

Just A Minute! *With Scripture*

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be made bold or numbered for emphasis.

Can't I Live The Way I Want?

Topic: Application of I Corinthians 3

Yes, the Corinthians and all believers can live as they like, being saints with free will and under grace. However, love would compel us to be thankful for all God has done through Christ, desiring to please our Father.

Do you think the Corinthians ever wondered if it really mattered how they lived? As believers, they were saved from the penalty of sin because they trusted the blood of Christ. Yet, they were not godly, because they followed the wrong standard (corrupted doctrine). Paul writes: *"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? **God forbid...**" (Rom. 6:1-2)* So, who would care? The Spirit grieved (Eph. 4:30) and the Father was not pleased with their ungodly walk.

God provided a wake-up call to Corinth saints by clarifying the believers judgment: *"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (I Cor. 3:13)* Corinth had been deceived by worldly wisdom, stayed babes, and embraced carnality. They lived in envy and strife, having divisions (vs 3) among the brethren. Upon reflection, the Corinthians parallel the spiritual condition of much of the Church today, making this a very relevant book.

I Corinthians addresses saints who choose to remain carnal in their thinking and behavior. In Chapter 3 we also see that spiritual decisions produce personal fruit: glory with rewards or loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ: *"If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."* (vs. 14-15)

Reflect: When we live in the flesh, it grieves our Father and has a profound impact on other Body members. Yet, as we realize God's great love and mercy through Christ, we develop thankfulness and a desire to please Him. As we live in line with who we are in Christ and allow Him to be magnified, it affects the here and now, but also eternity (I Tim 4:8). Read and meditate on all God has done for you to live unto the Lord, replacing the pattern of serving your own flesh and emotions, to prefer others.

Laborers: Working For or Against Him?

Who are you laboring with? How you use time and live day-by-day reflects the true god you serve. We can know a lot of Bible teaching, go to Church, give money to the poor, and try to be a good person. Yet we still may be serving a different god. *"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (II Cor. 4:4)* It is not glorifying to our Father when we live/serve in our own effort, without godly love (I Cor. 13:1-3)

Thus, believers too can be blinded by the cares and distractions of this world (Mark 4:18-19) At any point, God graciously gives us this opportunity to yield unto Him, being a co-laborer with Him: *"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building...But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." (I Corinthians 3:9-10)*

As individual members of the Body, we can choose to glorify God or serve Satan and his ways: *"Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the member of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid...For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (I Cor. 6:15,20)*

Think on this: What does being a laborer with God look like? We would realize that there are two ways to live, and choose to regularly live unto God. In addition, we would realize: *"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." (Galatians 2:20)* Thus, we would regularly read the Word and reflect upon our thinking, behavior, and motives to yield and grow spiritually. This allows God to renew our mind. Pray to be open and then walk by faith in what God the Spirit teaches.



Search it out!

Choose Something to Study in This Section

I Corinthians 3: The Use of Metaphors Are Study Tools

Examine verses!



I Corinthians 3 uses metaphors or illustrations, that is, a visual comparison or symbol to help the reader understand and apply what is being said in a deeper way. This tool is found on P. 18 of "Exploring the Bible Using Study Skills;" available to buy on Amazon.

1. Skim through the chapter to locate three metaphors:

- Describe the first in Verse 6-9. It is labeled in Verse 9.
- Locate the second in Verse 9-12. c) What is the metaphor in Verse 16-17. How do these help you understand how a teacher can help other saints to grow?

*Newer students: Focus on 'reading' Scripture rather than on using many new study insights.

2. Define the term, 'husbandry:' Describe how we are God's husbandry, as we work together with Him.

3. We are God's 'building:' a) In what way is our spiritual life similar to the construction of a building? b) What building materials can be used to build the edifice of doctrine in our souls, according to Verse 12? c) These materials seem to be categorized into two groups of work. One is acceptable and receives a reward and the other is unacceptable and burns away? Give some examples of each from your own life.

4. Look at a few other metaphors used by Paul: How do they help in understanding what Paul is teaching? Locate them in the following verses: Romans 12:1, I Corinthians 11:4-15, I Corinthians 11:23-26, and II Tim. 2:3-4. Can you find others?

Discerning What Really is!

Have you ever wondered, "Where am I in my spiritual walk and thinking?" Much too often we become entangled in life circumstances without conscious awareness of what we are doing. *I Cor. 2:15* states that believers, those that are spiritual, are able to judge (discern) even these things: "*But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.*" Saints are able to evaluate their own spiritual walk and attitude as they are led by the Spirit in sound doctrine (*Rom. thru Phile.*). Understanding God's perspective and will can develop personal conviction, which causes us to ask a question to apply verses to the details of life: "How can I yield to change and live unto God?"

Life can move quite quickly sometimes and we can be caught up in situations and emotions that seem like a whirlwind; **we think we have no control.** However, God encourages us to lead captive every thought to the obedience of Christ. The only way this can be done is to take in/meditate on sound doctrine of the Word and yield to what God teaches. Sometimes it takes determined concentration to be aware of what we are thinking. Our imaginations and tendency to make excuses or accuse others can keep us derailed or blind...we need to be mindful of our thoughts. "*(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds:) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*" (*II Cor. 10:4-5*). We all have elevated strongholds.

