

The Corinthian Letters, Lesson 11, 1 Corinthians 3:1-7, Carnival Atmosphere

- ✎ What comes to your mind when I say the words "Carnival Atmosphere"? Our carnivals always coincided with county fairs where I was from.
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1. All fun and games as long as it's kept in its place; you would never want the same atmosphere in our churches or spiritual lives.

- ✓ At the end of 1st Corinthians chapter 2, Paul drew a distinction between the natural and spiritual person. The natural person appraises everything wrong, sees the cross as foolishness and worthless, they are blind and deaf to what's really going on. Because of God's Spirit, the Spiritual Person is the opposite, correctly appraising everything and is not correctly appraised by the world they live in. Paul will now add a further distinction but this one is between believers only.

2. Paul distinguishes between the mature and immature believer 1st Corinthians 3:1-2.

- ✓ The carnal believers were creating a carnival atmosphere in the Corinthian church. We get our word Carnival from the from two words, "Carne and Vale" which together mean "Farewell to the Flesh." A carnival was originally a big party that was thrown before Lent. Lent would be a time of saying no to fleshly things, but the carnival would be the opposite. Mardi Gras is better example of the what the original carnivals were like, drinking, over-eating, committing of acts of immorality, etc. 1st Corinthians 3:3, they were immature in their attitudes and actions, the immature love carnivals. Self-centeredness and self-indulgence are obvious signs of the immature. This atmosphere erupted in all kinds of jealousy and strife. Jealousy wants recognition, position, control over things and people, and will cause problems if it can't get those things. Jealousy is the attitude and strife was the resultant action.

3. If you are familiar with physical babies, then you will be familiar with spiritual babies.

- ✓ They cry a lot, have to be treated with kid gloves all the time. They are takers not givers. Look at everything from the perspective of what's in it for them (church, people, its programs). They go to church with the same attitude that they take to the mall, they go looking for service instead of to serve. They appraise things like the lost do, even though they have access to the Spirit. They tend to look to people for their inspiration not the Lord, "I am of Paul, Apollos, Cephas..." Not interested in the spiritual meat but want the easy stuff because it's easier to chew.

4. This all creates a carnival atmosphere, but not the kind you want.

- ✓ We are all capable of it; just take a walk in the flesh and not walk with the Lord. Does it all have to be about you? Do you need recognition? position? the say? Does it have to go your way? Jealous of what someone else has?

It's time to grow up! The only way we leave the carnival is to leave the fleshly desires, and there is only one place we can do that, Romans 12:1-2.
