

1 CORINTHIANS

3:1-10 | STUDY GUIDE

Apollos

1 CORINTHIANS 3:1, "But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ." (ESV)

- **σάρκινος vs σαρκικός**
 - "people of the flesh" or "made of flesh"
 - "characterized by the flesh"
 - **Σαρκινος** refers to weakness common of every sinful human
 - **Σαρκικός** refers to someone who knows better, but chooses to do wrong
- Infants
 - Once again, Paul is addressing the stunted nature of their spiritual growth
 - Paul notes how this made them all the more susceptible to false teachers and those who appeared impressive
 - They're reliant on human wisdom, not the Holy Spirit

1 CORINTHIANS 3:2, "I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready ..." (ESV)

- This is not only the earliest infant stage, but it's the most exhausting as a parent.
 - The church is completely reliant on Paul for everything
 - They should be much further along developmentally

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- “Not ready for it”
 - Paul recognizes that they would spiritually choke if he gave them more than milk

1 CORINTHIANS 3:3, “...for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?” (ESV)

- Jealousy and strife
 - Key indicators of their immaturity
 - Paul is showing how they have misinterpreted their own maturity; he’s pointing out that they are acting like “mere men” and not those who have understood the ways of God
 - For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human?” (3:4)

1 CORINTHIANS 3:5-6, “What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.” (ESV)

- Apollos
 - “Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures.” (Acts 18:24, ESV)
 - Previously served with Paul
 - Educated more fully by Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:26, ESV)



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- Apollos has been faithfully serving the church, but in their immaturity, so have latched onto him as if he were superior to Paul or Peter
- “God gave the growth”
- Paul planted, Apollos watered
- Only God can “grow” us spiritually

1 CORINTHIANS 3:8, “He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor.” (ESV)

- Paul & Apollos are united in purpose, though their roles are different they are not competing with one another
 - “According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it.” (3:10)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: Craig Keener, 1-2 Corinthians, Bruce W. Winter, After Paul Left Corinth, N.T. Wright, The New Testament in Its World, Zondervan, Archeological Study Bible, Strong’s Concordance

