

Sermon – Student Takeover 2024

Is your life built to last?

If you want your life to be built to last, you've got to...

-REALLY grow up

-Obey, and RELY on God (to do his work)

-Know your work will be REVEALED by fire

*Mix in video

*practical tips to pass it on

It's Youth Sunday, so we're going to get a little interactive here

Any roller coaster fans out there?

I'm going to have you put your hands up in the air, like...(pause) you're riding a roller coaster

But instead of open fingers, do closed fists to start with

And I'm going to name some things, and I want you to give them a 1-10 rating using your fingers

Milk – my favorite drink is strawberry milk – so good!

Gold – fellas, take notice of the ladies around you

Co-Workers – Hopefully your boss isn't here to see what you just said

Fire – Got some pyros in here

Paul – which Paul, who knows?

Brothers and sisters – I see some parents breaking up fights in the balcony

Jesus –

Well hey, I'm Brad, I've have the privilege of working with HS students here, all the way back since 2010

Our son was in the nursery then, and now he's in 8th grade

Our oldest daughter was in elementary school then, and now she's an adult leader in our HS Ministry

And me...you should have seen me back then (picture)

You thought the presidency aged a person!

This (point to picture and myself) is what happens to a man when he eats as much Little Caesars as I have the last 13 years!

Any guesses what those words we raised our hands for have in common?

They're all taken from our passage today, 1 Corinthians 3:1-15

It's a passage that discusses...our lives, and the efforts of our lives, being built to last

It's a great youth Sunday passage

All of us have this deep longing in us, to go – I want my life to make a difference, I want what I do here on this earth to last for all eternity

And for all of you that grew up enjoying the church days of sitting in pews, getting handed a bulletin by the usher, overhead projectors, and singing As the Deer...

The message this morning is done in a format I'm not sure I've ever done before

A 3 point sermon with alliteration

Ahhh, like the good ole' days

Have a couple students help me read the passage here?

Prayer – God, cause us to think about, to live lives that their impact will last for all eternity, bless this next generation, for your glory!

Verse 1:

Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ.

When Paul, the writer of Corinthians, starts out with brothers and sisters, he's being good cop a little bit

He's like: I love you guys a ton, but I have to be bad cop here now too

If you want your life to be built to last, you've gotta

Hint, this is the first R in the 3 point sermon

You've gotta **REALLY grow up**

Because looking at your lives, you look more like infant Christians than Spirit filled Christians

Now, it's ok to be an infant Christian if you're new to Christianity, new to faith

If you're new around CCC, newer to this Jesus thing, this faith thing, that's awesome!

We're glad you're here!

We love helping you take your next best step in faith

Maturity comes from growth, and that takes time

Keep after it, day by day, following, pursuing, obeying Jesus

But if you should be a Spirit filled Christian and your life still looks more like the world than it looks like Jesus...you've gotta **REALLY grow up**

For the Corinthians, as we'll see in verse 3, it was jealousy and envy, and rivalry

Instead of putting others first, they were putting themselves first

If our lives look more like putting ourselves first over others

If our lives look more like worry than trust

If we keep quiet versus being bold

If we hoard God's blessings versus generously sharing them

If we display the fruits of the world versus the fruits of the Spirit

And we've been around Jesus a bit longer

We've gotta **REALLY grow up**

Verses 2-3

I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.

You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly?

Are you not acting like mere humans?

And because you haven't grown up yet like you should have, you've been getting bottle fed instead of enjoying the Omaha Steaks you could be enjoying

Or, if you're vegetarian or vegan, you've been getting bottle fed instead of enjoying a fresh, kale salad

There's application for all of us in this, we've gotta **REALLY grow up**

This is also an application for our Youth Ministry here at CCC

We're helping students move from milk to solid food
 From looking more like the world to more like Jesus
 And you're going hear me say this throughout, but, as you think about the next generation at CCC
 Helping them mature in faith is a role for all of us
 Yes, us Youth Ministry staff, Youth Ministry volunteers
 But parents, grandparents, young adults, even teenagers to those younger than you...every age
 All of us, how are we REALLY growing in faith and then passing that on to the younger generations!?

Verses 4-5

For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere human beings? What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task.

Paul says, you're so immature and worldly that you argue about who is better, me or Apollos
 These were 2 of the main guys preaching to, investing in the Corinthians
 And people were taking sides as to who they followed more
 At CCC, I mean, we all know who is the best out of Mark, Alex, and Jed, right!?

Just kidding – that was a trick question!

We're not arguing about that, we're not debating that
 These guys are all working toward the same thing, all working "toward the same task" is the way Paul words it at the end of verse 5

If you want your life built to last, you've got to REALLY grow up
 And move toward spiritual maturity

(Pause)

Is there any area of your life, where you go, I should probably be more mature spiritually than where I'm currently at?

(Pause)

Both Paul and Apollos, they've been doing their role

What was that role, and what was God's role?

I want to move to our second R

If you want your life built to last, you've got to

Obey, and RELY on God

Continuing on to Verses 6-8

I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor.

What was Paul and Apollos' role according to these verses?

To obey, and to RELY on God

By shout or show of hands, anyone here have a green thumb?

Ok, thanks for raising your hands, our landscape team just used our new face recognition cameras we have around the Worship Center and you'll be getting an email with more information about volunteering soon

If you're online, we have control of your camera and you'll get a similar email

Can you imagine!

By a shout or show of hands, how many of you just kinda struggle with keeping plants alive?

These verses say:

Paul planted

Apollos watered

God made it grow

Of those 3, which is most difficult?

