

**Happy New Year**  
**“Be Careful How You Build”**  
**1 Corinthians 3:10-23**

Why do people make New Year’s Resolutions?  
Because they believe that they can do better.

I’m talking about building our lives, building our church, building, working and serving where God has put us. It is important to build on the foundation that has been laid, and that foundation is Jesus Christ.

The church belongs to God, it is not yours or mine. This is the reason we must comply with God and use the best materials.

Now Paul had already taught the Corinthian church that the church is like a family, then he used an example as to how the church is like a field. One planted and one watered but it is God that is causing the growth.

**1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building.**

So, it is here that we focus on God’s building. This work of building His church started in the first century. God continues to build His building, His church, He has not finished.

- 1. Verses 10-11      The Foundation is Jesus**
- 2. Verses 12-17     We need to build with the right materials**
- 3. Verses 18-20     We need to build in accordance to His plan**
- 4. Verses 21-23     We need to build with the right motivation**

**1. Verses 10-11 The Foundation is Jesus:**

**Verse 10**

**According to the grace of God which was given to me,** ~ Grace; favor, benevolence, thanks and benefit. Gives the connotation of being accepted without deserving and by pure benevolence of the one who accepts. You have done nothing to earn his grace, God just gives it.  
**like a wise master builder** ~ as a construction expert, Paul is only an expert because he had God’s wisdom.

**I laid a foundation,** ~ What foundation? The only foundation that should be laid.

**Verse 11**

**1 Corinthians 2:1-2**

So, this is the foundation that is already laid. **and another is building on it.** ~

We see that he doesn't mention names, it is not necessary to mention names. ~ It is knowing that there are many of us who are working together to build His church.

**But each person must be careful how he builds on it.** ~ But each and every one of us building on this foundation has to be very careful.

We individually have a roll to build, we are to be building not because God needs our help. But because He wants to use us. We have a part in building His church.

### **Verse 11**

Paul is addressing the Corinthian church here because they are putting such an emphasis on the personalities, they were causing division and discord saying I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos instead of glorifying God.

Well, the point here is that we are to be building on the proper foundation who is Jesus Christ.

## **2. Verses 12-17 We need to build with the right materials:**

### **Verse 12**

We are to build with the right materials.

**That is "Sound doctrine, the essential doctrines of the Word of God."**

**gold, silver, precious stones,** ~ so that we understand that these materials have value and their difficult to obtain. They are beautiful but also importantly they are permanent materials.

**wood, hay, or straw,** ~ these materials are ordinary, more common, cheap and easy to obtain. They are temporary materials.

Now these materials **gold, silver, precious stones,** are materials that have been tested, they will last.

### **Proverbs 3:13-15**

It is when we are tested, when we go through the fire that we are cleansed from impurities. Our response can also be very revealing when being tested.

### **Verse 13**

It will be revealed if we have worked, if we really have built for the kingdom of God. As well, if we have built with materials that last, not with firewood, with wood, hay and straw that rots and burns.

### **Verse 14**

We need to recognize that we are building over the foundation of another. If our labor, our work remains we will be compensated.

### **Verse 15**

**If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss;** ~ We can see this as though our home were to be burnt down. We suffer loss, the years of labor we have put into our home.

**but he himself will be saved, yet *only* so as through fire.** ~ We have lost the house, our home but we escaped that fire and are still alive.

In this New Year, you need to start building on the right foundation; With the right materials.

### **Verse 16**

Take note that this verse is a question. You can understand it this way; "Don't you know or understand that Holy Spirit lives in you?" Or more directly; "Does the Holy Spirit live in you?"

### **Verse 17**

The destroyer is the person who attacks the church. The one who wants to destroy it or contaminate the church by infiltrating with false doctrine and ideas. They do it directly or indirectly.

### **1 Corinthians 3:1-4**

So, when there is division in the church directly or indirectly it is caused by carnal Christians behaving as children and or babies.

Once again it is in their carnal actions that they choose to follow men. They followed the men, Paul, Peter and Apollos and by following men they were building the Church of Corinth with WOOD, HAY and STRAW.

It is he who learns to love the Word of God that will obey the teaching of sound doctrine.

They will respect the pastor who teaches the truth and since they are receiving from the treasures of the Word of God they are going to help and serve by helping construct with the right materials that don't burn.

### **3. Verses 18-20 We need to build in accordance to His plan:**

#### **Verse 18**

##### **New Living Translation**

**<sup>18</sup> Stop deceiving yourselves. If you think you are wise by this world's standards, you need to become a fool to be truly wise.**

In becoming a fool ~ means for you to humble yourself, to realize that we need God's Wisdom not our own.

#### **Verse 19**

This a reference to

**Job 5:13 He captures the wise by their own cleverness,  
And the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.**

#### **Verse 20**

Here we see a reference to

**Psalms 94:11 The LORD knows human thoughts,  
That they are mere breath.**

Human wisdom is only the ego. What happens when the ego is deflated? One is left empty. But God's wisdom is not like that.

### **4. Verses 21-23 We need to build with the right motivation:**

#### **Verse 21**

We are reminded that this church would be boasting in whom they were following. You can hear their pride in them saying; **"I am with Paul," and another, "I am with Apollos,"**

We must recognize that we have a not only a relationship with God but with each other, the local church. That is with every person that says this is my church, this is where God has planted me. Also, a relationship with the pastor.

#### **Verse 22**

Be it these servants Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, that's Peter if you didn't know.

They are God's servants and God's property, just like we are.

~ Our preferences should not do us harm, and cause divisions, strife, or jealousy. By seeing this character in people, we understand that they are immature, that they still drink milk.

### **Verse 23**

Everything belongs to us, in Christ Jesus. So, we need to understand and say, "I am God's Property." WE have responsibilities in saying so.

OUR Responsibility is to help in the building of the church, the local church, right here where God has you. We are to build with the right materials, gold, silver, and precious stones so that our work will not burn away.

### **Hebrews 13:17**

#### **Application:**

- 1.** The only foundation is Christ Jesus.
- 2.** With what materials are you building with?
- 3.** It is God's plan that we hang on to Him and His wisdom, not this world's wisdom.
- 4.** We are God's property; we belong to Him. In Jesus everything belongs to us; Including the pastors, teachers and evangelists. Our motivation comes from knowing that I belong to God so there is no room for division or discord.