

1 CORINTHIANS
CALLED OUT
SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM



Sermon: **Characteristics of Christian Service (1 Corinthians 3:5-9)**

Date: **April 24, 2016**

We learned in 1 Corinthians 1 that the church in Corinth was a church divided. The Christians in Corinth were more concerned with boasting about their favourite Christian leader than building a united church. They formed factions and cliques as they identified with different apostles based on their unique personalities and gifts. This inevitably resulted in division and rivalry. The Corinthians turned the ministries of Paul and Apollos into a competition within the church. Paul wanted nothing to do with this. In this week's lesson, Paul describes the unity that the church in Corinth is meant to experience. It is a unity that does not turn our differences into competition. Rather, we should learn to appreciate our differences within the church knowing that each of us has a unique and God-given role to play in the building up of the body of Christ. Service for the kingdom of God is not something we compete over. It's something we do by faith and for the glory of God.

What you need for this study: Bible, Notebook, Pen

Individual Bible Study

1. Please read 1 Corinthians 3:5-9 and ensure that you've listened to Sunday's sermon.
 - a. What is the background of the problem that the Corinthian church is dealing with in this text? Who is Paul? Who is Apollos?
 - b. What is the significance of Paul referring to himself and Apollos as "servants" in verse 5?
 - c. What does the phrase "as the Lord assigned to each" mean in verse 5?
 - d. In verse 6, Paul uses the imagery of farming. Why is that significant?
 - e. Paul concludes in verse 7, that "neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything." Why? Who is the one that counts when it comes to the work of the ministry?
 - f. What does Paul mean when he writes "he who plants and he who waters are one," (verse 8)?

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- g. In verse 8, Paul also writes that “each will receive his wages.” What does this mean and how will we receive these “wages”?
- h. How are we one with each other and yet different from each other according to verse 8?
- i. God is in the possessive three times in verse 9. What does that teach us?
- j. After studying 1 Corinthians 2:10-16, what is the one main thing you can take away from this passage?

Group Discussion Questions

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the sermon and the Bible study this week?
2. Have you ever been envious of someone else’s gifting or position in the church? How does this passage encourage us to be joyful and content with the varying degrees of gifts and abilities that God has given us?
3. We don’t deserve any credit for the work of the ministry. It all belongs to God. How does this affect your attitude toward serving in the body of Christ?
4. The work of the ministry is 100% for the building up of the church. How much of our life’s focus should be on the building up of the church? How does this influence the way we invest in ministries outside of the local church?
5. We will be judged and rewarded as individuals for our service in the kingdom of God. What are the implications of this for your life? How are you contributing to the building up of the church?
6. The workers, the church, and the harvest are all from God. He deserves the glory. How should this affect the way we serve in the church? How can we serve in a way that glorifies God and not ourselves?