

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

Everyone loves babies. They do innocent and funny things. However, babies must grow up. Sooner or later they have to get rid of milk-bottles, diapers and strollers. They will need medical help if they cannot talk, walk or eat by themselves by certain ages. Doctors have standards to evaluate the growth of children. It is not just about increase in height and weight. Equally important is whether or not they mature of their minds. A sign of maturity is the awareness that they are not the center of the world. Early on, parents encourage kids to share food or toys with others. Also, they need to line up and take turns when playing in a group. Through interactions, children learn manners and mutual respect. Spiritual maturity bears resemblance to physical maturity. Paul had to deal with some spiritual babies in the Corinthian church. Instead of working as a team, they fell apart due to self-centeredness. Paul wrote to correct their mindset. They were to complete one other and not to compete with each other. We need to examine ourselves as we study this chapter. Are there signs of spiritual immaturity in us? Do we desire to become more mature in our walk with the Lord and in our church life? We are excited about the birth of babies as much as the salvation of souls. However, birth is just the beginning of a new life. Growth is the true indicator of a healthy life. Let us encourage each other to mature and become stronger Christians in God's Kingdom.

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

## 1. 指出不成熟 Address Immaturity (v. 1-9)

Paul starts off by addressing the spiritual immaturity of his audience. Let us read **verse 1 to 9**. Paul calls them “brothers.” They were believers, although they had a lot of room to grow. Their immaturity was similar to the appetite of new-born babies. Milk is the only food they can eat until their digestive system is more developed. Likewise, Paul could not feed the Corinthian believers deeper truths because those lessons were too hard for them. Their immaturity led to a few problems. Verse 3 mentions jealousy, conflict and even division. Paul says it showed that they were “of the flesh,” meaning that they behaved as if they were unsaved. Those three problems happened when they took sides with their favorite leaders. Some went after Paul, others liked Apollos. In 1:12, Cephas (another name for Peter) was on their list too. God gave each leader unique gifts and talents. But it was a serious matter when comparison led to division! In verses 6-7, Paul downplays the role of church leaders: **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.** Bible teachers are like farmers. This person sows seeds and another person waters the crops. But only God can supply sunlight and air to allow plants to grow. Likewise, leaders deserve credit for their faithfulness and diligence. However, ultimately, it is God who saves people and fosters spiritual growth.

There will be no comparison as to who is better or more important if we put our focus back on God. When Jesus began His ministries, John the Baptist realized that his work was coming to an end soon. John's disciples reported to him that Jesus' popularity was on the increase. Did John's heart turn sour when he heard that? Listen to his own words in John 3:28-30 – **“28 You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, ‘I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.’ 29 The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease.”** John understood his role as a pioneer who paved the way for Christ. John said he was only a best man in a wedding, but Jesus was the groom. The Lord should get the spotlight. Therefore, John was glad and not sad when Jesus finally arrived. From then on, Jesus would take over. There will be no comparison when we realize that we work together in God's team. It is natural for us to have our beloved teachers due to their strengths, teaching styles or personalities. But we can easily turn leaders into idols if we are not careful. When I first became a Christian, my home church had an older pastor and three younger pastors. The church has four locations. Those pastors would rotate and preach at different sites. One particular young pastor was gifted in preaching. He was eloquent and funny at times too. Gradually, he became a favorite preacher of some people. As a result, they turned into star-chasers. They followed the brother wherever he preached on Sunday. That is just one church. Nowadays, there are numerous Bible teachers you can choose from on the internet. There is nothing wrong if you listen to sermons from different pastors in your free time. I do that occasionally too. God speaks to me through their messages. I can improve my preaching skills by observing them. However, it does not matter whether those pastors wear full-suits or jeans, or their styles are energetic or boring. The most important thing is whether or not their messages are based on the Bible. We as teachers are just gardeners holding a water hose. Men's words are limited and only God's Word can change lives. Our job is to explain God's Word to help you grow. This is His church, His business and His Kingdom.

