



THE CHURCH THE WORLD NEEDS | JUST THE HELP (7)

October 24, 2021

1 Corinthians 3:5-15

PURPOSE

To discover and experience Jesus Christ in our midst
To cultivate mutually encouraging relationships
To participate in God's mission to the world

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

10 MIN

You now get an extra hour in your day. What would you do with that hour?

WORSHIP

10 MIN

OPENING PRAYER

Bless your servants, O God, and favor us with your steadfast love.
May your love flow through us like springs of living water,
that we may rejoice and be glad all our days of our lives. Amen.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER—Psalm 34:1-8

¹I will bless the Lord at all times;
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

²**My soul makes its boast in the Lord;
let the humble hear and be glad.**

³Oh, magnify the Lord with me,
and let us exalt his name together!

⁴**I sought the Lord, and he answered me
and delivered me from all my fears.**

⁵Those who look to him are radiant,
and their faces shall never be ashamed.

⁶**This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him
and saved him out of all his troubles.**

⁷The angel of the Lord encamps
around those who fear him, and delivers them.

⁸**Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!**

Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

SCRIPTURE READING

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

¹⁰According 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. ¹¹For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—¹³each 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. ¹⁴If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

BIBLE STUDY

40 MIN

Summary and Connection

One of the primary issues Paul has been addressing in a variety of ways to this point in his letter is how Christians ought to be relating to one another as they seek to expand the mission of the church. Paul had started this church in Corinth, but others had come after him to lead and expand the ministry. Unfortunately, instead of partnership and unity among the leaders of the church, there was competition and division. Paul resumes his theme of unity by redirecting the ambition and hopes of the Corinthian church away from the results of their own labors and toward the promise that God is at work in building his church. While we all have a role to play in the church, ultimately the growth and health of the church rests on God's work. After all, as Paul says, you are God's field and God's building.



1. Looking at the Bible

What does the text say?

- Read the text twice. Each time listen carefully and notice what grabs your attention.
- In your reading and hearing of this passage, does it remind you of any other part of Scripture?
- How does Paul use the image of a field and a building to clarify his main point?
- What or who specifically is God's field and God's building?
- In what ways are these metaphors the same and in what ways are they different?



2. Looking at Jesus

In v.11 Paul is modeling for us what ambition looks like when viewed through the cross of Christ. The foundation of which Paul speaks is the cross. Paul refers to himself as the 'master builder' who built a foundation on top of an even greater foundation: Jesus.

- How does Paul view his own gifts and work in light of Jesus, Apollos and others?
- How does seeing himself as a fellow servant reshape his ambition and model it for the Corinthians?
- How did Jesus' own ministry model this for Paul and for us?



3. Looking at our Hearts

The Corinthians wanted desperately to pick a side, or a person for that matter, to place their hopes for the future of the church. Some wanted to follow Paul, others Apollos, some wanted to follow Peter and others would come later who would captivate the hearts and minds of the Christians in Corinth. But Paul wants them not only to redirect their ambition but also their allegiance away from any one person and onto Jesus.

- What was driving the Corinthians to need to back Paul, Apollos, or others?
- How does Paul's opening statement in v.15 recast their understanding of leadership?
- How do our own ambitions oftentimes blind us from the work that God is doing in our lives?

Application question: Ambition and pride are the enemy of community. How do these presiding metaphors that Paul uses help us live together within our church as a family, but also work alongside other Christians and other churches? What are some times, in big or small ways, where this common unity and hope that God is the builder who gives growth has been modeled for you?



4. Looking at our World

What are we to hope for?

- What do you think Paul's hope was for the Corinthians? How might his hope have allowed him to continue on in his ministry even when things were a mess?
- How did Paul's hope shape his relationships with other leaders, both those he knew and those he didn't?
- Share a story of hope from your own experience, where someone planted a seed of the gospel in your life, and someone else watered maybe without even realizing it.

SHARING 15 MIN

Share your prayer requests, thoughts, hopes and fears for the coming week, and as you do consider how this passage might give light to what you are sharing.

KINGDOM PRAYER 15 MIN

Pray that we would see ourselves called by God.
Include other prayer requests.

SENDING 5 MIN

May the God who hears our needs and answers the cries of our hearts be with you today and always, a sure and certain strength, throughout all the ages. Amen.