

# Light Reading/Deep Reading of the Bible

## 1 Corinthians chapter 3

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Believers are the temple of God, why don't we feel it:

According to the Bible, "believers are the temple of God" means that God no longer dwells only in a temple or building made with hands, but in the community of believers, and even in the hearts of every believer. The church as a whole is the dwelling place of God, and believers become the temple of God through Jesus Christ. Why don't we feel God's presence? Although the Bible explicitly states that God is with believers, it is not uncommon for many people to experience "not feeling" God, even with Bible characters. Job, who lost his family, possessions, and health overnight, lamented in agony many times, wishing he had never been born and felt God's comfort. He did not understand why the righteous suffered so much, and although he did not reject God, he was full of doubts about God's work in his suffering. In many psalms, David expresses his inner sorrow and loneliness, feeling that God has "hid his face" from him. He experienced the pursuit of his enemies, the betrayal of his loved ones, and his own guilt, and often poured out his pain and confusion to God in prayer. After the peak of his ministry, Elijah fled because of Jezebel's threat, and was so discouraged that he begged for death. He felt lonely and helpless in the wilderness, as if God had forsaken him. The prophet Jeremiah was deeply grieved by the destruction of his nation and the rebellion of his people. Many times in prayer he complained about his loneliness and suffering, and even cursed the day he was born. Moses was so bitter about the disobedience of the people of Israel that he was willing to blot his name out of God's book for the people. In the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus was facing the great agony of the cross, Jesus prayed to the Father, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death," which shows that even Jesus experienced deep pain and loneliness in human nature.

God's presence is a spiritual fact that God is still with us even when we don't feel it. When people feel sinful, guilty, or far from God, they feel alienated and don't feel God's presence. It doesn't mean that God is gone, but that our hearts are blocked. When we neglect spiritual practices such as prayer, Bible reading, and worship, our sensitivity to God will be reduced, and it will naturally be more difficult to feel God's presence. Sometimes God allows us to experience moments of "not feeling" so that we can learn faith instead of following Him by feeling alone "Believers are the temple of God" reminds us that both the individual and the church are divine dwellings, sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This calls us to pursue holiness in our personal lives and honor the presence of the Holy Spirit. Promote unity and love in the church and avoid strife or destructive behavior. Live out the glory of God and make the church a testimony of God's presence to the world.

1 Corinthians 3; Paul pointed out that the Corinthian believers were still spiritual "babes" because of their envy and strife among them, which showed worldly behavior. They boast of following a leader (such as Paul or Apollos), which indicates that they are not yet fully spiritually mature. Paul emphasized that he and Apollos were only servants of God, each with different ministry, but it was God who made life grow. They are God's co-workers, and believers are God's fields and buildings. Paul uses the parable of construction to show that he has established Christ as the sole foundation of the church. Others build on this foundation, but each one's work will be tested at the last day. If the project survives, it will be rewarded; If they are burned, they are still saved, but they pass through the fire as if they were through fire. Paul reminds believers that they are the temple of God and that the Holy Spirit dwells among them. If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy that person, because the temple of God is holy. Paul warns believers not to deceive themselves and to rely on worldly wisdom, which is foolishness in God's sight. He encouraged believers not to boast about their human leaders, for all things belong to believers, and believers belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

We pray

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for never forsaking us, and although we may feel weak and even lonely at times, we know that Your promises will not change. Lord, we come to You today to ask for one thing alone—to make us truly feel Your presence. Lord, when we face difficulties, stress, temptations, and sorrows, pray that Your Holy Spirit will come upon us so that our hearts may be comforted and at peace. Let us know that even when the outer environment seems desolate, You are still there for us. Lord, You were with Israel in the wilderness, with a pillar of clouds by day and a pillar of fire by night, and you are with each of us today as unchanging. Open our spiritual eyes so that we do not act by our feelings, but by faith to experience Your truth. If our hearts are cold, Lord, rekindle the fire of our love for You; If our ears become dull, let us hear Your gentle voice again. Know that You are with us.

