



# LifeGroup Discussion Packet

“Grow Up Spiritually”

1 Corinthians - Ch. 3

September 13 and 14, 2025

Attached...

1. Discussion Questions: Long study (page 2-5)
2. Discussion Questions: Short study (page 6)
3. Five Day Devotional Guide (page 7-8)

Notice to LifeGroup Leaders

*Based on the needs of your group, use either long or short study*

# LifeGroup Discussion Guide (Long Study)

## Question 1

The phrase in 1 Corinthians 3:1 (NLT), "as though you belonged to this world" is "as people of the flesh" (ESV) or "as unto carnal" (KJV). Joel Beeke says, "The words translated as 'flesh' (sarx) and 'carnal' or 'fleshly' (sarkikos) are sometimes used by Paul for a worldly mindset that boasts in human ability<sup>1</sup>". As a Christian is it possible to have been given a new nature in Christ, a spiritual nature, and yet at times still be controlled by or severely impacted by your own fleshly nature (Romans 7:14-15)? Why is this true? (*Write your response/notes below*)

### 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (NLT)

<sup>1</sup>Dear brothers and sisters, when I was with you I couldn't talk to you as I would to spiritual people. I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in the Christian life. <sup>2</sup>I had to feed you with milk, not with solid food, because you weren't ready for anything stronger. And you still aren't ready, <sup>3</sup>for you are still controlled by your sinful nature. You are jealous of one another and quarrel with each other. Doesn't that prove you are controlled by your sinful nature? Aren't you living like people of the world?

### Romans 7:14-15 (ESV)

<sup>14</sup>For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. <sup>15</sup>For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

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## Question 2

The faith and the work which comes from faith are given to us by God (v. 5)! And all subsequent growth comes from God, too (vv. 6-7). In other words, while we might think our faith comes from us, it actually is God who grants us the ability to believe. And while we might think the good things we do are solely coming from us, they are really happening because God is working through us. In fact, being God's field and God's building, indicate that we are the possession of God. How does this strike you? How do you wrestle with God's sovereignty and your free will? (*Write your response/notes below*)

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<sup>1</sup> Joel R. Beeke and Paul M. Smalley, *Reformed Systematic Theology: Church and Last Things*, Vol. 4. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2024), 660.

### **1 Corinthians 3:5-9 (NLT)**

<sup>5</sup>After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God’s servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. <sup>6</sup>I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. <sup>7</sup>It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow. <sup>8</sup>The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. <sup>9</sup>For we are both God’s workers. And you are God’s field. You are God’s building.

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### **Question 3**

As believers, we are also building upon Christ, the foundation of God. In consideration of growing up spiritually, what choice building materials (gold, silver, jewels) and what lesser materials (wood, hay, straw) have you used in contributing to the structure of God? (*Write your response/notes below*)

### **1 Corinthians 3:10-12 (NLT)**

<sup>10</sup>Because of God’s grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it. But whoever is building on this foundation must be very careful. <sup>11</sup>For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup>Anyone who builds on that foundation may use a variety of materials—gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw.

### **Ephesians 2:19-22 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup>So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup>built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup>in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup>In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

### **Isaiah 28:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup>Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: Whoever believes will not be in haste.”

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## Question 4

God does not tempt us, but the Scripture is clear that He tests us. This is part of the process of spiritual maturity He intends to develop within us. We are told elsewhere that all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28). How are you doing right now with the refining processes that God is putting you through? Have you seen impurities being brought to the surface of your life? (*Write your response/notes below*)

### James 1:13 (ESV)

<sup>13</sup>Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.

### Proverbs 17:3 (ESV)

<sup>3</sup>The crucible is for silver, and the furnace is for gold, and the LORD tests hearts.

### Psalms 66:10 (ESV)

<sup>10</sup>For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried.

### Job 23:10 (ESV)

<sup>10</sup>But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.

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## Question 5

"Some Christians will stand before God saved, but with nothing to show, just ashes. In contrast, other followers of Jesus will stand with treasure refined by fire" (Pastor T.K. Anderson). What we do in this life, will be accounted for in the future. We will all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10), and will receive awards not punishment (2 Tim. 4:8). Do the verses above give you comfort or concern? Why? (*Write your response/notes below*)

### 1 Corinthians 3:13-15 (NLT)

<sup>13</sup>But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person's work has any value. <sup>14</sup>If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup>But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.

**2 Timothy 1:12b (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup>...But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.

**2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup>For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

**2 Timothy 4:8 (ESV)**

<sup>8</sup>Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

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## Question 6

"True maturity isn't just knowing facts about Jesus. It's living for Jesus. It's moving from milk to meat, from childish faith to cultivated growth, to a life constructed on Christ" (Pastor T.K. Anderson). Consider where you are right now in the faith. What can you do to improve your walk? How can you draw closer to God? (*Write your response/notes below*)

Consider the following, and ask God to impress one or more upon your heart.

- Incorporate fasting?
- Bible memorization?
- Replace "devotional" reading with actual reading of whole Bible chapters every day?
- Changing Bible versions?
- Purchase a study Bible?
- Joining a LifeGroup?
- Becoming a LifeGroup leader?
- Becoming a member of the church?
- Witnessing to your neighbors?
- Finally getting baptized?

