

“Building with God”

Summary

Are we building our lives on a foundation that will endure? This powerful message challenges us to examine how we're constructing our spiritual lives. Drawing from 1 Corinthians 3, we're reminded that Jesus Christ is the only true foundation, but we have a choice in what we build upon it. Are we using gold, silver, and precious stones - representing God's character, redemptive works, and investments in people? Or are we settling for wood, hay, and stubble - symbols of fleeting, self-centered pursuits? The imagery of fire testing our works serves as a sobering reminder that only what's built for eternity will last. As we reflect on this, let's consider: Are we allowing God to refine us through trials? Are we participating in His redemptive plan? Are we prioritizing the growth of people over material things? This message urges us to take heed and build wisely, recognizing that we are God's workmanship, designed to reflect His glory to a watching world.

Main Points – Building with God

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the picture of believers as God's living temple, emphasizing our role in partnering with God to build His spiritual house. Pastor Zach discusses how God is building us individually and collectively, the precise nature of this building process, and the importance of taking heed in how we contribute to this divine construction. The message underscores the responsibility of Christians to shine as witnesses for Christ and to build with materials that will endure God's refining fire.

Key Points:

- God is building us as His living temple
- The building process is precise and purposeful
- We must take heed how we build upon the foundation of Christ
- Our lives are to be a visible testimony of God's faithfulness
- We should build with "gold, silver, and precious stones" (enduring spiritual works) rather than "wood, hay, and stubble" (temporary, fleshly works)
- Christians are called to shine brighter over time, growing in faith and character
- We are God's workmanship, designed to make His invisible qualities visible to the world

Scripture Reference:

- 1 Peter 2:1-5
- Hebrews 3:1-12
- 1 Corinthians 3:8-15
- Ephesians 2:10
- Romans 1:18-20

Stories:

- Pastor Zach's personal testimony of growing up in church but not being truly saved until later in life
- The story of Elijah calling bears to maul children who mocked his baldness (2 Kings 2:23-24)
- The parable of the sower (Mark 4)
- The parable of the wise and foolish virgins (implied reference to Matthew 25:1-13)

Small Group Study Guide – Building with God

Key Takeaways:

1. God is building us into His spiritual house.
2. We are called to be missionaries and witnesses for Christ.
3. The building God is creating is precise and purposeful.
4. We must take heed how we build upon the foundation of Christ.

Discussion Questions:

1. Pastor Zach mentioned that if we have the Holy Spirit, we are missionaries. How does this perspective change the way you view your daily life and interactions?
2. Reflect on the comparison between Moses' faithfulness in building the tabernacle and Jesus' faithfulness in building His church. How does this impact your understanding of your role in God's plan?
3. The sermon discussed building with gold, silver, precious stones versus wood, hay, and stubble. What do you think these materials represent in your own life?
4. How can we ensure that we are "shining brighter" in our faith walk? What does this look like practically?
5. Pastor Zach emphasized that God is building people, not just physical structures. How can we prioritize building people in our church and community?
6. Discuss the concept of being God's "workmanship" (Ephesians 2:10) and how it relates to being visible representations of God's love to the world.

Practical Applications:

1. Self-reflection: Take time this week to examine your heart and actions. Are you building with "gold, silver, and precious stones" or with "wood, hay, and stubble"?
2. Intentional witness: Choose one way you can be more intentional about being a "living epistle" in your daily life this week.
3. Building others: Identify someone in your life whom you can invest in or encourage spiritually. Make a plan to reach out to them.
4. Spiritual growth check: Assess your spiritual growth over the past year. Are you "shining brighter"? If not, what steps can you take to grow?

5. Prayer focus: Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal areas where you need to take more heed in how you're building your spiritual life.

Scripture for Meditation:

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." - Ephesians 2:10

Closing Thought:

As we build our lives on the foundation of Christ, let's remember that we are God's temple, His workmanship, designed to showcase His glory to the world around us. May we build wisely and shine brightly for His kingdom.

Discussion Questions – Building with God

How does the concept of being 'living stones' in God's spiritual house challenge our understanding of our role in the church and our relationship with God?

In what ways might we be unintentionally building with 'wood, hay, and stubble' in our spiritual lives, and how can we shift towards building with 'gold, silver, and precious stones'?

