

I Corinthians 3:1-4:21 – Correcting the Problem

A. Outline^A

I. Party Spirit in the Church, chs 1-4

- a. The Letter Opens (1:1-9)
- b. Unity in Jesus Christ (1:10-17)
- c. Concerning Wisdom (1:18-2:16)
 - i. “God’s Foolishness / Wisdom and ours”; “The Wisdom of the Cross is Only Perceived by Believers” (1:18-25)
 - ii. “To the Praise of God”; “God in All His Fullness”; “God Always with Us” (1:26-31)
 - iii. “The Crucified Christ”; “Paul’s Humility”; “Superiority of Christ”; “God’s Eloquence, Man’s Stupidity”; “Reliance on the Spirit”; “We Preach Christ Crucified” (2:1-5)
 - iv. “God’s Wise Plan Revealed”; “The Gospel Contains God’s Wisdom”; “The Natural & the Spiritual Man”; “Natural Man Cannot Understand” (2:6-16)

d. Correcting the Problem (3:1-4:21)

- i. 3:1-9 _____
 - (1) 3:1-4 Problem Diagnosed; Proof of Immaturity; Stumbling-block of Pride
 - (2) 3:5-9 _____
- ii. 3:10-23 _____
 - (1) 3:10-15 _____
 - (2) 3:16-23 _____
- iii. 4:1-21 _____
 - (1) 4:1-5 _____
 - (2) 4:6-13 _____
 - (a) 6-7 _____
 - (b) 8-13 _____
 - (3) 4:14-21 _____
 - (a) 14-17 _____
 - (b) 18-21 _____

- 2. Moral Disorders in the Church, chs 5-7
- 3. Social Relations in the Church, chs 8-11
- 4. Spiritual Gifts in the Church, chs 12-14
- 5. Fundamental Doctrine of the Church, chs 15
- 6. Conclusion of the Letter, ch 16

^A Major outlines from Thinking Through the Bible by Rev’d. Dr. John McNicol © 1944

B. Correcting the Problem (3:1-4:21)

Key idea on verse by verse basis

I. 3:1-9

a. 3:1-4 Their Problem Diagnosed; Proof of Immaturity; Stumbling-block of Pride

¹ And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. ² I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, ³ for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? ⁴ For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not mere men? ^B

- i. Verse 1 Their carnality; Still spiritual babies; Babes in Christ.
 - (1) How do individuals hold back the progress of the (local) church?
- ii. Verse 2 Their poor digestion; Stuck in natural realm; Milk not solid food.
 - (1) What does ‘milk’ teaching mean here (phps Hebrews 6:1-2)?
- iii. Verse 3 Marked by envy, strife & division; Carnally driven, still in squalor; Jealous & strife reveals their immaturity. What are the biblical opposites to envy, strife, division?
- iv. Verse 4 Shown by party spirit; Involved in petty carnal dissension; Factions are worldly. What marks Christians as ‘mere men’?

b. 3:5-9

⁵ What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. ⁷ So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. ⁸ Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. ⁹ For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building. ^B

- i. Verse 5
- ii. Verse 6
- iii. Verse 7
- iv. Verse 8
- v. Verse 9

2. 3:10-23

a. 3:10-15

¹⁰ According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it.

¹¹ For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²

Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

¹³ each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is *to be* revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴ If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. ¹⁵ If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire. ^B

i. Verse 10

ii. Verse 11

iii. Verse 12

iv. Verse 13

v. Verse 14

vi. Verse 15

b. 3:16-23

¹⁶ Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷ If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

¹⁸ Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written, "*He is the One who catches the wise in their craftiness*"; ²⁰ and again, "**The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are useless.**"

²¹ So then let no one boast in men. For all things belong to you, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come; all things belong to you, ²³ and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God. ^B

i. Verse 16

ii. Verse 17

iii. Verse 18

iv. Verse 19

v. Verse 20

vi. Verse 21

vii. Verse 22

viii. Verse 23

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