



# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

## I CORINTHIANS 3:10-23

LESSON: CHRIST—OUR ONLY FOUNDATION — March 20, 2022

### INTRODUCTION / SYNOPSIS

**CHAPTER 3:5-9** The Corinthian church was severely divided. The division focused primarily from the carnal believers in the church directed upon the former preachers of the church: Peter, Paul, and Apollos. Some liked Peter and his preaching better, and felt he was doing more for the Lord, while others felt the same about Paul and Apollos. This has always been a critical issue in the church. Our believer has a favorite minister. This should not be in the body of Christ!

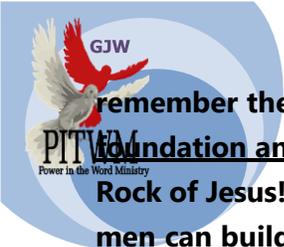
1. Ministers are servants (v.5). (Instruments of God—can help only as God gifts).
2. Ministers are nothing in comparison to God (vv.6-7). (one plants, one waters, but God gives the increase).
3. Ministers are one-equal in God's eyes (v.8). (both who plants and who waters—each is responsible).
4. Ministers are co-workers with God (v.9). (to work for God—to cultivate the field).

### LESSON: I. THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH 1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-15

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:10** 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. This shows us about four things: the grace of God; a wise master builder; other laborers; how you build upon what the master builder has laid. Paul writes to the Corinthians. We find that...

1. Paul was a master builder because of the grace of God— God had given and enabled, empowered, and equipped him to do the job. He gives all the credit to God. It wasn't a building per say, but God gave him the plans to teach others. It was God's power, God's gifts, God's ability to reach people. Paul was only the instrument through which God was continuing to build the church.
2. Paul said he was a wise master builder— He did not approach the task and project unthoughtfully. He kept his mind upon the task at hand. He did not allow the distraction or desires to interfere. So, he did it as God instructed. You can't work without instructions. Matthew 7:24-27 says *24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*
3. Paul said that another is to build upon the foundation he has laid—Paul says we are to build upon the foundation that's already laid because it was given to him by the grace of God. This was to be so because when Paul left Corinth, God raised up others to continue laboring in building the church: ministers; leaders; teachers, and, members.
4. Paul said take heed how you build— 1 Timothy 4:16 says *Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.* Every member is either building or destroying the testimony and strength of the church. The steady job of the follower is to continue believing the One whom God has sent. We build upon His foundation that He has been laid for us in the bible 2,000yrs ago.

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:11** For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. We have to



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remember the foundation has been laid and it is strong and shall never be moved! (1) There is only one foundation and that is Jesus Christ Himself. All others are sinking sand. We build our lives upon the solid Rock of Jesus! He is our strong foundation. (2) There is only one teaching or doctrine of Christ upon which men can build their lives. John 3:34 says *He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God.* John 7:16-17 says *My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man will do His Will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.* It's not about me, but about Jesus Christ who has given us the victory.

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:12** Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;— There is a structure, and this scripture lists two possible materials: either permanent (*gold, silver, precious stones*) or perishable (*wood, hay, stubble*). The permanent last forever, are incorruptible and undefiled. The perishable fade away and are defiled. So, when we look at the permanent, eternal substance, they will withstand the test of times:

1. They are the fruit of the Spirit, the spiritual qualities that last beyond this life. These are the things that believers are to use in building the church. Galatians 5:22-23 says *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.*
2. They are the things which are to be added to our faith. 2 Peter 1:5-11 says *5And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*
3. They are the souls and lives of men, women, boys, and girls become living stones in the church. 1Peter 2:4-5 says *4 As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— 5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (NIV).*

When we look at the perishable, temporary, they will not withstand the trial by fire.

4. They are the treasures, wealth, and cares of this world. They are the works of the flesh. Matthew 6:19-21 says *19Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*
5. They are the false teachings that are always dangerously floating around believers and the church. 1 Peter 4:1-5 says *1Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. 4Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.*

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:13** 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. This concerns believers.

1. There is a day of inspection and every man's work shall be inspected. When it is finished, the inspector, the Lord Jesus Christ will approve or disapprove it. Our works shall be made manifest:





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made known, and that day shall declare it. The day speaks of the Day of Judgment. No believer can be exempted. The believer will stand before the Lord Jesus Christ and have his works tried and tested by the Lord! This is in reference of the "*Judgment Seat*" where believers will not be judged for sins, but of their faithfulness serving Christ; how they obeyed the Great Commission; how you controlled their tongue; how your time, money, and talents were used; and crowns received. How? It shall be revealed by fire! And the truth and quality of what sort his works is, will be exposed.

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.**

2. **The believer whose works survived the fire will be rewarded greatly.** This concerns a good builder. The quality of service speaks for itself, for if they remain undamaged by the fire, it was God's grace at work!

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.** This concerns a bad builder.

3. **The believer whose works perished in the fire will suffer loss.** Note: **he will be saved, but he will suffer the loss of reward,** appearing and looking like a burned-out building. Everything he has devoted himself to in this life shall be suddenly swept away, but he himself shall be saved, but no reward to present to the King. The stress in this entire passage is not upon a man's relationship to Christ, but upon his service to Christ. He will be like someone who just escapes from a fire.

