

"HOW TO BUILD A FIRE-PROOF LIFE"

I COR. 3:10-15

INTRODUCTION:

A. The **sum of a man's life** is the works that he has done during his life-time, *whether good or bad.*

1. This means: The judging of our works is also a judging of our lives.

2. **Since our works will be judged by fire we must conclude that our lives will also be judged by fire.** Hence the title of this message: "HOW TO BUILD A FIRE-PROOF LIFE."

B. *The fiery test is not to reveal whether we are Christians or not, but whether our works as Christians are a credit to Christ or not.*

C. Paul, "*as a wise master builder*", under the inspiration of the Spirit, provides believers with several fundamental facts concerning: ⁽¹⁾what the Christian's life and work is to be; ⁽²⁾**WHAT HE IS TO BUILD UPON, AND** ³**HOW - IF HIS LIFE'S WORK IS TO STAND THE TEST BY FIRE AND BE REWARDED.**

I. THE NEEDED FOUNDATION HAS BEEN LAID. "*Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*" (v.11).

A. It's important to understand a **foundation was needed.** *It was needed:*

1. *First, by God Himself*, upon which to build the structure of His redeemed Church.

2. *Second, it is needed by man, on which to build his hopes for this life and the life to come.*

B. Both foundations have been *well and truthfully laid* by the hand of *Infinite Wisdom.*

Quote: "*Laid as deep as the grave, and as stable as the Eternal Throne.*"

1. It is a **foundation that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it.**

Matt. 16:18 "*...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*"

2. It is **one that standeth sure.**

2 Tim 2:19 "*Nevertheless **the foundation of God standeth sure**, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*" (*Important starting point in building a fireproof life.*)

3. Since God the Father has purposed to build His Church and His Kingdom on that **Rock, which is Christ**, *Paul warns "let us take heed (beware, regard) how we build thereupon" (v.10). Have you? ARE YOU?*

II. A SUPER STRUCTURE IS TO BE RAISED -(v.12). *"If any many build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones (Grk. "little stone, building stone"), wood, hay, stubble:".*

A. It is evident that there are two different types of builders referred to by Paul. *The material each uses reveals his/her type of builder.*

1. **The Wise Builder:** Is one who builds with *"gold, silver, and precious (building) stones"*.

2. **The Foolish Builder:** Is one who builds with wood, hay, and stubble. In this message we will consider both.

B. This **Wise Builder** uses lasting materials.

1. *Material that is consistent with the character of the Foundation.*

2. Materials that complement the Foundation, which is Christ Jesus.

3. This builder seeks to honor Christ, *seeking for "quality" spiritual life and works that will glorify Christ*

a. Not quantity (liberties) that will win the acceptance, approval, and praise of men.

b. Not the cheap, shabby things after which those of the world build their lives, which are equal to wood, hay, stubble.

B. The **wise build according to the Word**, being *"doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving themselves" (James 1:22).*

Mat 7:24 *"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which **built** his house upon a **rock**:"*

1. Peter gives us a list for a complete **load of suitable material** for the wise builder. (He gives Building Material specifications.)

2 Pet 1:5-11 *"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue (moral uprightness); and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance (self-control); and to temperance patience (for endurance); and to patience godliness (god-fearing conduct); 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity (agape love). 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: (not to make sure of your election and calling) for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our*

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

2. Wise builders ¹study the Word (plans and specs); ²they pray and ¹depend on the Spirit of God; as a result, their work will stand the test.

a. When the fire tries their work in the judgment, it will stand!!

C. **The Foolish Builder.** He uses "*wood, hay, stubble.*"

1. He is **wise in his own conceits**. He thinks that as long as he *believes in the foundation* it matters little what he builds upon it.

Mat 7:26 "*And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:*"

a. To him, false teaching becomes acceptable, and the vain philosophies of those who are proud in heart, become attractive.

b. He is careless and indifferent in the practice of "**the faith**" (that body of truth taught by Christ, expounded upon by apostles and believed upon by the Church.).