Prayer is in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

## 1 Corinthians 3

### Amplified Bible

#### Foundations for Living

**3** However, brothers and sisters, I could not talk to you as to spiritual people, but [only] as to [a]worldly people [dominated by human nature], *mere* infants [in the new life] in Christ! <sup>2</sup> I fed you with milk, not solid food; for you were not yet able *to receive it*. Even now you are still not ready. <sup>3</sup> You are still [b]worldly [controlled by ordinary impulses, the sinful capacity]. For as long as there is jealousy and strife *and* discord among you, are you not [c]unspiritual, and are you not walking like ordinary men [unchanged by faith]? <sup>4</sup> For when one *of you* says, “I am [a disciple] of Paul,” and another, “I am [a disciple] of Apollos,” are you not [proving yourselves unchanged, just] *ordinary* people?

<sup>5</sup> What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Just servants through whom you believed [in Christ], even as the Lord appointed to each his task. <sup>6</sup> I planted, Apollos watered, but God [all the while] was causing the growth. <sup>7</sup> So neither is the one who plants nor the one who waters anything, but [only] God who causes the growth. <sup>8</sup> He who plants and he who waters are one [in importance and esteem, working toward the same purpose]; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. <sup>9</sup> For we are God’s fellow workers [His servants working together]; you are God’s cultivated field [His garden, His vineyard], God’s building.

<sup>10</sup> According to the [remarkable] grace of God which was given to me [to prepare me for my task], like a skillful master builder I laid a foundation, and now another is building on it. But each one must be careful how he builds on it, <sup>11</sup> for no one can lay a foundation other than the one which is [already] laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> But if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup> each one’s work will be clearly shown [for what it is]; for the day [of judgment] will disclose it, because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality *and* character *and* worth of each person’s work. <sup>14</sup> If any person’s work which he has built [on this foundation, that is, any outcome of his effort] remains [and survives this test], he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> But if any person’s work is burned up [by the test], he will suffer the loss [of his reward]; yet he himself will be saved, but only as [one who has barely escaped] through fire.

<sup>16</sup> [d]Do you not know *and* understand that you [the church] are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells [permanently] in you [collectively and individually]? <sup>17</sup> If anyone destroys the temple of God [corrupting it with false doctrine], God will destroy the destroyer; for the temple of God is holy (sacred), and that is what you are.

<sup>18</sup> Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool [discarding his worldly pretensions and acknowledging his lack of wisdom], so that he may become [truly] wise. <sup>19</sup> For the wisdom of this world is foolishness (absurdity, stupidity) before God; for it is written [in Scripture], “[He is] The one who catches the wise *and* clever in their craftiness;” <sup>20</sup> and again, “The Lord knows the thoughts of the [humanly] wise, that they are useless.” <sup>21</sup> So let no one boast in men [about their wisdom, or of having this

or that one as a leader]. For all things are yours, <sup>22</sup> whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas (Peter) or the world or life or death or things present or things to come; all things are yours, <sup>23</sup> and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God.

## 1 Corinthians Chapter 3 – Full Description and Theological Inference

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### ◆ I. Overview and Context

1 Corinthians 3 is part of Paul's larger effort to correct divisions and immaturity in the Corinthian church. He addresses the problem of **partisanship** (favoring leaders like Paul, Apollos, or Cephas), and shifts the focus back to **Christ as the only true foundation** of the church. This chapter emphasizes **spiritual maturity**, **unity**, and the **responsibility of Christian leaders**.

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### ◆ Detailed Breakdown

#### ✓ 1. Spiritual Immaturity and Division (vv. 1–4)

*"I could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ."* (v.1)

- Paul rebukes the Corinthians for being spiritually immature—acting like "infants in Christ".
- Their behavior (jealousy and strife) shows they are still "**worldly**" or "**fleshly**".
- The root issue: **divisions** and pride in human leaders.