## 2. 檢驗各品質 Assess Quality (v. 10-17)

Paul urges the Corinthian believers to overcome their spiritual immaturity. One day God will assess the quality of their lives. We will continue to read verse **10 to 17**. From an imagery of farmers, Paul transitions to a picture of builders. He says the foundation is Jesus Christ. He is the basis of our faith. That echoes with 1:23 when Paul stresses that he preached Christ and Him crucified. Understanding Jesus' identity and works is the litmus test of true faith. John puts it this way in 1 John 4:2-3 – **2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.** True Christians must believe that Jesus is the one true God who became a man and came into the world. If He did not become a real person, He could not have died. If He was not risen from the dead, then He is not God. Some religions may say that Jesus is a spirit, a prophet or a man elevated to become a god. A serious question we need to ask is: where do they get those ideas? Christians ground their beliefs in God's Word. Of course, to prove that the Bible is truth is another huge topic that we will not

dive into today. Suffice to say, we cannot know God unless He reveals His nature and attributes in His Word. Besides the root of our faith, Paul emphasizes the fruit of our faith. In other words, what kind of building we establish on the foundation of Jesus Christ. He compares two kinds of materials in verses 12 to 13: **12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw — 13 each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.** Houses built with long-lasting materials can withstand a fire, whereas structures built with flammable materials will be burned away. God will assess the quality of our works by fire on “the Day,” referring to the return of Jesus. Remember that Paul was writing to believers. Therefore, he is not talking about whether a person will be saved or lost on the Judgment Day. Rather, he cautions us to examine if our buildings have any eternal value. People whose houses pass the fire test will receive rewards. Those whose houses are destroyed in the flame will lose everything, though their souls will still be saved. Their “houses” can be fancy church buildings, books they write or money they accumulate from their fame. They will be like survivors who do not have time to gather any belonging as they escape from a burning home. What was Paul trying to illustrate? Jealousy, conflict and division in the church are expressions of “wisdom of the world.” Those mentalities do not have eternal value in God’s Kingdom. They can even be toxic to the spiritual health of believers. God does not focus on appearance but substance. Jesus will do an inspection on us when He comes back. The outcome depends on the type of materials we use in the construction process. A church should not take pride in the glory of its buildings, the size of a congregation, the performance of an orchestra and a worship band or the credentials of its staff members. Let any church be known for their faithfulness in teaching and obeying God’s Word. The same principle applies to our personal life as well. The secular world measures success by your paycheck, the house you live in, the car you drive and the clothes you wear. But God looks deeper at your character and your love for Him and for people. He focuses on quality and not quantity. Let us build our lives according to God’s blueprint and pursue future rewards.

### 3. 達到更屬靈 Attain Spirituality (v. 18-23)

The Corinthian believers must grow up. They had to attain spirituality, meaning spiritual maturity. Listen to **verse 18 to 23**. Paul appeals them to ditch the wisdom of the world and to pursue the wisdom of God. In verse 18, he goes back to the comparison of foolish and wise: **Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.** To attain spirituality, they had to embrace what the world considers as foolishness, namely the message of the cross. Christians should not only know the gospel and believe in it. They must also internalize it and appreciate it. Then they would live by the truth. As a result, though the world thinks that they are foolish, God sees them as wise. That is how God frustrates people who believe that they are too smart to believe in Him. Paul supports that by quoting verses from the books of Job and Psalm. The common theme is that God knows how to stumble smart people by their own smartness. People can easily trip themselves when they assume that everything is under their control. I can think of thieves who are so dumb to expose their crimes. They believe they are smarter

