

I Corinthians 3:16-20

A. I Corinthians 3:16 - Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

1. Paul considers the Corinthians to be the temple of God. It is as if he is saying: "Don't you perceive; don't you know this is true?" He is trying to get them to **think** of who they are in Christ. It is as if saying: "Is it possible that you do not know this?"

They needed to: Romans 12:2 - And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

2. [that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?] The temple is where **God** dwells. The Corinthians were where God dwelled and being omnipresent, He dwells in a special way in the **midst** of all the assemblies of His people. They represent the larger universal Body Church (diverse, yet one).

- a. It is true that the Spirit is in the individual believer and **corporately** in the midst of the local church.

I Corinthians 6:19 - What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

Ephesians 2:19-22 - Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; Eph. 2:20 - And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; Eph. 2:21 - In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: Eph. 2:22 - In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Romans 8:9 - But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Galatians 2:20 - I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

- b. The temple of God is composed of individual believers indwelt by the Holy Spirit, joined together by their common **faith** in Jesus Christ through the gospel (DBR).

B. I Corinthians 3:17 - If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

1. God here puts **value** on the local church with a warning against those who would try to destroy it. God has their number and will react accordingly to the defiling attempts against the temple (Body-Universal and **local**).
2. To God the temple is holy and set apart for what **He** has created it to accomplish (for the work of the ministry). And if one comes in to corrupt and defile that purpose, they will be destroyed in this life and at the **judgment**.
3. This is not talking about if one brings alcohol, smoking, certain dress, anything the church does not like (list) into the church. Then they will say "you will be knocked down by God, will **perish**, have financial setback, **no** answers to prayers, send sickness on you, and if you do not get right with God, He will **kill** you."

*If we all had to wait in the parking lot until we had **no** sin, there would not be anyone in the Church! There will always be sin in our lives because of our **flesh**. The only way to have **less** sin is to be identified with who we are in Christ (Romans 6:4-6). Thank God we can come to church while having problems.

4. Remember what Paul is talking about here. It is our old program **thinking** of being under Kingdom Law that makes us think legalistically.

a. Paul's context here is **how** we build on His Christ-given foundation doctrinally. We are to have right dispensational doctrine on the right foundation. Paul is talking about defiling **bad** or false doctrine used in the church.

b. It is about **neglecting** the grace doctrine and using human viewpoint or man's wisdom.

I Corinthians 1:17, 19-22 - For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. I Cor. 1:19 - For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. I Cor. 1:20 - Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? I Cor. 1:21 - For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. I Cor. 1:22 - For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

I Corinthians 2:4-6, 13 - And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: I Cor. 2:5 - That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. I Cor. 2:6 - Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: I Cor. 2:13 - Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

I Corinthians 3:19 - For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

c. It is also referring to going back to Israel's program, under law, under the kingdom's program, under scriptures, but not the principles of **this** dispensation. It is not building on grace doctrines or Paul's grace foundation. Something other than that defiles and corrupts truth with wrong **timing** error.

Note: This (man's wisdom - bad doctrine of Kingdom Law program) goes on in the **majority** of churches across America this morning!

I Timothy 4:1-2 - Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; I Tim. 4:2 - Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

I Timothy 1:19-20 - Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: I Tim. 1:20 - Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

C. I Corinthians 3:18- Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

1. These Corinthians were consumed with their **own** intellect. That caused carnality because it turned them from God's divine, absolute authority, to man's viewpoints which, in turn, produced divisions. The issue is **who** has the final authority!

2. Evidently some Corinthians had a bloated opinion of themselves. Paul warns them about deceiving **themselves**. Worldly learning that excludes God's wisdom makes them unwise. They are misleading themselves.

Ephesians 5:6 - Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

Galatians 6:3 - For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

Galatians 3:1 - O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

II Timothy 3:13-14 - But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. II Tim. 3:14 - But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*;

3. Remember, we are not talking about things like business, mathematics, science, English, etc., but areas of spiritual truth that affect our thinking, viewpoint, lifestyle, morality, priorities, salvation, divine truth, etc. It is that we won't allow the world's thinking - wisdom to take authority **over** God's Word, when it is contrary to His Word!
4. Human opinion is **never** qualified to judge God's revealed truth. The Corinthians (many) were imagining, presuming, esteeming themselves to be wise in the philosophy, mythology, and religious wisdom of this Satan-dominated evil world system. They had been **de**ceived!

Acts 17:15, 18, 22 - And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed. Acts 17:18 - Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babblers say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. Acts 17:22 - Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

I Timothy 1:4 - Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: *so do*.

5. The question no doubt from the Corinthians then was how not to be deceived. The answer was not to allow themselves to become a fool to the world's thinking, when the world's view is contrary to God's. You need to **sub**mit to God's authority with the Holy Spirit's illumination of biblical truth.
 - a. Example: Psalms 139:13-16 - For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. Psalms 139:14 - I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well. Psalms 139:15 - My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Psalms 139:16 - Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Jeremiah 1:5 - Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

Luke 1:36, 41 - And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. Luke 1:41 - And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

Exodus 21:22-23 - If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges *determine*. Exo. 21:23 - And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,

Proverbs 6:16-17 - These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: Prov. 6:17 - A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

*But when the world says about, what should **we** do?

- b. Example: Leviticus 18:22 - Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it *is* abomination.

Leviticus 20:13 - If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them.

Romans 1:26-28 - For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: Rom. 1:27 - And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. Rom. 1:28 - And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

*But if most of America says it is good and natural, what shall we do?

Answer: If not deceived by America's humanistic wisdom, we willingly stand on God's authority and His absolute Word of truth.

*| Note: When church leaders begin substituting their own ideas - opinions for true doctrine, that leads to divisions. That is because personal preferences (many and different) become the final authority.

D. I Corinthians 3:19- For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

1. In God's eyes, man's wisdom (which has a low view of scripture) is stupidity, senselessness, totally unreliable, useless, and will ultimately entrap and bring him down!

Proverbs 14:12 - There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

Job 5:13 - He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.

Proverbs 9:10 - The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding.

2. Remember Haman hung himself on his own gallows. Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Achan, King Saul, Ananias, Sapphira, and many others who would not submit to God as final authority, but followed their own wisdom, were brought down (Flood - Tower of Babel).

E. I Corinthians 3:20 - And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

1. Paul gives God's estimation of the wisdom of this world. Man's thoughts and reasoning are vain, empty, and groundless. When judged in light of God's truth, man's wisdom has no value nor validity.
2. Human philosophy is totally inadequate to bring men to God, to show them how to be saved, how to live, or even the meaning of life. Man cannot even have the right understanding of himself (sin nature), which in turn leads him down many useless and empty roads - thoughts.

I Corinthians 1:21 - For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

II Corinthians 1:12 - For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.