?
6. What have you learned in this lesson that you will apply to your life?
7. Jesus said to His disciples in John 16:12 NLT *Oh, there is so much I want to tell you, but you can't bear it now.* This was also Paul's heart's cry to the believers in Corinth. How does this speak to you about being in a place where God can tell you more of His heart and intentions for you?

*Show me Your ways, O LORD;
Teach me Your paths.
Lead me in Your truth and teach me,
For You are the God of my salvation;
On You I wait all the day.*

- Psalm 25:4,5

Lesson 6 – Scripture References

DAY THREE

- 1b. **Romans 8:7-8** Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. [8] So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

2 Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, [20] idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, [21] envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

2. **Romans 6:6** knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Romans 6:11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

Galatians 5:24-26 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. [25] If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. [26] Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

4. **Galatians 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.
- 1.) **John 15:4-5** Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. [5] I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

DAY FOUR

- 2a. **Romans 1:1** Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God

- 4 **Romans 12:6-8** Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; [7] or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; [8] he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Proverbs 11:25 The generous soul will be made rich, And he who waters will also be watered himself.

DAY FIVE

- 2a **John 4:36-38** And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. [37] For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' [38] I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."
- 2b. **Romans 2:6** God "will give to each person according to what he has done."
- 3b. **Isaiah 27:2,3** In that day--"Sing about a fruitful vineyard: I, the Lord, watch over it; I water it continually. I guard it day and night so that no one may harm it.

DAY SIX

- 3 **Hebrews 5:11-14** of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. [12] For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. [13] For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. [14] But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.
- 7 **John 16:12** I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.
- Psalms 25:4-5** Show me Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths. [5] Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; On You I wait all the day.

Verse	Paul	Apollos	Lord-God
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			