than the police because they are not caught. To brag about their intelligence, they post videos on the social media explaining how they beat the system. They do not only leave a paper trail for the police to go after them, but they also testify in their own words that they are lawbreakers. Are they really smart? Spiritual immaturity displays similar pride. In picking their favorite leaders, the Corinthians believers implicitly puffed themselves up. They might think: “See, I’m better than others because I follow Paul. He is the best.” Paul counters that mentality with an interesting argument in verses 21-23: **21 So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, 22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future — all are yours, 23 and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.** By saying “all things are yours,” Paul was not advocating that they could remain as their own bosses. We need to read on to the end. His logic goes like this. By choosing their preferred teachers, they claimed: “I belong to Paul” or whoever. But Paul corrected them that they did not belong to certain leaders. Rather, those teachers were theirs. Not only that. Paul even says the world, life, death, the present and the future are theirs. What does he mean? The answer is in verse 23. All believers are under Christ, and Christ is under the Father when He was in the world. People are in Christ once they are saved. Henceforth, they must see everything through the lens of Christ. Leaders in the church are only servants of God. The world is part of God’s Kingdom. The purpose in life is not to grab all they want, but to give glory to God in what they do. Furthermore, they should have no fear over death, since Jesus conquered death. In summary, Jesus completely reverses the human logic! Everything belongs to Him. We can enjoy the same freedom only by embracing God’s wisdom. The wiser we become, the humbler we should be. We thank God for Bible teachers, because God uses them to lead us in the truth. They explain God’s Word and they encourage us to apply the truths. God also blesses us through the faithful service of many coworkers. They cook for us, they fix things, they organize ministries and they make future plans for our church. Seeing things through Christ also gives us a correct perspective about life. Since Jesus is our Lord, we should not worship money, career and success. Our goal in life is not to use God to accumulate wealth, but to manage all that He entrusts us for His glory. We can have a correct view of ownership when we put Jesus first in our lives, and we hold Him center to our hearts.

## 結論 CONCLUSION

Growth is the true indicator of a healthy life. Each of us should continue to grow by reading the Bible daily and attending church ministries. At the same time, we should also encourage one another to pursue spiritual growth. It can be as simple as caring for absent members and inviting them back to church meetings or reminding people to put their phones away in small groups and bring their own Bibles. We can be better as a whole when we join together with one heart, one mind and one goal under the leadership of our Lord. Think of us as instrumentalists in an orchestra. Some of you play violins, others play clarinets, etc. We need to use the same music score and obey the direction of the conductor. Otherwise, it will only be a mix of loud noise and not beautiful music. Each of you is capable in certain things. But only by supporting each other and following the guidance of our Lord, we display a glorious harmony to the world.

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

任何人都喜愛嬰孩。他們會做出天真又有趣的事情。然而，嬰孩必須成長。遲早，他們都要戒掉奶瓶、尿布和嬰兒車。當他們到達一定年齡仍無法說話、走路或自行吃飯，他們就需要去找醫生檢查。醫生有一些標準來評估兒童的成長，這不只是身高和體重的增加；同樣重要的是心智的成熟。成熟的一個標誌，是意識到自己並非世界的中心。在孩子年幼時，父母會鼓勵他們與別人分享食物或玩具；在團體遊戲中，他們也需要排隊並輪流。透過互動，孩子學習禮貌與互相尊重。靈命的成熟與身體的成熟相似。保羅需要處理哥林多教會中一些屬靈的嬰孩。他們沒有同心合意地事奉，反而因自我中心而分裂。保羅寫信糾正他們的心態：他們應當彼此互補，而不是彼此相爭。當我們看這一章經文時，我們也需要省察自己：我們是否也有靈命不成熟的跡象？我們是否渴望在與主同行以及教會生活中更加成熟？我們為嬰孩的誕生感到高興，也同樣為靈魂得救而喜樂。然而，出生只是新生命的開始，成長才是真正健康生命的指標。讓我們彼此勉勵，在神的國度中更成熟，成為更剛強的基督徒。

