1 Corinthians Series

**The Church in Corinth**

July 2, 2023

**All Grown Up**

(1 Corinthians 3:1-7)

Dear brothers and sisters, when I was with you I couldn’t talk to you as I would to spiritual people. I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in Christ. I had to feed you with milk, not with solid food, because you weren’t ready for anything stronger. And you still aren’t ready, for you are still controlled by your sinful nature. You are jealous of one another and quarrel with each other. Doesn’t that prove you are controlled by your sinful nature? Aren’t you living like people of the world? When one of you says, “I am a follower of Paul,” and another says, “I follow Apollos,” aren’t you acting just like people of the world? After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? **We are only God’s servants through whom you believed the Good News.** **Each of us did the work the Lord gave us.** I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but **it was God who made it grow.** It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow.

**Introduction**:

I wonder if God gets as exasperated with us as parents do in dealing with their strong-willed children?

I’m prone to want my way

I’m prone to argue with God

I’m given to immature responses to spiritual moments

It’s a good thing that our Father is patient, loving and kind!

We’ve already established that there is great deal of spiritual immaturity in the Corinthian church that finds its root in divisions, factions and petty jealousy. **If not corrected, their immaturity will prevent them from the opportunity for deeper things in God.**

(v.1) …when I was with you I couldn’t talk to you as I would to spiritual people. I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in the Christian life.

Let’s look closely at what Paul says to them…

**I couldn’t talk to you as I would to spiritual people…**

* “*I could not speak to you as people who are* ***dominated*** *by the Holy Spirit*”—Eerdmans Publishing

What do these “spiritual people” look like? (According to Paul)

* A lifestyle dependent on the Holy Spirit for a long time.
* Knows the Bible and practices it over a long period of time in order to distinguish the difference between good and evil on a regular, consistent basis.
* Embraces the doctrine of Scripture and is open to truth that is revealed by the Holy Spirit.
* Familiar enough with the Bible to teach others (publicly or individually).
* Has spiritual insight and checks all things by the Word of God.
* Mature enough to deal with sin and failure in others (Galatians 6:1)
* Views life from a divine viewpoint, not hyperreactive but sees everything as part of God’s sovereign plan.

(Hebrews 5:12-14)

You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God’s word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn’t know how to do what is right. Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.

**I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in Christ…**

The marks of “infants in Christ”

* Chokes on strong doctrine
* Easily distracted by things
* Needs to be amused
* Loves to talk about the fascinating or spectacular
* Follows men rather than Christ
* Has difficult time talking to others about Christ
* Easily offended
* Talks more than listens
* Quickly quits rather than persevere through difficulty
* Compromises when pressure comes
* Tantrums when he does not get his way

This phrase **“as though you belonged to this world”** is important because it points out that these believers in Corinth were acting just like people in the world were acting.

(1 Peter 2:9)

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light;

**…for you are still controlled by your sinful nature…**

Paul says that given their behavior, he is required to speak to them as if they were unbelievers"

It is their behavior that leads Paul to this conclusion—you are acting as if you did not ever know Jesus Christ and you never accepted his forgiveness for your sins.

It does matter how we live

It does matter how we treat others

It does matter what we do in life

(Romans 6:6)

We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin.

**Conclusion**:

There is a genuine humility about people who are dominated by the Spirit and we can see it in two statements Paul makes at the conclusion of this passage…

1. We are only God’s servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us.
2. It was God who made it grow.

Whatever has been accomplished -- To God be the glory for all the things He has done in my life

God I am a sinner

I’m sorry for my sins

I believe Jesus died for my sins

I believe Jesus will forgive my sins

I choose Jesus