#### 🔍 Theological Inference:

- **Sanctification is progressive**: New believers are expected to grow in spiritual understanding and unity.
  - **Carnality in believers** is real—Christians can still act according to the flesh, but it's not acceptable.
  - **Spiritual maturity** is tied to unity, not knowledge alone.
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#### ✓ 2. Ministers Are Servants, Not Saviors (vv. 5–9)

*"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth."* (v.6)

- Paul explains that he and Apollos are **servants**, not the source of spiritual growth.
- God alone gives the **increase**.

- Believers are **God's field and God's building**.

 **Theological Inference:**

- Christian leaders are **instruments**, not objects of worship.
  - **God is sovereign** over spiritual growth; human effort is necessary but not ultimate.
  - The Church belongs to **God**, not to any preacher, denomination, or personality.
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 **3. Building on the Foundation of Christ (vv. 10–15)**

*“For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (v.11)*

- Paul laid the foundation (Christ), and others build upon it.
- Builders (leaders, teachers) must be careful how they build.
- Works will be tested by **fire** (a metaphor for divine judgment).
- Some will receive a **reward**, others will suffer loss, though still be saved.

 **Theological Inference:**

- **Jesus Christ is the only true foundation** for the Church.
  - Christian ministry will be **evaluated by God**, not by popularity or human success.
  - There is a concept of **eternal reward** for faithful ministry and **loss** for wasted work, though salvation is secure.
  - This teaches the doctrine of **Bema Seat judgment** (2 Corinthians 5:10) – reward based on deeds, not salvation.
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 **4. The Church as God's Temple (vv. 16–17)**

*“Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?” (v.16)*

- Paul shifts the metaphor from agriculture/building to the **temple**.
- The church (collectively) is **God's temple**.
- Anyone who **destroys** the church (through division, false teaching) will face **God's judgment**.

 **Theological Inference:**

- The Church is **sacred** because the Holy Spirit indwells it.
- There are **serious consequences** for harming the unity or purity of the church.

- This supports a high view of **ecclesiology**—the church is not just an organization, but a spiritual reality inhabited by God.
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### ✓ 5. Worldly Wisdom vs. Godly Wisdom (vv. 18–20)

*“The wisdom of this world is folly with God.”* (v.19)

- Paul challenges believers not to be deceived by worldly philosophies.
- True wisdom involves **humility**, even appearing foolish to the world.
- God catches the wise in their craftiness (cf. Job 5:13).

#### 🔍 Theological Inference:

- True Christian wisdom is **countercultural**.
  - Pride in intellect or worldly success is **empty before God**.
  - The Gospel challenges human systems of value and reasoning (cf. 1 Cor. 1–2).
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### ✓ 6. All Things Are Yours in Christ (vv. 21–23)

*“All things are yours... whether Paul or Apollos... all are yours, and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”* (vv. 21–23)

- Paul concludes by reminding them that **everything belongs to the believer** in Christ.
- There is no need to boast in men—they already **possess everything** in Christ.
- Christ is submitted to God, indicating the **divine order** within the Trinity.

#### 🔍 Theological Inference:

- Believers have **full spiritual inheritance** through Christ.
  - **No need for party loyalty**—all ministers serve the same Lord.
  - Trinitarian framework: Christ belongs to God, believers belong to Christ.
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## 📖 Theological Summary

### 1. Christ-Centered Ministry

- Jesus Christ is the foundation of the Church.
- Ministry should point to Him, not to personalities or denominations.

## 2. Spiritual Growth and Maturity

- Believers are called to grow beyond infancy.
- Divisions, jealousy, and immaturity are signs of spiritual stagnation.

## 3. Eternal Accountability

- Christian leaders and workers will be judged for how they build upon the foundation.
- Works matter for eternal rewards, though salvation is secure in Christ.

## 4. The Sanctity of the Church

- The Church is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.
- Dividing or corrupting the Church is a serious offense to God.

## 5. Wisdom from Above

- God's wisdom often appears foolish to the world.
- True spiritual discernment comes through humility and faith.

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### Modern Application

- Don't idolize pastors or ministries—**follow Christ**.
- Ask yourself: Am I growing, or still a spiritual baby?
- Take care how you **contribute to the Church**—are you building or tearing down?
- Embrace a wisdom that may not make sense to the world but honors God.