

Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

1 Corinthians 3:10-23

Lesson 7

Jesus Christ is the *foundation* of the church. We, as believers, are called to *build* upon that *foundation*. How we *build* will not only affect things in this life, but they will determine the rewards we will receive in the next. Therefore, 1 Corinthians 3:10 cautions us to *take heed* how we build. Will your works be revealed as *gold, silver and precious stones* or will they as *wood, hay and stubble* – be reduced to ashes?

DAYS ONE and TWO: Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-23

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 3:10-23 has been divided into two sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

Verses 10-15 (continuation of subjects in verses 5-9)

Verse 16-23

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

After titling each segment division, record a title for chapter 3.

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, Paul, wisdom/wise, and foolishness*

New to this lesson: *work and temple*.

Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in 1 Corinthians 3:10-23. 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. Also, note the word *it* as it refers to *work*.

3. Choose a key word from the list in question #2 and make a list of what the text reveals about that word. Include the referenced verse(s) in parenthesis at the right of each item.

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 3:10-15

1. Paul refers to himself in verse 10 as *a wise master builder*. As a *wise* builder, what did Paul do?
 - a. Why is laying a *foundation* important when building a house?

 - b. Describe this *building* from Ephesians 2:19-22.

2. What (or Who) is the *foundation* of all we build spiritually? See 1 Corinthians 3:11
 - a. Why is it so vital that we understand this before we do **anything** for the Lord?

3. Once the *foundation* has been properly laid, the building can begin. This process of building represents the works we do as believers. Nothing an unbeliever does is of any value spiritually. 1 Corinthians 3:12 divides these works into two categories, each having three kinds of materials. What are the first three materials mentioned?
 - a. Give some examples of what kind of works might be *gold*, *silver* or *precious stones*.
 - 1.) In your own words write what Titus 3:8 says about *works*.

 - b. What are the second three materials mentioned?
 - 1.) Give some examples of what kind of works might be *wood*, *hay* or *stubble*.

4. According to verse 13, when and how will our *works* be revealed?
 - a. To what does *the Day* refer? See 2 Corinthians 5:10

5. *If anyone's work* survives the test of fire, what will he receive? Verse 14
 - a. Heavenly *rewards* here are associated with works. Salvation is a free gift. To many Christians, Matthew 25:21 expresses the ultimate *reward*. What is it?
 - 1.) What do you think it will be like for those who hear those words?

6. *If anyone's work is burned*, what two things will happen to him?
 - a. Many believers are willing to settle for an eternal heap of ashes – salvation, but nothing to show for their life lived here on earth. What do you think that *Day* of reckoning will be like for them?

DAY FOUR: Read 1 Corinthians 3:16-17

1. Observe the word *temple* used four times in 1 Corinthians 3:16,17. *Temple* is used metaphorically of the church (the Body of Christ), of a local church (Corinth), and of the individual believer. It designates more than a structure or building. It implies the sanctuary where, like the Holy of Holies in the Temple in Jerusalem, the holy, awesome presence of God dwelt. In the context of these verses, Paul is not referring to the individual believer, but to the church as a whole. With this interpretation, what do you think was Paul's point in asking the questions he asked in verse 16?
 - a. However, verses such as Romans 8:11 remind us that the Holy Spirit dwells in each and every believer. What does it mean to you that you personally are the *temple of God* and that the *Spirit of God dwells in you*?

2. 1 Corinthians 3:17a denotes serious consequences for defiling God's holy temple (the church). *Defile* and *destroy* are translated from the same Greek word *phtheiro* which means to corrupt. State the consequences.

- a. Think of how many churches have been *defiled* (corrupted by men bringing in worldly or secular wisdom). How does this help you to understand the severity of the consequences?
3. The word *holy* in 1 Corinthians 3:17b designates the temple as being set apart for God. It was not to be desecrated in any way. Since you are a part of that *temple*, this implies that you are also to be *holy*. What does being *set apart for God* say to you about your life?

