



Only God Makes Things Grow 1 Corinthians 3: 5-11

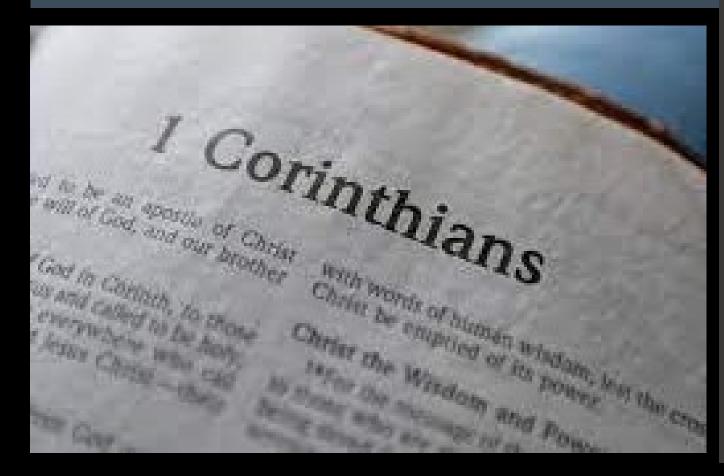
Bishop Toshua Khong 25 July 2021



Only God Makes Things Grow

1 Corinthians 3: 5-11

Introduction



- 1. Christ, the centre and focus of all we do,
- 2. the gospel of Christ is understood through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,
- 3. Christians are the Body of Christ,
- 4. keeping ourselves morally pure,
- 5. partaking of the sacrament worthily, in godly reverence
- 6. gifts of the Holy Spirit,
- 7. the reality of the Resurrection,

the city of Corinth, the church in Corinth

- a prosperous city and busy port

- a cosmopolitan metropolis

Aphrodite worship,
 3 temples dedicated for the goddess

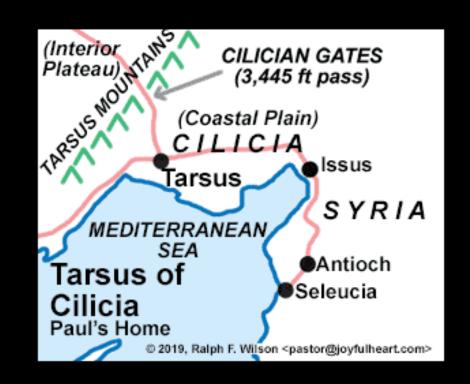
- a Greco-Roman cultural hub





a little about the Apostle Paul

- a passionate Jew, Paul described himself, "Hebrew of Hebrews," a Pharisee, a disciple of Gamaliel
- a learned man, well versed in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic
- well-groomed, a citizen of Tarsus, a university town, capital of Cilicia (Strabo placed it above Athens and Alexandria)
- Paul met the Risen Christ (Acts 9)





a peek into Paul's mind

- Paul invested 1½ years in Corinth, building deep relationships there (Acts 18)
- Paul has a repeated pattern in 1 Corinthians.
- a) He identifies the problems & issues the church in Corinth struggles
- b) He follows through with responses for the problems & issues
- c) He draws them back to the FOUNDATION, gospel of Christ,
- d) The foundation gives Christians their identity, a new identity
- e) The foundation gives life, new life, in Christ

1. Standing on the shoulders of saints before us

- Paul is **an Apostle**, a church planter, a spiritual father, a mentor, a teacher, an encourager, a nurturer and many more. I am a servant... for Paul, it is more than the broad-stroke humility. The theology that Paul instils here:
 - a. The Church is the Body of Christ
 - b. Jesus Christ is the HEAD of the Church
 - c. Succession in continuity, until Christ comes back for us



1 Corinthians 3: 5

"What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants,

through whom you came to believe — as the Lord has assigned to each his task."



1 Corinthians 3: 5

"What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants,

through whom you came to believe — as the Lord has assigned to each his task."



1 Corinthians 3: 5

"What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul?

Only servants, through whom

you came to believe —

as the Lord has assigned to each his task."



Joshua 1: 2

"Moses My servant is dead.

Now then, you and all these people,

get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them,

to the Israelites".



In God's Kingdom work

- We are all servants
- We are co-workers, co-labourers... servants of God's sending
- Servants do not have AGENDA of their own, they are on their Master's business
- the title "servant" is empowering



"servant" is an empowering word

- -It is empowering for the church
- -It is empowering for the person
- It is empowering for the body life



1 Corinthians 3: 6-7

⁶ "I planted the seed,

Apollos watered it,

but God has been making it grow.

