

Studies In First Corinthians

(I Corinthians 3:9-23)

1. Can it be said that Christians are God's building?

Yes: *"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (I Corinthians 3:9).*

- The church is the people (**Romans 12:4-5** and **I Corinthians 12:27**), built by Christ (**Matthew 16:18**). We are the household of God (**Ephesians 2:19** and **Hebrews 3:1-6**).
- Paul and Appolos worked together with God to build up God's people (cf. **Acts 6:7**).

2. Though we may build up work for the Lord, who laid the foundation?

Christ: *"(10) According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. (11) For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 3:10-11).*

- **Ephesians 2:19-21**; cf. **II Timothy 2:19**.
- Be cautious not to ruin the work others have done (**I Corinthians 4:17**, **Colossians 4:17**, and **I Timothy 1:3-7**).

3. Can we expect our labor for Christ to be tested?

Yes: *"(12) Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; (13) Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. (14) If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. (15) If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (I Corinthians 3:12-15).*

- A spiritual consideration of gold, silver, and precious stone will hold up to a fire test (**Malachi 3:1-3** and **Revelation 3:18**).
- Consumable things such as wood, hay, stubble will not stand up to trials of fire likened unto weak faith that cannot stand trials (**Matthew 13:20-21**).
- The spiritual image of gold and silver are honorable while the other is not (**II Timothy 2:20**). Clearly, physical treasures cannot save (**Zephaniah 1:18**).
- Sometimes we'll see our work for the Lord suffer loss (**John 6:66-71** and **II Timothy 4:10-17**).
- The ultimate point is... Make full proof of your work (**II Timothy 4:1-5**).

4. Whose temple are we?

God's: *"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (I Corinthians 3:16)?*

- We are God's temple (**II Corinthians 6:16** and **I Peter 2:5**).
- Figuratively speaking, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit indwell us and we them (**John 14:23, John 17:20-21, Romans 8:9-10, II Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 1:25-27, and I John 4:15**).

5. What will happen to those who defile God's temple?

Destroyed: *"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are"* (**I Corinthians 3:17**).

- Individually, this point applies (**I Corinthians 6:18-20**).
- As the local church, woe unto those who defile us (**Philippians 3:17-19, II Peter 2:1-3, and Jude 4**).

6. What should one do with his or her worldly wisdom?

Don't use it. Become a fool in regard to worldly wisdom: *"Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise"* (**I Corinthians 3:18**).

- **Proverbs 3:5-7, Proverbs 23:4, Isaiah 55:7-9, Jeremiah 4:14, and Romans 12:16.**

7. Is God impressed by the wise people of this world?

No: *"(19) For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. (20) And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain"* (**I Corinthians 3:19-20**).

- **Psalms 2:1-5.**
- We are to be aware of following the wisdom of this world (**Colossians 2:8**).

8. Ultimately, who does all things belong to?

God: *"(21) Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; (22) Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; (23) And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's"* (**I Corinthians 3:21-23**).

- As we discussed earlier in this epistle, don't follow man (**I Corinthians 1:12-17; 3:4-7**).
- All glory belongs to God (**Romans 16:27, I Corinthians 1:31, I Corinthians 10:31, II Corinthians 10:17, Philippians 4:20, and II Peter 3:18**).
- There is an order of authority that puts the earth under man (**Genesis 1:26**), man under Christ, and the Father above all (**I Corinthians 11:3 and Hebrews 2:6-10**).