

**“What is the church to be?” – Pt. 2
1 Corinthians 3:9b - 23**

Big Idea – God wants His church to be all it can be in Jesus Christ.

Note that the word “church” doesn’t mean physical structure, but the people of God who are believers in Jesus Christ.

Review from last week – believers are a Family, believers are a Field

1 Corinthians 3:9b You are God’s building.

10 Because of God’s grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it. But whoever is building on this foundation must be very careful.

11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have— Jesus Christ.

12 Anyone who builds on that foundation may use a variety of materials—gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw.

13 But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person’s work has any value.

14 If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward.

15 But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.

16 Don’t you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?

17 God will destroy anyone who destroys this temple. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.

18 Stop deceiving yourselves. If you think you are wise by this world’s standards, you need to become a fool to be truly wise.

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. As the Scriptures say, “He traps the wise in the snare of their own cleverness.”

20 And again, “The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise; he knows they are worthless.”

21 So don’t boast about following a particular human leader. For everything belongs to you—

22 whether Paul or Apollos or Peter, or the world, or life and death, or the present and the future. Everything belongs to you,

23 and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

The church is a Building, (God's dwelling on planet earth) – the goal here is quality work

1. Jesus Christ is the foundation – v. 11

1 Peter 2:6 The Scripture says: "I will put a stone in the ground in Jerusalem. Everything will be built on this important and precious rock. Anyone who trusts in him will never be disappointed."

7 This stone is worth much to you who believe. But to the people who do not believe, "the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone."

Here Peter quotes from Isaiah 28:16

2. Paul, and other apostles laid the foundation – v. 10

The early apostles like James, Peter, John and later Paul put down the foundation by teaching the early church the doctrines of Christ, aka "the apostles' doctrine"

Acts 2:42 "they continued in "the apostles' doctrine, and breaking of bread and prayers"

Ephesians 4:11, 12 says that God gave gifted men to the church in apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor-teachers..."

There are no apostles or prophets (in the true biblical sense) today

Ephesians 2:20 You are like a building that was built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus himself is the most important stone in that building,

21 and that whole building is joined together in Christ. He makes it grow and become a holy temple in the Lord.

22 And in Christ you, too, are being built together with the Jews into a place where God lives through the Spirit.

3. We need to build carefully with good quality materials – vs. 12 – 17

v. 12 "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble" represents:

Valuable, precious materials/work

OR

Cheap, temporary, shoddy materials

v. 13 God's refining fire will test the works and reveal their worth

v. 14 Those whose works pass the test receive rewards

v. 15 Those whose works fail suffer the loss of rewards, not salvation

vs. 16, 17 The body of Christ is God's temple/dwelling place on earth

4. We must build with the correct plan – vs. 18 – 20

“19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. As the Scriptures say, “He traps the wise in the snare of their own cleverness.”

20 And again, “The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise; he knows they are worthless.”

Man's wisdom is foolishness to God

God's Word seems foolish to the natural man

Warren Wiersbe said, “The world depends on promotion, prestige, and the influence of money and important people. The church depends on prayer, the power of the Spirit, humility, sacrifice, and service.”

5. We should build with the right motives – vs. 20 - 23

“21 So don't boast about following a particular human leader. For everything belongs to you—

22 whether Paul or Apollos or Peter, or the world, or life and death, or the present and the future. Everything belongs to you,

23 and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

It's all for the glory of God – 1 Corinthians 10:31