

## *“All Things Belong to You”*

Prepared by Patrick J. Griffiths © - [pastorpat@waukeshabile.org](mailto:pastorpat@waukeshabile.org)  
April 24, 2005

*“So then let no one boast in men. For all things belong to you.” (1 Cor 3:21)*

Read 1 Cor 3:18-23

Self-deception is always a real threat. It is one of those sins that you never know you have. It means, “to beguile or seduce.” The reflexive pronoun “himself” makes the seduction even more sinister. To think oneself wise in the things of this age in the absence of God’s revelation is to be ignorant. To think God’s thoughts is to be considered a fool in the eyes of the world, but then you are truly wise.

Verses 18-23 summarize Paul’s thoughts in chapter 3. In essence, Paul says, “Why are you quarreling over the parts, when you already possess the whole?”

By chasing after a part of the whole, they miss the whole. By embracing the whole, they have all the parts. Notice the language of verses 22 and 23, “All are yours, and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” Because Christ is the substance and all of creation is but a shadow cast by the substance, to have the substance is to have the shadow. Each piece of creation “Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come (v. 22),” all these “things” ultimately belong to God and thus Christ and thus His people.

In the context of the Corinthian Church, people were dividing over the parts by failing to see the whole. Churches “fail” when they lose sight of why they exist. **Churches exist not to fulfill the mission statement of any institution. Churches exist to be passionate worshipers of God.** This is the mission and what flows from the all-consuming passionate worship of God is a ministry to others that is characterized by Christ and not by the pieces.

We are self-deceived when we start boasting of the men (“pieces”) placed in the body of Christ by God. We must always look past the parts in order to see the whole. Because the believer is already in possession of the whole, there is no longer a need to be chasing after the parts. May our energies at WBC be spent in our pursuit of Him who is the whole. May we see the parts only as they are shadows of the substance who is Christ. The parts within the whole will come and go, but the whole will never fade. Embrace the whole. Embrace Jesus Christ.