Discussion Guide

A "Grown-Up" Faith

GETTING STARTED

In what ways is it easier to measure our value/worth and spiritual depth by our gifts, abilities and knowledge rather than by our character?

What would happen to a church that measured spiritual growth not just by gifts, abilities, talents and knowledge, but by our maturing Christ-like character? What would it/I start doing? Stop doing? Focus on?

QUICK REACTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?
What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

How did Paul use the image of babies to expose the Corinthians' wrong attitudes?
(Think about how babies behave, what they depend on, and how they grow.)

How might we confuse spiritual depth with outward qualities such as abilities, talents, gifts, knowledge, or education?

How did the Corinthians show that they were "controlled by their sinful nature"?

How might their lack of Christ-like character disrupt the whole church?

What do you think Dave meant by saying mature faith is measured by character, not content?

How should the simplicity of the "message of the cross" shape our outlook and actions?

In verses 5–9, how does Paul help the church see its divisions over Paul and Apollos from God's perspective? What roles do Paul and Apollos, God, and we each play? How would this perspective reshape our understanding of church unity?

What might God be asking of me? How should I understand true spiritual growth, depth, and maturity?

How can I personally help the church grow and remain united?

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE DEEPER [1 Corinthians 3:1-9]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however, good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.) Work through this quickly, the answers are fairly obvious.

Why did Paul call the Corinthians "mere infants"? (3:1-3)

What were the Corinthians like? (3:3-5)

What traits did the Corinthians have that made them worldly? (3:3-5)

How did Paul want his readers to view both Apollos and himself? Why? (3:5-7)

What is each Christian worker's purpose in ministering to others? (3:8)

How is the person who plants like the person who waters? (3:8-9)

QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

What is our role in God's work?

What does it mean to plant and water God's Word in others?

How do we plant and water God's Word in others?

What is your particular role in God's work?

In what ways are you able to plant and water God's Word in others?

What opportunities do you have to plant and water God's Word in others?

APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in this passage?

What do you need to stop, start or do differently as a result of reading this passage?

How can we pray for each other?