

How Is Your Building?

1 Corinthians 3:5-23 My husband and I have only built one house in our lifetime. We lived in an apartment close by to the sight of the home we were building, and one of our joys was to check almost daily on the progress of our new home. We had the privilege of choosing the carpet, the other flooring, paint, wallpaper, lighting fixtures and many other things for our new home.

This passage in 1 Corinthians gives three images of those who follow Jesus. We are called laborers, God's husbandry or garden, and God's building. God has chosen us to be co-laborers with Him in His vineyard, and at the same time He looks upon us as His own special garden. We are often called the plantings of the Lord in the scriptures. We talk about a great harvest of souls in this last day and spreading the seed of God's Word. God also has called us to be co-laborers as we build up His kingdom here on earth, and at the same time He looks upon us as His own valuable building. Each believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Paul emphasizes in this passage the importance of laying the foundation of our own temple carefully and exhorts us to build with the right materials. He says, "According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward" (vv. 10-14).

I recall reading this passage to my boys when they were young.

I drew pictures of a house made of gold, one made of silver and precious stones, one made of wood, one made of hay and one made of stubble. Then I asked them which house would burn down first. They answered, "The house made of stubble." Then I shared that each of their bodies was a building designed to be a home for God. I asked, "If you were building a home for God, which material would you use to build such a home?" They responded, "I would build a home for God with gold and silver and precious stones." How is your building progressing, and what materials are you using to build your own personal home for God? You are the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Lord, help me to build my personal home for You with the finest materials.

**READ: Ezra 5:1-6:22; 1 Corinthians 3:5-23; Psalm 29:1-11;
Proverbs 20:26-27**