



**Title:** Growth (First Corinthians #6)

**Text:** 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

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**Intro:** In 1 Corinthians 3:1-9, Paul tells the Corinthians that they are stunting their own growth and the advance of the Gospel by their selfishness and insecurities by basically calling them spoiled rotten babies. Responding to the Gospel is much more than a one-time event but rather should involve growing in spiritual maturity in Christ for the rest of our lives.

*3:1 But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.*

### I. THE PROBLEM: Stunted Growth

- 1). What does this look like in our day and lives?
- 2). Why does this happen?—The weakness of cultural Christianity.

*2 I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, 3 for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? 4 For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?*

### II. THE SYMPTOMS

1. Inability to feed on God's truth
2. Jealousy, strife, and self-absorption
3. Divisiveness and insecurity

*5 What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. 8 He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor.*

### III. THE CURE

1. Pride-smashing God-centeredness
2. How do you get this?—By Understanding the Gospel!
  - Understanding the Gospel rightly brings humility and seeing all of life as grace.
  - Illustration: 10 acres purchased by God in Christ and the Gospel as bushhog.

### 3. Repentance

- Martin Luther's theses #1: "When our Lord and Master said, 'Repent,' he willed that the whole of the Christian life be one of repentance."

*9 For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.*

What is at stake is nothing short of the advance of the Gospel. God's fields and buildings have a purpose—to bear fruit and give refuge and be used as a means by which God brings others to believe and trust in Christ.