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

## 1. 指出不成熟 Address Immaturity (v. 1-9)

保羅一開始就指出聽眾的不成熟。讓我們來讀第1到第9節。保羅稱他們為「弟兄們」。他們確實是信徒，只是仍有很大的成長空間。他們的不成熟，就好像新生嬰兒的腸胃狀況一樣。他們在消化系統尚未發展完成之前只能喝奶。同樣地，保羅無法把更深奧的真理餵養給哥林多的信徒，因為那些內容對他們來說太難了。他們的心態幼稚導致幾個問題。第3節提到嫉妒和分爭，其實原文還包括分裂。保羅說，這顯明他們是「屬肉體的」，意思是他們的行為就像非信徒一樣。這三個問題的出現，是因為他們偏愛自己喜歡的領袖。有些人跟隨保羅，有些人喜歡亞波羅；1:12也提到磯法（彼得的另一個名字）。神賜給每一位領袖不同的恩賜與才幹，但當比較導致分裂時，事情就變得非常嚴重了！在第6至7節中，保羅刻意淡化教會領袖的角色：6 我栽種了，亞波羅澆灌了，惟有神叫他生長。7 可見栽種的，算不得什麼，澆灌的，也算不得什麼；只在那叫他生長的神。聖經老師就像農夫一樣：這個人撒種，另一個人澆水，但唯有神能供應陽光和空氣，使植物生長。同樣地，領袖因他們的忠心與勤奮值得肯定；然而，最終拯救人、促進屬靈成長的，乃是神自己。若我們把焦點重新放在神身上，就不會比較誰更重要、或是誰更優秀了。當耶



耶穌開始祂的事工時，施洗約翰知道自己的任務快要結束。約翰的門徒向他報告，耶穌的名聲不斷在上升。約翰聽到之後，心裡是否感到酸溜溜呢？讓我們來聽聽他在約翰福音 3:28–30 中的告白：28 「我曾說：『我不是基督，是奉差遣在他前面的』，你們自己可以給我作見證。29 娶新婦的就是新郎；新郎的朋友站著，聽見新郎的聲音就甚喜樂。故此，我這喜樂滿足了。30 他必興旺，我必衰微。」約翰明白自己是為基督鋪路的先鋒。他說自己只不過是婚禮中的伴郎，而耶穌才是新郎，主才應當得到所有的注意。因此當耶穌終於出現時，約翰是喜樂而不是憂傷的。從那一刻起，耶穌要接手一切。當我們明白自己是在神的團隊中彼此同工時，就不會再有比較。因著不同人的恩賜、風格或個性，我們自然會有自己喜愛的講員。但若不小心，我們很容易把領袖變成偶像。我剛成為基督徒時，教會有一位年長的牧師和三位年輕的牧師。教會共有四個聚會點，牧師們會輪流在不同地點講道。其中有一位年輕牧師在講道方面很有恩賜，口才出眾，有時也很幽默。於是他漸漸地成了某些人最喜愛的講員。結果，有些人變成了「追星族」，無論那位弟兄星期天在哪裡講道，他們就跟到哪裡。這只是一間教會的情況而已。如今，在網路上有數不清的聖經老師你可以選擇收聽。若你在空閒時間聽不同牧師的講道，其實是一件好事；我自己偶爾也會這樣做。神透過他們的信息對我說話，我也能藉著觀摩他們來改進講道的技巧。然而，最重要的不是那些牧師是穿西裝還是牛仔褲，風格是熱情還是沉悶，而是他們的信息是否以聖經為根基。我們這些當老師的人，只不過是手拿水管的園丁。人的話語有限，唯有神的話能改變生命。我們的責任，是解釋神的話，幫助你成長。這是祂的教會、祂的事工，也是祂的國度。