*Your testimonies are very sure;
Holiness adorns Your house, O LORD, forever.*
- Psalm 93:5

DAY FIVE: Read 1 Corinthians 3:18-23

1. The concluding paragraph of 1 Corinthians 3:18-23 is divided into two parts. Each part opens with the same phrase. Complete the following sentences by writing that phrase:
 - a. 1 Corinthians 3:18a _____ _____ *deceive himself*.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 3:21a *Therefore* _____ _____ _____ boast in men.
2. 1 Corinthians 3:18 immediately follows the severe warning of verse 17. Look carefully at 1 Corinthians 3:18,19a and tell how the believers in Corinth were *deceiving* themselves.
 - a. Self-deception can ultimately lead to destruction. The deception of these Corinthians was caused by their assumption that they were wise by the standards of the world or *age*. What does 1 Corinthians 3:18b prescribe as a remedy for this deception?
 - 1.) How do these Scriptures that Paul quotes from the Old Testament support this perspective?

1 Corinthians 3:19a (Job 5:13)

1 Corinthians 3:20 (Psalm 94:11)

*Stop fooling yourselves.
If you think you are wise by this world's standards,
you will have to become a fool so you can become wise by God's standards.*
- 1 Corinthians 3:18 NLT

3. 1 Corinthians 3:21-23 comprises one long sentence. Write in your own words Paul's exhortation in 1 Corinthians 3:21a.

Challenge: Define *boast* as it is used in 1 Corinthians 3:21

- a. Why shouldn't we *boast* in men? Write your answer from verses 21b, 22c, and 23a.
4. Explain what *all things are yours* signifies.
 - a. Look up the following verses which contain the phrase, *all things*. What insight do they provide?
 - Matthew 6:33
 - Romans 8:32
 - Romans 8:28
 - 1 Timothy 6:17
 - 2 Peter 1:3
 5. How should knowing *all things are yours* keep you from conflict and division not only in the church, but also in your personal relationships?
 6. *You belong to Christ...*(1 Corinthians 3:23a NASB). How do the following verses affirm this truth?
 - Acts 20:28
 - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
 - a. Why is *belonging to Christ* not confining or a loss of freedom?
 7. *...and Christ belongs to God* (1 Corinthians 3:23b NASB). Christ is equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, but inferior to the Father as touching His manhood. What do these verses say about this?
 - a. John 5:18
 - b. 1 Corinthians 11:3
 8. As man, Christ belonged to God and submitted to His authority over Him. What can you glean from His example?

DAY SIX: Review 1 Corinthians 3:10-23

1. How has this lesson prompted you to be more attentive to how you *build* spiritually?

2. In what ways has this lesson encouraged you to do your part in your church so that it properly reflects being *the temple of God*?

3. How should our attitudes and actions be influenced by the fact that we are the *temple of God*?
 - a. What changes have occurred in your life since the *Spirit of God* began to *dwell in you*?

4. What does it personally mean to you that *all things are yours*?

*And God placed all things under his (Christ's) feet
and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,
which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.*

- Ephesians 1:22-23 NIV

Lesson 7 – Scripture References

DAY THREE

- 1b. **Ephesians 2:19-22** Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, [20] having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, [21] in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, [22] in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.
- 3 1.) **Titus 3:8** This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.
- 4a. **2 Corinthians 5:10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.
- 5a. **Matthew 25:21** His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

DAY FOUR

- 1a. **Romans 8:11** But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Psalms 93:5 Your testimonies are very sure; Holiness adorns Your house, O LORD, forever.

DAY FIVE

- 2 1.) **Job 5:13** He catches the wise in their own craftiness, And the counsel of the cunning comes quickly upon them.

Psalms 94:11 The LORD knows the thoughts of man, That they are futile.

- 4a. **Matthew 6:33** But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

1 Timothy 6:17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

2 Peter 1:3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

6. **Acts 20:28** Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? **20**For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

- 7a. **John 5:18** Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.
- 7b. **1 Corinthians 11:3** But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.
- 7c. **John 5:18** Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

DAY SIX

Ephesians 1:22-23 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, [23] which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. niv