

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

Study to show "The Way of True life,"

## *Bible Study Outline*

**TOPIC:** Leading in Ways That Last

**TEXT:** *1 Corinthians 3:10-23*

**Instructions:** - *Let the above passages be read each time you come together to study this topic so that everyone could participate fully. The teacher should provide additional background information on the topic and come up with follow-up questions. Participants should be brief in their responses and use relevant Bible references to illustrate their points. They should be careful not to dominate the discussion to allow everyone to have an equal opportunity to participate.*

**Introduction:** "I follow Paul." "I follow Apollos." "I follow Cephas." These were the loyalty claims of various Christians in the church of Corinth, claims which Paul felt obligated to thoroughly debunk. Yet the question of who we are following in the church remains a vital issue. Today some may follow a particular worship leader because they like their style of music best. Others might follow a certain pastor whose sermons make them feel good. Still others may regard as truth only the words of the person who led them to Christ in the first place. We urgently need a healthy, biblical understanding of the church, for only then shall we have a healthy, biblical understanding of Christian leadership. Paul uses two images to help the Corinthian Christians better understand the nature of God's church: a building under construction, and then a particular kind of building—a temple. Read 1 Cor. 3:10-23.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. If you were asked to give one sentence of advice to a NEW leader in your church, what would you say? Begin your answer with the word **Always** or **Never**. If a person were to say, "I follow (insert your name)," what do you hope that person would **mean**, and **not mean** by that statement?
2. If you were one of the leaders in the church of Corinth, how would you feel as you heard this section of Paul's letter: **encouraged**, **discouraged**, **worried** or **challenged**? Why?
3. Focus on verses 10-15 where Paul pictures the church as a building under construction. What do various terms in the passage represent: **expert builder**, **foundation**, **various building materials**, **revealed**, **fire**, **the Day**?
4. What role does **"fire"** have in the development of a church? What people or events have served as **"fire"** in your own experience?

5. What does the "one foundation " statement of verse 11 imply about the nature of a true church?
6. In a church, almost everyone teaches something to someone, even if unintentionally. When you consider those within your own influence as a teacher, what cautions and what hopes especially jump out as you think about Paul's illustration of a church as a building under construction?
7. Read verses 16-17 again. Mentally run your eyes up and down the rows of people who typically gather at your church for worship. How can you relate to these people in a way that shows that together (not individually) you become something as holy and as beautiful as God 's temple? (Consider those you relate easily to, as well as those who are not so easy to relate to.)
8. This passage also carries the warning of verse 17. What are some of the destructive forces in today's churches that might come under that warning?
9. What responsibility do you think individual church members should take to protect the church from these kinds of destructive forces?
10. Read verses 18-21 again. What chain of belonging can you find?
11. In your own church setting how can you show appropriate respect for your leaders-but not fall into the sin of boasting about them? Give examples of both-showing respect and boasting-to distinguish between the two
12. "So then, no more boasting about men!" (1 Corinthians 3:21). And "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:31). If you were to seriously enact these two statements about boasting as you relate to people within your own cluster of Christian friends, what changes would begin to take place?