

Text: 1 Corinthians 3

Title: Envy, Strife and Divisions

THE DANGER OF CARNALITY

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.” 1 Corinthians 3:1

1. Sarkikos...pertains to all who are of the flesh
2. It stands contrary to the Lord and His ways
3. It is a present threat and danger to the oneness of the church.

THE EXPRESSIONS OF CARNALITY

“For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?” 1 Corinthians 3:3

1. Envy
 - a) Envy is what we want for ourselves that others have but we are unable to have
 - b) Members of the Corinthians church were envious of those who were more “gifted”
2. Strife
 - a) Quarrels and contentions
 - b) Similar word in 1 Corinthians 1:11...Contentions among the brethren
3. Divisions
 - a) Disunity, sedition
 - b) Paul had highlighted the dissension in the church
1 Corinthians 1:10, 12, 13

CAUSES OF CARNALITY

1. Being unspiritual

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.” 1 Corinthians 3:1

- a) The opposite of being spiritual
- b) When we are not spiritually inclined, we tend to be carnal.

2. Behaving as natural man

“For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?” 1 Corinthians 3:3

- a) The human and natural man tends to think and act in a worldly and secular way
- b) Our natural and worldly behaviour causes us to be carnal.

3. Still babes in Christ

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal.” 1 Corinthians 3:2

- a) Still spiritually immature
- b) Unable to have solid food...even after a long while
- c) Being only fed milk, our life and thinking will be less spiritual and more carnal

DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM OF CARNALITY

1. The need to grow (Ephesians 4:15, 16)

- a) Through the truth
- b) Through the supply of each member of the body of Christ

2. Growing towards spiritual maturity (Hebrews 5:12-14)

- a) To leave the consuming of milk
- b) To partake of solid food...spiritual meat

3. Developing spiritual and mature perspectives

a) Not about envying each other but loving each other

“Love does not envy” 1 Corinthians 13:4

b) Not about striving against each other but to strive together for the faith

“That you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,” Philippians 1:27

c) Not about being divided but being connected as one body in Christ

“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.” Romans 12:5

4. The challenge to keep the unity of the church at all cost (Ephesians 4:3, 13)

a) Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit

b) Equipped and edified till we all come to the unity of the faith