

# Read

1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Ephesians 4:11-16

# Consider

Milk or solid food provides essential nutrition for growth of the body (v.2). The focal point is “growth” through the intake of the nutrition generated by the digestion of the food. Pleasure from sight, smell and taste of food is good for appetite, but without the intake for digestion, the person would never grow! The same phenomenon applies to our spiritual growth. The intake of milk to solid food relates to the progression of spiritual growth from infancy to maturity, from being taught to know God to discernment of righteousness and evil.

In this passage of 1 Cor.3:1-9, Paul speaks to the Corinthians about the lack of spiritual discernment he has been discussing in chapter 2. This lack is seen in their misconceptions about those who are the co-laborers with God. The work of God does not depend on men for completion but on God who makes things grow (v.6), for we are God’s fellow workers, God’s field, God’s building (v.9). The correct understanding is given by Paul in his later statements about the importance of working correctly for the Lord (3:10-17), and not depending on man or on human wisdom (3:18-23). Their spiritual immaturity was shown in their jealousy and quarreling which plagued the Christian community causing divisions (v.4), and acting like “mere men” (v.3) in selfishness, pride and envy.

The example of whether they belonged to Apollos or Paul in sharing in the ministry at Corinth (Acts 18:1-28) reveals that they had a distorted view of the Lord’s work. They thought of God’s work in terms of belonging to or following a particular Christian worker, which shows that they were acting on the human level in taking sides in the worldly manner. Paul teaches clearly that he “planted the seed” and “Apollos watered it” (v.6-9), but “God made it grow”. We are merely God’s servants serving Him. Only God would produce any spiritual results. The servants with their various functions are really one, being united in God’s work (v.8), subordinate to God and responsible to Him, awaiting His reward with their faithful labor (v.8b).

Paul also reminds us in Eph.4:11-16 that God has given us various spiritual gifts to prepare His people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining the full measure of perfection in Christ. Then, we will no longer be infants. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all

things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Deacon Sam Chan

## Pray

Gracious Lord Jesus, guide me today that as a follower of you, the pathways to be a mature Christian in Christ in my deeds and speech; show me what the most essential characteristics I should practice in my life-time to be a spiritually mature Christian.

## Diving Deeper

In verse 3, Paul says that “You are still worldly”. What does it mean? Then he also says that the Corinthians are acting like “mere men”. In what ways were they doing it? How is this related to us in Paul’s teaching?

How is spiritual immaturity shown in the Corinthians’ way of serving God, and what was the consequence? What should be the correct attitude in our serving today? What is the role of God in making things grow in the analogy of “planting” (see verse 7)?

Paul mentions in v.9 that “we are God’s fellow workers, God’s field, God’s building”. What is the implication of Paul’s teaching here? What is your reflection on this?

How can we live closer **WITH** God in our lives?

How are we being **TRANSFORMED** to be more like Christ?

How is the Holy Spirit empowering us to imitate Christ in what we **DO** this week?