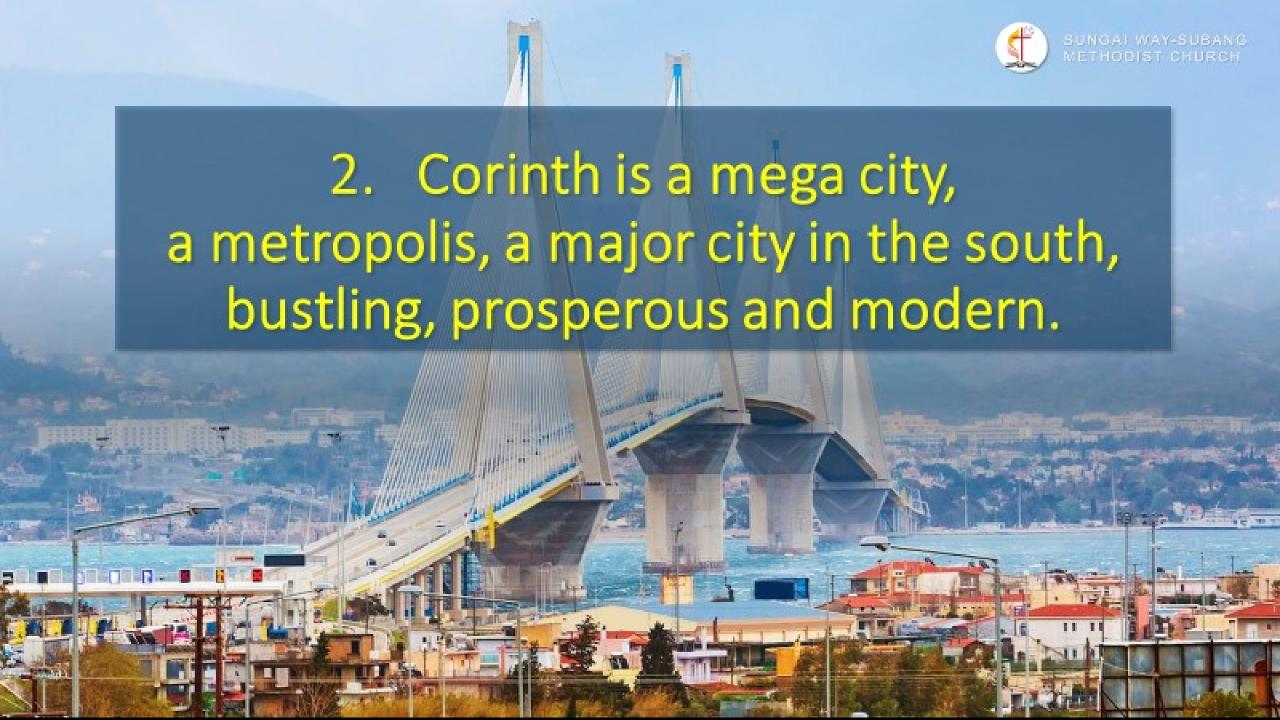
⁷ So neither the one who plants

nor the one who waters is anything,

but only God, who makes things grow."

The church in Corinth is a growing church:

- a. In the frail and sinful nature of the congregation, the Church grew
- b. The Church did not grow because of its sinful ways
- c. The Church grew because of God's compassion on those who are receiving healing, redemption, restoration





Why did Paul use an agricultural example for an urban church in a bustling metropolis?



1 Corinthians 3: 6b-7

- ^{6b} God has been making it grow.
- ⁷So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.



Will Paul's readers connect with him and the message he intended for them?



Paul used a biblical example

God, the Source of Life "I Am the true vine, and My Father is the keeper of the vineyard.

He cuts off every branch in Me that bears no fruit, and every branch that does bear fruit, He prunes to make it even more fruitful."





3. Foundation

> ON CHRIST. THE SOLID ROCK I STAND. ALL OTHER GROUND IS SINKING SAND.



Paul says, (in 1 Cor 3:10-11)

- ¹⁰ By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care.
- ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.



Our Response



1. It delights God to see His saints, whom He has chosen and nurtured for the church to engage in ONENESS in the eternal and glorious work He started.

Therefore, let us embrace each other as coworkers and fellow saints in Christ, and teach this to our children, and children's children.



2. ONLY God makes things grow.

We CANNOT do anything by ourselves, on our own.

It is God who sustains His church, and blesses her with life, vibrant, glorious life in Christ.

3. The Body of Christ MUST submit to God in godly fear and reverence, in an orderly manner, in unity and continuity, honouring God, and lifting-up Christ.



And Can It Be?

Charles Wesley

Amazing love! How can it be that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

Amazing love! how can it be, that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?





And Jenus tailured in the power of the Spirit into Galler: and short were out a farm of Han Dadoph all the region record about. And the taight in their prespagate, being plotted out all.

And He serve to Nanawite where He had been brought. appliand, as the contacts was, the word into the openings and the subhath day, and steed up for to read. And there was defenced unto Him the book of the prophet States. At when He had opened the book, He found the place where was written. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He both assessed my to projek the puspel to the pust. He hadk: sent me to heat the backsohoused, to prouch deliverable, his the applieds, and recovering of sight in § Disease there that are beginned, by P. of the book. And the closed the the minimis, and set down. server in the secretaries will to any leads there. Disk a ners. And of here Here Was woods which presented test of a

THE REPORT OF PERSONS ASSESSED.



We bow in prayers



