

*Of the Spirit or Of the Flesh*  
**1 Cor. 3:1-9**

*“Paul’s concern needs to be resurrected throughout the church. The gift of the Spirit does not lead to special status among believers; rather, it leads to special status vis-à-vis the world. But it should do so always in terms of centrality of the message of our crucified/risen Savior. The Spirit should identify God’s people in such a way that their values and worldview are radically different from the wisdom of this age. They do know what God is about in Christ; they do live out the life of the future in the present age that is passing away; they are marked by the cross forever. As such they are the people of the Spirit, who stand in bold contrast to those who are merely human and do not understand the scandal of the cross. Being Spiritual does not lead to elitism; it leads to a deeper understanding of God’s profound mystery—redemption through a crucified Messiah.” Fee*

- I. One of the most powerful blessings we’ve been given as believers is the ability to think with the mind of Christ. Through the Spirit, we can all be wise in Christ. Unfortunately, some believers choose to remain ignorant, uneducated dullards or halfwits spiritually because they value being of the flesh more than of the Spirit.

**1 Cor. 3:1-4**

- A. God sees a believer who squanders his grace through fleshly living as one that prefers spiritual infancy over spiritual maturity. Sadly, in time, they render themselves incapable of understanding with the mind of Christ as the solid food of the Word becomes more and more unappealing to them.

**1 Cor. 3:1-2**

**1 Cor. 1:6**

**James 1:22**

**Heb. 5:11-6:3**

**James 1:22**

- B. A healthy church thinks with the mind of Christ, is challenged by the solid food of the Word, and is matured by it through the wisdom of the Spirit. It acts out of love, and guards against jealousy, spiritual pride, arrogance, factions, quarreling, and moral compromise. An unhealthy church is dominated by those who act like "**mere men**" by valuing the wisdom of the world more than wisdom from above. The only thing they guard is their pride, which can do great damage to Christ's precious body.

**1 Cor. 3:3-4**

**James 3:17-18** *17But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.*

- II. All believers have equal standing before Christ, "*for God does not show favoritism*" (**Rom. 2:11**). We have all been called to ministry of one sort or another; we have all been called to serve Christ. What differs is our assignments, which a mature believer fully embraces, and a worldly believer ignores. We will be judged on the level of our work ethic as we serve alongside God to accomplish his will while here on earth.

**1 Cor. 3:5-9**