**Hebrews 5:12-14 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup>For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, <sup>13</sup>for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. <sup>14</sup>But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

# LifeGroup Discussion Guide (Short Study)

## Starting Question

Share about a time you learned something the hard way (bike, sports, school, job). How did it help you mature?

## Discussion Questions

1. Stop Living Childish (vv. 1–3)
  - What does immaturity look like today compared to Corinth?
  - Why do jealousy and quarreling still divide churches?
  - How do you personally battle comparison and drama?
2. Start Living Cultivated (vv. 4–9)
  - What “planting” and “watering” habits grow your faith most?
  - How does Billy Graham’s quote encourage you in discouraging times?
  - Why is consistency more powerful than quick spiritual highs?
3. Stay Living Constructed (vv. 10–15)
  - What are “hay and straw” foundations people often build on?
  - What does building with “gold and silver” look like practically in your life?
  - How do storms test what we’ve built?
4. Godly vs. Ungodly Message
  - Where do you feel the tension between “stay immature” and “grow in Christ” in your daily life?

## Application

*This week’s challenge*

- *Bible before phone.* How could this one habit reshape your mindset?
- What specific step of growth will you take this week?

*Next Step*

- Encourage each other to take one growth step this week.
- Pray for consistency and perseverance. Philippians 1:6 — “*He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion.*”

# Five Day Devotional Guide

## September 15-19, 2025

### Day 1: Stop Living Childish

1 Corinthians 13:11

<sup>11</sup>When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. (NASB)

We have all been children at some point in the past. And the expectation is that children will be childish, is a given. The problem Paul addresses in the text above is not childhood itself, but childishness being found in someone we would expect to be mature. As the preacher said, "A poor yet wise lad is better than an old and foolish king who no longer knows how to receive instruction" (Eccl. 4:13).

**Reflection:** I know there are yet still times, Lord, when I don't do what is right and I know better. Times when I may not present as the most responsible person in a moment in time. But today, help me to throw off any remnants of childishness, and instead act like the spiritual adult I am. You call me to be like a child in innocence (Matt. 18:3), not in immaturity.

### Day 2: Start Living Cultivated

Hosea 10:12

<sup>12</sup>Sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the LORD until He comes to rain righteousness on you. (NASB)

To cultivate means to prepare and use (land) for crops or gardening and to break up (soil) in preparation for sowing or planting. This is a good word picture for us, as we consider moving into spiritual maturity in our daily lives. There are times when our hearts need to be tilled again, in order for additional good seed to be planted. If we want good things to come from our hearts, we must prepare our hearts to receive the good Word from God.

**Reflection:** Lord, not only must I receive your Word afresh, everyday, but I must also allow You to fertilize, to continually rid my heart of weeds, to water me with Your Spirit, and to shine the light of grace so that I can reach out towards You as I grow. I must stop trying to be the Gardener, that task is Yours alone.

### Day 3: Stay Living Constructed

1 Peter 2:4-5

<sup>4</sup>And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, <sup>5</sup>you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (NASB)

"...are being built up" (v. 5) is not to be missed. It is God who has made us into this "spiritual house for a holy priesthood". We did not construct ourselves, our very lives are the prerogative of God. What the "rooms" of this house will be, the dimensions thereof, the furnishings, it is all of Him, to Him, and for His glory. Our role is to do those things in the house, that will be acceptable to Him (v. 5).

**Reflection:** LORD God, I am fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps. 139:14)! I could not have designed a better tabernacle for myself in this present life. And yet, I know You, as the Architect of the universe, have an even better dwelling for me in the life to come (Jn. 14:2-3); "and my soul knows it very well." (Ps. 139:14)

## Day 4: Godly Message v. Ungodly Message

Psalms 1:1-2

<sup>1</sup>How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! <sup>2</sup>But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. (NASB)

There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end is death (Prov. 14:12). In a world where we are told to view things on a spectrum, God's word is clear: There is light and darkness; right and wrong; Good v. Evil; Truth v. Lies; and Godly v. Ungodly. Joshua said it best, "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." (Josh. 24:15)

**Reflection:** Everyday I choose You, Lord. Help me to fight against the tricks of the enemy, the temptations of the world, and the pull of my own flesh (1 Jn. 2:15-16). I choose to pick up my cross and carry it (Lk. 9:23), not leave it lying down to collect dust. I choose life, which only comes from You!

## Day 5: Challenge to Pursue Godliness

1 Timothy 4:8

<sup>8</sup>For bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. (NASB)

There are many things we all may wish to accomplish in life. We all want good health and healthy relationships. We try to eat right (as well we should!), we do our best to treat others well (we are Christians, after all!), but the apostle shines a light on not only where the priority should lay, but also on what continues to produce the greatest return: Godliness. The interchangeable word is holiness. This is where the rubber meets the road.

**Reflection:** In the final analysis, Father, we must be more than just talkers, but must be people of action (faith without works is dead; Js. 2:26). You are holy and call me to be the same (1 Pet. 1:15-16); You are perfect, and yep, I am to be also (Matt. 5:48). Help me to navigate this world, especially today, recognizing there is nothing optional about being like You. And You never tell me to be anything and not empower me to accomplish it. Bless Your Name forever!