## 2. 檢驗各品質 Assess Quality (v. 10-17)

保羅勸勉哥林多的信徒要克服靈命的不成熟。有一天，神將要檢驗他們生命的品質。讓我們繼續讀第 10 到第 17 節。保羅從農夫的比喻，轉到蓋房子的圖畫。他說房子的根基是耶穌基督。祂是我們信仰的基礎。這與 1:23 相呼應，保羅在那裡強調他所傳講的是釘十字架的基督。對耶穌身分與工作的正確認識，是分辨真信仰的試金石。約翰在約翰一書 4:2–3 這樣說：2 凡靈認耶穌基督是成了肉身來的，就是出於神的；從此你們可以認出神的靈來。3 凡靈不認耶穌，就不是出於神；這是那敵基督者的靈。你們從前聽見他要來，現在已經在世上了。真正的基督徒必須相信，耶穌是真神成為人來到世上。若祂沒有成為真正的人，就不可能死；若祂沒有從死裡復活，祂就不是神。有些宗教相信耶穌只是一個靈、一位先知，或是一個人被提升變成神。我們必須嚴肅地問一個問題：那些觀念從何而來？基督徒的信仰是建立在神的話語之上。至於如何證明聖經是真理，這又是另一個很大的課題，今天我們不會去探討。有一點可以肯定的：除非神在祂的話語中啟示祂的本質與屬性，否則我們就無法認識祂。除了信仰的根基，保羅也強調信仰的果子，換句話說，就是我們在耶穌基督這個根基上建造什麼樣的工程。他在第 12 到 13 節中比較了兩種材料：12 若有人用金、銀、寶石、草木，禾楷在這根基上建造，13 各人的工程必

然顯露，因為那日子要將他表明出來，有火發現；這火要試驗各人的工程怎樣。用堅固材料建造的房子能經得起火的考驗，而用易燃材料搭建的結構則會被燒毀。神將在「那日子」——也就是耶穌再來的時候——用火來檢驗我們工作的品質。請記得，保羅是對信徒說這段話的，因此他並不是在談論一個人在審判日是否得救或沉淪。他是提醒我們要省察所建造的工程是否有永恆的價值。那些房子經得起火試驗的人，將要得著賞賜；而那些房子在火中被燒毀的人，雖然自己仍然得救，卻會一無所有。他們就像從起火的房子裡逃出來的生還者，根本來不及帶走任何財物。有些基督徒的「房子」可能是華麗的教堂建築、他們所寫的書，或因名聲而累積的財富。保羅到底想說明什麼呢？教會中的嫉妒、紛爭和分裂，都是「世上的智慧」的表現；這些心態在神的國度裡毫無永恆價值，甚至對信徒的屬靈健康有害。神看重的不是外表，而是實質。當耶穌再來時，祂要親自檢驗我們，結果取決於我們所使用的材料。一間教會不應以建築的氣派、會眾的人數、樂團與敬拜小組的表現，或同工的學歷為榮；而應當因忠心教導並遵行神的話而被人認可。同樣的原則也適用在我們的個人生活。世俗用薪水高低、所住的房子、所開的車子、所穿的衣服來衡量成功；但神看得更深入，祂注意的是你的品格，以及你對祂、對人的愛。祂重視的是品質，而不是數量。讓我們按著神的藍圖來建造生命，並追求那將來的賞賜。

