

“WOOD, HAY, AND STUBBLE”
1 Corinthians 3
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¹ But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ² I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³ for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? ⁴ For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human?

⁵ What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸ He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. ⁹ For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

- Q1 – Paul appears to make a division between two groups. What are the two groups?

¹⁰ According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. ¹¹ For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— ¹³ each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

- Q2 – Whose work is being exposed? What is the “work?”

¹⁶ Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

- Q3 – Who is the “you” in verse 16?

¹⁸ Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in their craftiness,” ²⁰ and again, “The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.” ²¹ So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future— all are yours, ²³ and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

- Q4 – What conclusion does the Apostle draw?

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

1. **First**, all leaders, regardless as to their giftedness, are tools. Some plant and some water (3:6).
2. **Second**, God is the one who causes growth (3:6, 7).
3. **Third**, each of those who labor (whether planting or watering) will receive their own reward (3:8).
4. **Fourth**, 3:9 says that the leaders are fellow-workers together for God. Those among whom they labor are God's field, God's building, and God's Temple (vv. 16, 17).
5. **Fifth**, based on what has been said, we begin to note verses 10-15.
6. **Sixth**, "What is being built in verses 10 and 12?" Based on verse 9, the church (people).
7. **Seventh**, "Who is doing the building?" The leadership within the church is doing the building (v.10b). This is the same idea in Ephesians 4:11-13. God causes such building through human instrumentation.
8. **Eighth**, the emphasis does not appear to be on the individual, but on the assembly. It is not an individual being evaluated, but the work of the leadership within the church.
9. **Ninth**, the emphasis appears to be on body unity versus body division. If you divided the body you will not receive the reward for that area, but you will still be saved (v. 15).
10. **Tenth**, the gold, silver, precious stone is a contrast to wood, hay, and straw (3:12).
11. **Eleventh**, the conclusion to this whole matter is found in verses 21-23, "Do not boast in men, boast in Christ."