Even those of you who didn't volunteer for the landscape team

Can you plant a seed or a plant?

Yes, 100% of us can!

Can you water a plant or a seed?

Yes, 100% of us can!

How about, can you make that plant or seed grow?

No, none of us can

The point is, our job is actually the easy part, when it comes to building a life that will last, when it comes to passing that life on to others

We plant and we water, in other words, we obey, and we RELY on God

And then God does the rest!

Let's apply that in a couple ways:

For one, it's important that the one who plants and who waters are in unity together

You and me and her (point) and him (point), there's a mission that God has given us that's bigger than our differences

In this series, we've been talking about how a church can mess things up

And yet still, how do we stay unified when we disagree, unified when we mess up and hurt others, unified when the enemy seeks to divide us?

Verse 8 says we have one purpose – meaning all of us together, we have one purpose

I'll say that one purpose in a few ways, but it's to love Jesus, to make disciples, to build lives that will last

Something really cool about students, is that they don't care nearly as much as we have in the past about differences

They care about unity under Jesus and completing his mission

For example, they don't care about denominational differences

We have this yearly event in our city every August called O,NE (pictures)

And at O,NE, many of the churches in our city, spanning location, denominational lines, schools, whatever might tend to divide, we all come together

This past year, in our parking lot at CCC, we had 3,000 students worshipping God, hearing his Word, and praying together by their schools for their friends, our city

For Jesus' glory!

Let's use our differences to work together for unity, and for God's purpose!

A second application

We each just need to obey God and do what he's called us to do, and no more

This takes the pressure off for evangelism, for discipleship

You and I don't have to evangelize or completely disciple someone else along

Sure, we do have a role, but there's also a role we each have in community as we each use our gifts to do the work of God

Let's talk evangelism specifically

We're all called to reach lost people, even if we don't have the gift of evangelism

But not doing it alone means you live it out, then you invite them to your house with other Christians so they meet others, and you have still others praying, and then you bring them to church to see other Christians and all together, God uses that, we each have our role

Or let's talk about discipling the next generation

Parents, you live for Jesus at home, and point your kids to Jesus, and then grandparents, you invest in your grandkids, and then you bring them to church, and you get connected into our youth ministries and then in the rows of seats, the atrium, everyone, this is your role, you get to know students, talk to them, pray for them

And, a shameless plug for our Youth Ministry

If you're not plugged into it, and you're a student, a parent, you've gotta get in

We have a booth in the atrium, some free ????, stop there, get plugged in

And all those people together, we obey God by doing our part and RELY on him to reach this next generation

And then, check this out, not only is the pressure not all on you, it's a community effort, but after we obey, we RELY on God

He does the hard work of life change, and he takes our obedience and uses it to make an eternal impact in other's lives

Verse 9

9 For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

What we do, how we live is important

But the emphasis is on God and his power, his action

As his servants, his instruments, we obey, and RELY on him

And in his unlimited power, he does the rest

And 3rd R, if you want to live a life that's built to last, you've gotta **know your work will be REVEALED by fire**

Verses 10-11

By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

There's only one foundation, and that's Jesus Christ

Any attempt to build without him as the foundation, of your life, our church, our efforts to Reach one More, or invest in this next generation

Any attempt without Jesus is no more than good works
 No more than putting ourselves as mere humans in the place of God himself

Verse 12

If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw,

You can give your best efforts of gold, silver, and costly stones for God, stuff that costs you a lot
 Or you can be kinda lazy, and slothful, and not give God stuff that costs you much and build with hay, with straw

If it's not about Jesus, if our motives are about anything else, don't bother

Our work is going to be REVEALED by fire and only what's built on Jesus will survive that test
 Verses 13-15

their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

What are you building on?

Jesus?

Yourself?

You image?

Your foundation?

Your legacy?

And to get to the place where it's like – not just, yeah Brad, some of my life is built on Jesus, most of my life is built on Jesus, no!

Every single moment of every single day God has me on this earth, I want to have built on Jesus
 That my life, my efforts, my legacy, would be built to last

None of us here can see into each other's hearts, each other's motives

But the REVEALING fire of God sees all

Are we building what will last?

There's so many ways to do this, but since this is Youth Sunday, we want to focus in on 1 specific way, that's by investing your life in the next generation

We've got a video to show some of that – BETTER SET UP

Let's get practical:

-Do like you pray - Older generations – you often pray for people to invest in your kids, grandkids

What do you wish those people would do for your kids, do that for other people's kids in your circle

-Utilize the atrium - Talk to the next generation in the atrium, stick around versus heading out quickly, experience those key church relationships

-Identify 2-3 young people to get to know, to pray for, send a text to, to take their family dinner

-Join the Sunday PM prayer group – intergenerational, 5PM, pray with teens and adults

-Use your skills to invest – do you love sports – Upward, are you a plumber – pull up your pants and teach someone about plumbing

-Join the Youth Ministry team – it's like Nebraska, it's not for everyone, but some of you, your take home today is to go – I'm going to get some more info about serving in youth ministry, we need small group leaders, people to help with food, tech, greeting, lots of stuff – go to the serve page on the website or find my email and email me or youth staff

-Give opportunities – for the next generation, at work, as you serve at church, develop young people around you

-Call out potential in the next generation versus negativity because of what the media tells you about them – sure, there are challenges, but I believe God has awesome plans for this next generation!

Take a moment of prayer before we close and ask God to help you sort through what he wants you to hear from today

That God would build our lives in a way that would last