

Small Group Guide
THE CROSS AND CHRISTIAN UNITY

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. Jim Shaddix

May 19, 2013

1 Corinthians 3:1-23

MAIN TRUTH

Message Outline

Question: What causes division within the church? Nothing grieves God more than His body being divided; Ephesians 4:30 - *Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God ...*

The big deal with disunity over church leaders...

Division in church in Corinth was over leadership – same in many churches; sometimes leadership is the cause of division in church – main cause, people in church adamant about having their own way

The REASON: Carnal Christianity

- Christian maturity is stunted by carnality. (1-3)
- Christian carnality is rooted in vanity. (3-4)
- Christian vanity always causes disunity. (3-4)

Spiritual stages:

Natural – unsaved, “of the flesh”, no growth

Spiritual:

Carnal (immature) – saved, still “of the flesh”, little or no growth

Maturing – saved, of the Spirit, growth

Evidence of spiritual maturing – Galatians 5:22 - 26

The REMINDER: God is the star of the church

- The church is God’s field. (5-9)
 - Leaders are the servants, but God gives the jobs.
 - Leaders work the ground, but God gives the growth.
 - Leaders work together because God gives the wages.
- The church is God’s building. (9-15)
 - God gives the grace, so leaders build cooperatively.
 - God gives the gospel, so leaders build accordingly.
 - God gives the rewards, so leaders build for eternity.
- The church is God’s temple. (16-17; cf. Eph. 2:19-22)
 - God gives His Spirit and each local church gets to host it.
 - God gives His holiness and each believer must preserve it.

Trust ourselves for growth

Look to men for “wages”

Crucify vanity
Salvation through Christ alone

Human attitude to “do” in order to “get” (we want reward)

This church, us, reflection of God’s character in this community; how are we portraying His character?

The RESPONSE: Boast only in God (Repeat Ch. 1:31)

- The wisdom of the world is so deceptive. (18) Doing church based on wisdom of

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the world

- The wisdom of God is so dominant, not just dominant but perfect. (19-20)
- The glory of God is so desirable. (21-23; cf. Eph. 1:20-23) – **REFER Leviticus 9:5 - 7**

Message Summary

This week we are continuing our study in 1 Corinthians, focusing on the Cross and Christian Unity. The believers in Corinth had begun to allow the issue of leadership in the church to cause division and disunity among the church. The reason for this was their carnal Christianity that was rooted in vanity and causing disunity. God, not gifted leaders, is the star of the gospel. The church is God's field, His building and His temple. The church has the unique responsibility of representing Christ on earth. We reject the deceptive wisdom of the world and boast only in God and His glory.