

“Christians as God’s Temple”

Text: 1 Corinthians 3:10–23

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 3:11 – “For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

Introduction

- Paul writes to the Corinthians to correct division, pride, and spiritual immaturity in the church.
 - He uses building imagery to explain that the church is God’s sacred space—**His temple**.
 - Christians are not just individual believers, but a **unified spiritual structure**, built on **Jesus Christ**.
 - This passage reminds us of the seriousness of how we build our lives, treat one another, and define success in ministry.
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I. Careful Work (1 Corinthians 3:10–15)

We are spiritual builders working on God's project—His people.

A. Many Builders (v.10)

- Paul describes himself as a “wise master builder” who laid the foundation (preaching Christ).
- Others are building on that same foundation.
- Warning: **Be careful** how you build. Not all work is beneficial.

B. One Foundation (v.11)

- Jesus Christ is the **only** foundation for Christian life and ministry.
- Everything must be aligned with His life, teaching, and work.
- No leader, ideology, or trend can replace Him.

C. Various Materials (v.12)

- Believers build with either **lasting** (gold, silver, precious stones) or **perishable** (wood, hay, straw) materials.
- These represent the **quality of our motives, methods, and ministry**.

D. Fiery Test (vv.13–15)

- God will test every believer's work.
 - Fire will reveal what was done for God's glory vs. personal gain.
 - Reward for lasting work; loss for wasted effort—but salvation is still possible.
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II. Holy Temple (1 Corinthians 3:16–17)

God dwells among His people—this changes everything.

A. What's So (v.16)

- The church (not a building, but the people) is **God's temple**.
- God's Spirit **lives in us collectively**—we are His dwelling place on earth.
- This speaks to the **dignity** and **importance** of the church.

B. So What (v.17)

- God **protects His temple**.
 - Anyone who harms or divides the church is opposing God Himself.
 - The church is **holy**, set apart—treat it with honor, not selfish ambition or pride.
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III. Deceitful Wisdom (1 Corinthians 3:18–23)

God's view of wisdom is different from the world's.

A. Human Thinking (v.18)

- Don't deceive yourself by clinging to worldly definitions of success or intelligence.
- If you want to be wise in God's kingdom, be willing to look foolish in the world's eyes.

B. God's Knowledge (vv.19–20)

- God sees through human cleverness—it's empty in His sight.
- Scriptures affirm: human wisdom **cannot compare** to God's insight.

C. Paul's Assurance (vv.21–23)

- Stop boasting in human leaders—they are **not your foundation**.
 - Everything already **belongs to you in Christ**: life, death, present, future.
 - You belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God—**that's your identity and security**.
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Conclusion

- As Christians, we are not just individuals—we are **God's holy temple**, built together on Christ.
- How we build matters—our motives, methods, and treatment of one another will all be tested.
- Let us build with reverence, humility, and faithfulness to the foundation: **Jesus Christ**.
- **Challenge**: Are you building with lasting materials? Are you treating God's temple—His people—with care? Are you living with God's wisdom or the world's?