## II. THE TEMPLE OF GOD 1 CORINTHIANS 3:16-17

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?—** Paul is asking, yet saying that you should know...The building identified is the temple of God, the church, the vessel used—the body of Christ. It is us, the church that the Spirit of God dwells in. God sent the Holy Spirit to dwell in these fleshly temples of believers.

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.** <sup>1</sup>There were many temples in Corinth. They all had idols but none of them contained a real god. The Christians in Corinth had God among them by means of His Holy Spirit. Therefore, they were like the temple. The spiritual temple of Christians existed to show that the only real God is holy. But the bad behavior of the Christians at Corinth was stopping the work of the Holy Spirit. Their jealous quarrels were destroying God's work. James 3:6 says, *And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.* "Defile" means to dishonor or destroy. "*Him shall God destroy...*" shows that the person who defiles the temple of God (the body) shall face terrible judgment because "*the temple of God is holy*", which we are that holy temple. It is the Spirit of God alone that brings about a spiritual fellowship.

1. **Troublemakers can make it utterly impossible for the Spirit to work within the church.** An attitude of disgust, a spirit of ill will, an unwillingness to learn—grumbling, complaining, quarreling, arguing, divisiveness destroys the spiritual fellowship of the church.
2. **Troublemakers can split the church.** Sometimes they try to hold their opinions to themselves, but their opinion is usually written all over their faces and in their speech and their behavior till it begins to burst at the seams with derogatory feelings. They have become opinionated resulting into splitting little parties and opinionated cliques.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible-commentary/1-corinthians-lbw.htm>  
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>





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The temple of God is holy! Think about the day of judgement.

## III. THE STRENGTH OF WISDOM 1 CORINTHIANS 3:18-23

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:18 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.** This simply says, *'Do not have too high an opinion of yourself.'* Deception is quick if you don't think you could be deceived or fooled. And still Paul says become a fool, that you may be wise. What may seem foolish to the world; is wise to God. What is impossible to the world; is possible to God. So, if your worldly wisdom is your go to, you're going to miss out on what God wants.

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.** Paul had already told them that *their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God (1Cor.2:5)*. He continues that *the preaching of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but it's the power of God to those who are saved (1 Cor.1:18)*.

1. It's foolishness because evil, selfishness, and sin do exist within the heart of man. No one is good enough.
2. It's foolishness because there is only one way imaginable that a sinful and imperfect creature could be acceptable to a perfect God.
  - a. **First**, someone would still have to pay the penalty for man's sin. Why? Because God is perfect and righteous and just.
  - b. **Second**, a perfect Being would have to take man's sin upon Himself and die for man. Why? Because no sinful creature is acceptable to God.
  - c. **Of course**, this means that only God Himself could pay the penalty for man's sin. That's what He did. God came to earth in the Person of His Son and revealed the truth to man, and then died for man. This is the reason why all approaches to God other than through His Son Jesus Christ are foolishness to God. He made no other way. This is the reason the Scriptures proclaim that God uses man's own wisdom brilliance to trap him; he stumbles over his own wisdom and falls. in 1 Corinthians 1:19 also says *For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the under-standing of the prudent.* It's not in power and fame; selfishness and greed, nor human works and efforts—worldly wisdom, it's by the cross.

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.** The Lord knows the thoughts of every man, the utter emptiness of man's worldly approach to understanding the truth of God and the world. God says their thoughts are vain.

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;—** Paul lets us know that we are not to glory in men. To "*glory in men*" means to trust men. meaning don't be proud of following the wise men of the world; to look upon men as the answer and source of life and blessing, for God has given us all things; everything we need.

**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;—** God has given us Apollos, Cephas (Peter) as our helpers. They were servants to the Christian believers at Corinth. God has even given us the whole world to use; even life and even death are our servants. He has given us all the present and all the future. All are ours. I don't know about you, but that's assurance!



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**1<sup>ST</sup>—3:23** And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's. Christ is the head of all believers' lives. We belong to Christ, and Christ is God's. This belongs to His function and ministry as Savior. He came to earth to save men who were helpless to save themselves. As the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ served God the Father, in obedience as our Savior. His love is perfect and sincere!

## SUMMARY:

**10**Paul writes to the Christian believers in Corinth telling them that the grace of God enabled him to be a wise master builder where he has laid the foundation as instructed, and another builds on it. But he who builds on the foundation must be very careful. **11**No other foundation can be laid, other than the one that is already laid, which is Jesus Christ. **12**If any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, it is either permanent (eternal) or perishable (temporary). **13**Every man's work shall be made known, for the day (Judgment) will declare it, because it shall be exposed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. **14**If any man's work survive the fire, that he had built upon, he shall receive a reward. **15**And if any man's work is burned in the fire, he shall suffer loss: but he himself will be saved; and escape from the fire (**3:10-15**).

**16**Paul is asking, don't you know?, yet saying that we are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you. **17**If any man defile the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, in which we are that holy temple (**3:16-17**).

**18**Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. **19**For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, God catches the wise in their own clever plans. **20**Again, the Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. **21**Therefore, don't glory in men; being proud of following the wise men of the world; don't look upon men as the answer and source of life and blessings, for God has given us all things; everything we need. **22**God has given us Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life, death, things present, and things to come as our helpers. All are ours. **23** And Christ is the head of all. We belong to Christ, and Christ is God's (**3:18-23**).