

The Problem with the Church

1 Corinthians 3:5-9

Whenever divisions tear at a local church, it is because of _____ --Christians acting like non-Christians
This problem is common in American churches; many believers experience it & refuse to _____ another church
But vv.5-9 teach that the remedy is quite the opposite: it teaches us how God works IN the local _____
2 pictures of the local church: 1) God's _____ 2) God's _____

I. THE LOCAL CHURCH IS WHERE GOD IS AT _____ TODAY

- A. The Local Church Is _____ Field or Crop (It is where God goes to _____ every morning!)
- B. Jesus Promised to Build His _____ Not Any Other Organization
- C. Therefore, We Must Never Give Up on the _____

II. ONLY GOD CAN _____ A LOCAL CHURCH

ONLY GOD CAN GIVE THE _____

A. This Truth Deflates _____ in Local Church Ministry

- 1) V.5 begins literally, " _____ is Paul or Apollos?" using a pronoun that pictures them as mere tools
- 2) V.5 answers by calling them _____ which today is a high-brow word but means simply "waiter"
- 3) Vv.6-7: he who plants is _____ & he who waters is _____ because God gives the increase

B. This Truth Teaches Why _____ Short-Circuits the Work of God

- 1) Vv.1-4 teach that carnality divides the church; vv.5-7 point to a particular type of carnality: _____
- 2) The most important truth about pride: Ja.4:6: God resists the _____ but gives grace to the humble
- 3) The church grows only through the _____ of God, but when churches divide over any issue, pride is at the root and in the end such carnal conflict will short-circuit the _____ of God in that church

III. MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH ARE GOD'S _____

A. When We Plant _____ God Normally Works

- 1) V.6 groups 3 activities together: 1) Paul planted; 2) Apollos watered; 3) God gave the _____
- 2) We cannot call it a promise, but it is standard _____ procedure for how God grows the church
- 3) This truth provides tremendous _____ to be involved in evangelism and discipleship

B. When We Do NOT Plant Seed Normally God Does NOT _____

- 1) God is sovereign in salvation, but God has chosen to do His work through _____ channels
- 2) God could entrust evangelism to _____ or write the gospel in the clouds or save humans directly
- 3) When human channels refuse to partner with _____ in this work, then God does not work to save

C. The Privilege of Being the _____ of God Ought to Motivate Every Christian to Get Involved in Service in the Local Church

- 1) While this passage applies these truths to Paul/Apollos, Eph.4 applies them to every _____
- 2) The greatest "feature" that any local church offers is the opportunity to be the _____ of God