### 3. 達到更屬靈 Attain Spirituality (v. 18-23)

哥林多的信徒必須長大成熟。他們需要達到更屬靈。讓我們來聽第 18 到 23 節。保羅呼籲他們丟棄世上的智慧，轉而追求神的智慧。在第 18 節中，他再次回到「愚拙」與「智慧」的對比：人不可自欺。你們中間若有人在這世界自以為有智慧，倒不如變作愚拙，好成為有智慧的。要達到更屬靈，他們就必須接納世人所認為愚拙的道理——也就是十字架的信息。基督徒不應該只是知道福音、相信福音，還必須把福音接納到心中，並真正珍惜它，然後按著真理而活。結果就是，雖然世界看他們是愚拙的，神卻看他們為有智慧的。這正是神挫敗那些自以為太聰明、以致不需要相信神之人的方式。保羅引用了約伯記和詩篇中的經文來支持這一點，這些經文的共同主題是：神知道如何用人的聰明絆倒他們。當人以為一切都在自己掌控之中時，往往最容易跌倒。我想到一些愚蠢的小偷，他們暴露自己的罪行。他們自以為比警察更利害，因此沒有被抓到。為了誇口自己的「聰明」，他們在社交媒體上發表影片，炫耀自己如何鑽漏洞。結果不但留下讓警方追查的線索，還用自己的話證明自己是犯法的人。這樣的人真的聰明嗎？靈命不成熟的人也會顯示出類似的驕傲。哥林多的信徒在選擇自己喜愛的領袖時，其實是在暗中自誇。他們可能心裡想：「你看，我比別人聰明，因為我跟隨保羅；他才是最棒的。」保羅在第 21 到 23 節中，用一個很有意思的論點來反駁這種心態：21 所以無論誰，都不可拿人誇口，因為萬有全是你們的。22 或保羅，或亞波羅，或磯法，或世界，或生，或死，或現今的事，或將來的事，全是你們的；23 並且你們是屬基督的，基督又是屬神的。當保羅說「萬有全是你們的」時，他並不是在主張他們可以繼續當老闆。

我們必須讀到結尾，才能明白他的邏輯。哥林多信徒因為選擇自己偏好的老師，就宣稱：「我屬於保羅」或其他人。但保羅糾正他們：他們不是屬於某位領袖；相反地，那些老師是屬於他們的。不僅如此，保羅甚至說，世界、生、死、現今的事和將來的事，都是他們的。這是什麼意思呢？答案在第 23 節：所有信徒都是在基督裡的，而基督在世時是順服父神的。人一旦得救，就是基督裡，信徒從此必須透過基督的眼光來看一切。教會的領袖只是神的僕人；世界是神國度的一部分；人生的目的不是抓取自己想要的一切，而是在所做的事上榮耀神。並且，信徒也不必懼怕死亡，因為耶穌已經勝過了死亡。總而言之，耶穌徹底顛覆了人的邏輯！萬有都屬於祂。因此，唯有擁抱神的智慧，我們才能享有真正的自由。我們越有智慧，就應當越謙卑。我們感謝神賜下聖經老師，因為神使用他們引導我們進入真理；他們解釋神的話，也鼓勵我們把真理活出來。神同樣藉著許多同工忠心的服事來祝福我們：他們為我們預備飲食、維修設備、編排事工、並且計劃教會的將來。透過基督來看事情，也能幫助我們對人生有正確的眼光。既然耶穌是我們的主，我們就不應該敬拜金錢、事業或成功。人生的目標不是利用神來累積財富，而是管理祂所託付給我們的一切，為要榮耀祂。當我們把耶穌放在生命的首位，讓祂成為我們生命的中心點之時，我們就能對擁有權有正確的看法。

## 結論 CONCLUSION

成長是真正健康生命的指標。我們每一個人都應當藉著每日讀聖經、參與教會的各種事工，不斷地成長。同時，我們也要彼此勉勵，一同追求屬靈的長進。最簡單的事情是關心缺席的弟兄姐妹並邀請他們回到教會聚會，或是在聚會中提醒大家把手機收起來，帶自己的聖經。當我們在主的帶領下，同心合意、朝著共同的目標彼此配搭時，教會的整體就能變得更美好。可以把我們想像成一個管弦樂團裡的樂手：有些人拉小提琴，有些人吹單簧管，等等。我們需要看同一份樂譜，並聽從指揮的帶領；否則，發出的只會是吵雜的噪音，而不是優美的音樂。你們每一個人在某些事情上都有自己的能力與恩賜；但唯有彼此扶持、並一同跟隨我們主的帶領，我們才能向這個世界展現出榮美、和諧的見證。