How does the idea of Christians being 'living epistles, known and read of all men' impact our daily choices and interactions with others?

What does it mean to 'take heed how we build' in our spiritual lives, and how can we practically apply this principle?

How might our understanding of being God's 'workmanship' change the way we view ourselves and our purpose in the world?

In what ways can we ensure our spiritual growth is progressing, shining 'more and more unto that perfect day' as mentioned in Proverbs 4?

How does the comparison between Moses' faithfulness in building the tabernacle and Jesus' faithfulness in building His church challenge our own faithfulness in serving God?

What does it mean to be a 'missionary' simply by virtue of having the Holy Spirit, and how should this shape our daily lives?

How can we cultivate a heart that embraces trials as opportunities for spiritual growth, seeing them as refining 'gold' in our lives?

In what ways might we be unintentionally acting as 'foolish virgins' in our spiritual lives, and how can we ensure we're maintaining enough 'oil' in our lamps?

Scriptures – Building with God

Here are the [scripture references](#) mentioned or alluded to in the sermon:

1. Acts 1:8
2. 1 Peter 2:1-5
3. Matthew 16:18
4. 1 Timothy 3:15
5. Exodus 19 (general reference to Israel as God's peculiar treasure)
6. Hebrews 3:1-12
7. 1 Corinthians 3:8-15
8. Proverbs 4:18
9. 2 Kings 2:23-24 (Elisha and the bears story)
10. 1 Peter 1:7 (trial of faith more precious than gold)
11. Mark 4:3-20 (Parable of the Sower)
12. Ephesians 2:10
13. Romans 1:18-20
14. 2 Corinthians 3:2-3
15. 1 Thessalonians 1:8

Devotional – Building with God

Here's a 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional:

Day 1: Building on the Right Foundation

Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

Devotional: As we begin this journey, let's reflect on the foundation of our faith. Paul reminds us that Jesus Christ is the only foundation upon which we can build our lives. Today, consider the materials you're using to build your spiritual house. Are you investing in gold, silver, and precious stones - things of eternal value? Or are you settling for wood, hay, and stubble - temporary satisfactions that won't withstand the test of time? Remember, God is actively building you into His spiritual house. Take a moment to pray, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal areas where you need to align your building efforts with God's plan.

Day 2: Shining Brighter Each Day

Reading: Proverbs 4:18

Devotional: The path of the righteous is described as a shining light that grows brighter and brighter. This beautiful imagery reminds us that our spiritual journey should be one of continual growth and increasing radiance. Reflect on your spiritual walk over the past year. Can you see evidence of growing brighter? If not, what might be dimming your light? Remember, even small steps of obedience and faith can increase our shine. Today, choose one specific way you can let your light shine brighter for Christ, whether through an act of kindness, spending extra time in prayer, in the Word of God, in worship, sharing your faith with someone.

Day 3: Living Epistles

Reading: 2 Corinthians 3:2-3

Devotional: Paul tells us that we are living letters from Christ, known and read by everyone. This is a profound responsibility and privilege. Your life is a testimony to God's work, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God. How aware are you of this reality in your daily life? Consider the people you interact with regularly - your family, coworkers, neighbors. What message is your life conveying to them about Christ? Ask God to help you become more conscious of your role as His living epistle and to empower you to reflect His love and truth more clearly.

Day 4: Bearing Fruit in Every Season

Reading: Mark 4:1-20

Devotional: Jesus' parable of the sower reminds us that the condition of our hearts determines how fruitful we will be. Even when it doesn't feel like the right season, God

expects us to bear fruit. Examine your heart today. Are there areas of rocky ground or thorns that need to be addressed? How can you cultivate more "good soil" in your life to receive God's Word and produce a bountiful harvest? Remember, bearing fruit isn't just about personal growth - it's about providing nourishment and shelter for others, just as the mustard seed grows into a tree where birds can nest.

Day 5: Partners in God's Building Project

Reading: 1 Peter 2:4-5

Devotional: As we conclude this week's devotional, let's focus on our identity as living stones in God's spiritual house. You are not just a passive recipient of God's grace, but an active participant in His grand building project. How are you contributing to the beauty and strength of God's house? Consider the unique gifts and experiences God has given you. How can you use these to build up others in the faith? Take time to pray, asking God to show you your place in His building and to empower you to fulfill your role with faithfulness and joy.