

- I. Unity over Leadership (1 Cor 1-4)
 - A. The Promise and Danger of Being God's Temple (1 Cor 3:1-23)
1. The Marks of a Carnal Christian (3:1-4)
 - a. Historical Context: After Paul explored the heights of spiritual behavior with the Corinthians (2:10-16), he shattered the discourse by revealing that the Corinthians were not spiritual in their behavior. Their eagerness towards divisive behavior showed that they were not spiritual. They had surrendered to carnality instead of walking like the Spirit had commanded them. The model of Christ had been set. He walked like God and not as the people he was around. We are to do the same. We are to look higher for guidance.
 - b. Paul uses these descriptors to talk about carnality: "carnal" (sarkinos), "babes" (nepios), drinking milk, walking as "people" (anthropos).
 - c. There is never a place in the body of Christ for envy, strife, or divisiveness.
 - i. In our walk with Christ, we should always strive to grow up. We should not be dealing with the same issues. We should be measuring ourselves and asking the question, are we still drinking milk or are we able to handle meat in life?
 - ii. We need to evaluate the things that divide us. Think of the people you do not like. Are you able to freely and lovingly pray for the people you do not like? Can you care for the people you do not like?
2. It's Always about God (3:5-10)
 - a. Paul reminds the community that though he preached, he was used a vessel. He and Apollos were instruments of God. He planted and Apollos watered but God made the crop grow.
 - b. Paul reminds them, also, that they are "co-laborers" (sunergos) with God. God is at work in the world. Our job, the job of the ministers, and all who share the word, is to join God at work. We are God's coworkers.
 - i. Do we understand our relationship with God as a joyful job?
3. We are the temple of the Spirit of God (3:11-23)
 - a. Historical Context: Paul laid the foundation, preaching the gospel in Corinth. Others have added to the temple building through their preaching. But people of God were arranged by God to be his house, his abode, his dwelling place. In the ancient world, gods lived in temples. The God of Israel decided to dwell in a temple made with hands, brick and mortar. Now he dwells in temples made of flesh and blood, which he made.
 - b. Preachers need to watch what they add to the temple. If it is edifying, it will last. But if it is of substances insufficient for the kingdom, it will be destroyed. And we need to be careful what we add.
 - c. We are warned, defiling God's temple brings destruction. But keeping and protecting God's temple, acting wisely, brings everlasting life. This is the promise and the danger of being the temple.
 - i. Do we see ourselves everyday as a dwelling place for God? What does God see about us looking from within us as a community and as individuals?