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Paul's View on The Local Church

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Acts 18:24-28 ²⁴Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, well versed in the Scriptures. ²⁵He had been instructed in the way of the Lord and was fervent in spirit. He spoke and taught accurately about Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him in and explained to him the way of God more accurately. ²⁷When Apollos resolved to cross over to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. On his arrival, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. ²⁸For he powerfully refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. (BSB)

I Corinthians 3:1-23 ¹Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual, but as worldly—as infants in Christ. ²I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for solid food. In fact, you are still not ready, ³for you are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and dissension among you, are you not worldly? Are you not walking in the way of man? ⁴For when one of you says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere men? ⁵What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? They are servants through whom you believed, as the Lord has assigned to each his role. ⁶I planted the seed and Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. ⁷So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. ⁸He who plants and he who waters are one in purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. ⁹For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building. ¹⁰By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one must be careful how he builds. ¹¹For no one can lay a foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, ¹³his workmanship will be evident, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will prove the quality of each man’s work. ¹⁴If what he has built survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵If it is burned up, he will suffer loss. He himself will be saved, but only as if through the flames. ¹⁶Do you not know that you yourselves are God’s temple, and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? ¹⁷If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple. ¹⁸Let no one deceive himself. If any of you thinks he is wise in this age, he should become a fool, so that he may become wise. ¹⁹For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight. As it is written: “He catches the wise in their craftiness.” ²⁰And again, “The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.” ²¹Therefore, stop boasting in men. All things are yours, ²²whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future. All of them belong to you, ²³and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God. (BSB)

- I. What does this passage tell us about Paul's View of the Local Church?
- A. Not all local churches have the same maturity level. V.1-3
 - B. There were different styles of church even back then. V.4-6
 - C. The emphasis of a local church should not be on the human leadership but on the Lord, Himself. V.7-9
 - D. The quality of our labor as ministers will be tested by time and circumstances. Everyone has a ministry in the local church. V.10-15
 - E. Every local church is sacred in God's eyes and He holds the life of a local church in high esteem. V.16
 - F. Every local church must put their trust in Christ alone. V.17-23
- II. What can we learn from these truths?
- A. Divisions and strife show areas in a local church that are not mature in Christ.
 - B. Denominations are not evil. There have always been differences in how to do church.
 - C. Local churches should look for ways of cooperation for the Church universal to continue to become mature.
 - D. We must strive to keep our local church holy and whole.
 - E. Jesus Christ has got to be the center of every local church that we associate with.