Nevertheless, God has made a way for us to 'cast down' imaginations and anything that exalts itself above God and His Word within our life. This enables us to clearly discern what is happening and what we are doing, seeing things from God's perspective. Taking in the Word by faith, transforms our thinking to the mind of Christ (*I Cor. 2:16*) and empowers us to stand against the wiles of the devil. It becomes our armor to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked as long as we live on earth (*Eph. 6:10-24*). As this is done, we are being led by the Spirit, being conformed to Christ. We can learn to discern (evaluate, not condemn) our own spiritual life, which includes these additional issues in *I Corinthians 3*:

- Verses 1-4: Realize that some saints are carnal babes and others are mature saints. This equips us to help them.
- Verses 5-7: Distinguishing who are God's laborers from the source of all things, which is God Himself.
- Verses 8-15: Differentiating between acceptable works (gold, silver, precious stones) and those that are not (wood, hay, stubble).
- Verses 16-23: Discerning between thinking/behavior that glorifies God, versus what defiles the Body of Christ.



God Gives the Increase

By Jeannette Scallan

Admiring his crop of luscious tomatoes, the weekend gardener wipes his brow and exclaims, "Just look at this bounty I've produced!" He's proud of the work of his hands, but is his statement correct? Certainly his efforts were involved, but did he produce the tomatoes? Digging in dirt he did not create; the gardener planted a seed he never designed. Hydrating the vegetation with water supplied from heaven, he then relied on light from the sun to nourish the plants through photosynthesis which he could never control. Even his careful weeding would have been to no avail had a blight of disease, or insects descended on his garden.

The natural inclination of our flesh is to constantly seek some work of our own hands to glory in, but as believers we understand that our works are nothing but filthy rags. We have placed our faith in the finished work of Christ. Yet, we are also instructed to be labourers together with God, and were created in Christ Jesus unto good works. How, then can we be careful to maintain good works, without frustrating the grace of God by falling into a performance-based thought pattern?

Paul teaches us the right perspective in I Corinthians 3:7, "So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." Did you desire to share the Gospel with a friend, or have strength to show grace to an enemy? "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13). Recognizing that both the desire, and strength to do good now comes from God's Word working effectually in us mortifies the temptation to boast. God plants the desire, He provides the strength, and He will give the increase.

We Are God's Temple?

Paul provides foundational teaching in *Romans 1-11*: Our Justification (*Romans 1-5*), Our Holy, Sanctified Life (*Romans 6-8*), and clarity about What Happened to Israel and this temporary 'Mystery' time of Gentile grace (*Romans 9-11*). In *Romans 12*, God begins to instruct saints about a **new form of worship and service**. We are NOT Israel, therefore we are to worship and serve God differently. A few examples:

-Sacrifices: We don't kill animals as sacrifices today (*Lev. 1:3*), but saints are to be the sacrifice: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies **a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (*Rom. 12:1*)

-Gifts: Today we are to offer gifts, but not as Israel did under the Law. Our gifts are of ability, enabled according to the grace given and the proportion of faith: "Having then **gifts** differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness." (*Romans 12:6-8*)

-Law: We are not under the Mosaic law as was Israel, but under grace. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore **love is the fulfilling of the law.**" (*Rom. 13:10*)

-Temple: First, we are individually God's temple: "What? Know ye not that **your** (individual) **body is the temple** of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (*I Cor. 6:19*). Second, all saints together make up Christ's Body, and are members one of another. This is the temple of God: "Know ye not that **ye** (Body of believers) **are the temple of God**, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (*I Cor. 3:16*)

I Cor. 3:16 relays a change; now we are God's temple to be used for His spiritual business. When we continue to serve our flesh and sin reigns, we defile His temple. *I Cor. 3:17* says: "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." This destruction, in the context, means that our dead works will burn away and we will suffer loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ. As believers, when we walk by faith, our spiritual life functions in this body as God's holy temple. In this way, we can glorify God in the decisions we make and we will receive rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Praise God for this glorious reality!

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Stamp

To:

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...” (Romans 3:24)

Who is Teaching God's Word? By Erin Alexander

Those who teach the Word of God are held to a high standard. How do we know when we are listening to a teacher who is sound in the Word? We can turn to the King James Bible for the answers. *1 Corinthians 2:4-7 “And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. 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: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:”* A pastor should not give his own opinions on what God’s word says. He should show us how to understand the Scriptures and how to live the way God wants.

There are many false teachers in the world today. We have all been under them at one point in time. Even the Lord Jesus Christ warned Israel of a coming day in the Tribulation Period of these things: *Matthew 24:24 “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; in-somuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”* How many people today fit this narrative?

As the Body of Christ, we walk by faith not sight, *2 Corinthians 5:7*. A false teacher will preach what others want to hear, that God will miraculously take away problems and sufferings, if they have enough faith. Actually, God’s power is working in the inner man by the Word, being the source of His power to help us deal with them. This issue is understood when you rightly divide the Word as instructed in *II Timothy 2:15*, acknowledging the context of what is being written. *2 Timothy 4:3 “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;”* Search for teachers who use the King James Bible and rightly divide the Word.

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Periodical
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