2. The Foolish Builder is **typical** of Christian workers (ministries) that are in a hurry to build a crowd, **but do not take time (care) to build Him a church.**

a. They build on every thing but the Word. (*Personality, entertain-ment, and social activities.*)

b. These are **typical of those who** do not test the professions of people by the Word, to see if they are truly born again: *they merely take them into the church and rejoice in bigger numbers.*

III. A TESTING TIME IS COMING. "*...the fire shall try every man's work (and ministry) as to what sort it is. (V.13)*

A. The Foundation has been already *tried. Isaiah prophesied of Him.*

Isa 28:16 "*Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.*"

B. The **life built, (life's work), that has been associated with (done in) His Name,** will be tried by the fire of God's searching judgment and holiness. (*In accordance with Word of God, (which is His specs.)*)

1. This fiery test is not to reveal whether we are Christians or not, **but whether our works as Christians are worthy of Christ or not.** Will He own them or will He burn them?

a. That depends on their own inherent character, whether they are gold, or wood, silver or hay, precious stone or stubble. **What they are will determine their destiny and our reward!!**

IV. THE RESULTS OF THE JUDGMENT.

A. **Some will be rewarded.** *"If any man's work (life's work or BUILDING) abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward" (v.14).*

1. **We will not be rewarded because we are a Christian.** *Salvation is not a reward for good works. It is the gift of God.*

2. The reward comes as a result of the high-quality, lasting, works done in His name, works that are well pleasing in His sight, and that honor Christ.

a. Works which are **consistent with the Foundation.** **Works that bear the stamp of Christ's blessings and eternal value.**

B. **Some will not be rewarded.** *"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (v.15).*

1. **We may have a saved soul, but a lost life (one void of reward)!**

2. Christ will not mistake the empty, heartless, worthless hay and stubble service for the faithful, dedicated work done in love by the consecrated life of faith and trust. **"Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon" (v.10).**

3. **Beware of unthankfulness; the spirit of the age.**

2 Tim 3:2 *"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, **unthankful, unholy,**"*

IV. CONCLUDING FACTS ON THE JUDGMENT OF BELIEVERS AND WHETHER THEIR WORKS (LIVES) ARE FIREPROOF.

A. The Bible speaks of the believer's judgment as being **solemn and serious**, especially since it includes the possibility of damage or "loss" (**eternal detriment**).

1 Cor 3:15 *"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss (detriment, damage): but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."*

2 John 1:8 *"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, **but that we receive a full reward.**"* **CONSIDER NOW:**

B. **There is the possibility of being ashamed before Him at His coming.**

1 John 2:28 *"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, **and not be ashamed before him at his coming.**"*

C. **God will examine and openly reveal, in their true reality:**

1. **Our secret acts.**

Mark 4:22 *"For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad."*

Rom 2:16 *"In the day when **God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ** according to my gospel."*

2. **Our words.**

Mat 12:36-37 "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. 37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

3. Our good works.

Eph 6:8 "Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free."

4. Our motives.

1 Cor 4:5 "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels (motives) of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

D. Every believer will have to give account of the **degree of his faithfulness**, or unfaithfulness to God.

Mat 25:21, 23 "His lord said unto him, Well done, thou **good and faithful ser-ant**: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

1 Cor 4:2-5 "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

Mat 25:30 "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

1. We will have to give an account of our deeds and actions in the light of the grace, opportunity, and understanding made available to us.

Luke 12:48 "But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

E. The specific results of the believer's judgment will be varied.

1. There will be either the gain or loss of joy.

1 John 2:28 "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we **may have confidence**, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

2. Either approval or disapproval.

Mat 25:21 "His lord said unto him, **Well done, thou good and faithful servant**: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

CONCLUSION:

A. In the light of what you have heard, how do you feel about the life you have been building against the Day of Judgment by fire?

1. Do you see a need to examine more closely the nature of your works, in light of future rewards and eternal detriment or damage?

2. Is it time that you make a new commitment to God and give Him your very best? Or, are you already doing so? Come and pray.

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