

Series: 1 Corinthians
Title: Builders United
Text: 1 Corinthians 1: 9-11
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1 Corinthians 3: 9:...*ye are* God's building. 10: According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11: For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Our subject is "Builders United." When believers divide and take sides they glory in their flesh, in men, in carnal things—and God hates the divider of brethren.

Proverbs 6: 16: These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18: An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19: A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

I always need to be reminded, this is my flesh—this is all my flesh is—the only thing my flesh can produce. My fleshly man is the forward man.

Proverbs 16:28: A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.

But by Christ's work, believers are made one by God in Christ. Can Christ be divided against himself? Can one divide against one? Any time believers begin to whisper things about brethren, we create sides and take sides. We are attempting to divide Christ and his body. To do so is to glory in our flesh rather than God our Savior and God hates it. But listen to this word:

Proverbs 26:20: Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out: so where *there* is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.

Proverbs 22:10: Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.

I pray God would use this message so that if there be strife and reproach in my own heart, God would make me personally, cast out the scorner that my old fleshly man is, that strife and reproach might cease. Make me "Endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph 4: 3)

There is no cause to glory in our flesh by dividing one brother against another, because God's true church is "God's building", built by God's grace, and built on God's Foundation, "which is Jesus Christ."

YE ARE GOD'S BUILDING

First, we ought never glory in our flesh by dividing brethren but rather glorify God by keeping unity, because we are God's building—"ye are God's building." (1 Cor 3: 9)

The metaphor is taken from architecture: true believers are God's building built by God the Father.

Amos 9:11: In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: 12: That they may

possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.

God's building is built by Christ who is God.

Zechariah 6:12: And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name *is* The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: 13 Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

God building is built by God the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. Believer, remember this—not only are we built by God, by Christ, but God in Christ dwells in his church, in each of his people individually—you are God's temple. So God does not take kindly when we attempt to defile his temple with our fleshly division.

1 Corinthians 3:16: Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17: If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are. 18: Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. 19: For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. 20: And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

We might fool ourselves and we might fool our brethren into thinking that we are speaking truth that we are doing this for God's glory or that we are justified from God's word but no man has ever fooled God. "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." What then ought a believer be doing for fellow believers and toward fellow believers?

1 Peter 2:5: Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Spiritual sacrifices involve casting our care on Christ. We ought to pray for one another. We ought to ask Christ to forgive, to save, to keep. Someone might say, "But they sinned against me!" But I answer, "Who are you? A sinner against God? Yet, God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. Endeavor to keep unity rather than being a divider."

ALL OF GOD'S GRACE

Secondly, we ought never glory in our flesh by dividing brethren but rather glorify God by keeping unity because if God uses us at all it is all of God's grace—"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon." (1 Cor 3: 10)

Paul refers to himself as a skilled, master builder because he was used of Christ first—before any others—to preach the gospel to the Corinthians. But the true Wise Masterbuilder is God our Father and his Son Jesus Christ who gave grace to Paul.

The wise Masterbuilder draws up the plans before one piece of ground is broken up—salvation is all of God's purpose and God's grace determined from eternity. The Masterbuilder chooses the Foundation—God the Father chose Christ his Son to be the one Foundation of his building: to lay down his life, to bring in righteousness, to honor God. The Masterbuilder chooses who each living stone will be—God chose all his people in Christ. The Masterbuilder chooses who will work on his building—God predetermined who every preacher and every witness of his gospel would be. Then the Masterbuilder provides all things necessary to

his workers to build the building—but it is God who gives all grace and it is God who laid the foundation as **THE FIRST WISE MASTERBUILDER**.

Isaiah 28:16: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

So Paul glorifies God, saying, “According to the grace of God which was given unto me,…” Paul had no room to glory in himself. He had no reason to exalt one brother over another and thus divide brethren. Neither do we. Why? We are given grace from the Wise Masterbuilder. We are laborers who are given all provision from the very Head of this construction project.

So Paul gives glory where glory is due, “According to the grace of God which is given unto me… I have laid the foundation,

1 Corinth 15:10… I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

Ephesians 3:7: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

Colossians 1:29: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

So here is the lesson for us. What should I speak? What should I say and do in every situation I face? Every trial, every temptation, every sinful fall my brethren fall into.

1 Peter 4:11: If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

CHRIST IS OUR ONE FOUNDATION

Thirdly, we ought never glory in our flesh by dividing brethren but rather glorify God by keeping unity because Christ is our one foundation—“But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11: For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor 3: 10)

We must remember the church is not built by us or on us but Christ is the one Foundation.

Ephesians 2:20: And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; 21: In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Christ is our Righteousness and our only acceptance before God. Christ is our Wise Masterbuilder. Christ is our Foundation. Christ is All and in all those born of God. So let us take heed how we build on Christ the One Foundation—“But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11: For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

In the context he is speaking of ministers, and therefore this is a warning addressed to them. But it is true of all of us as far as we are used of God to bear witness of Christ to one another and to this world. **AND EVERYTHING WE DO AND SAY DOES!**

We are to take heed how—with what materials—we build on Christ the Foundation—fidelity as well as diligence is required!

Therefore we are to use nothing but the truth of God's word, nothing but the truth which glorifies Christ, nothing but the truth which abases all our wisdom and works can be used, nothing else will God use to build up his child or the Church.

The moment we mix our wisdom, our will, our desires—with the wisdom of God in this work, we have ceased preaching Christ alone, we have become dividers and we are surely to create cliques. Seek out God's word first:

Ecclesiastes 12:9: And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, *and* set in order many proverbs.

First he heeded God and his word. Then he sought out God's word for his people. Then he ministered to the Lord's people the word of God.

We have a tendency to make up our minds on what we need to say and do, then try to find justification to support it from God's word. That is backwards. Go to God's word first. Lean to his Wisdom and bow to God. Then give God's word to one another—not seeking to divide but seeking to unite!

Luke 11:35: Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

1 Timothy 4:16: Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

REMEMBER

Let me end by giving you a few simple things to remember. Is Christ divided? Then believers ought to strive to keep unity in Christ. Lay aside all divisive thoughts before they even become whispers. This is Unity in Christ:

- 1) Let us each rest entirely in God our Builder, trusting his grace and resting on Christ our Foundation.
- 2) Speak to one another the glorious good news of Christ, the Solid Rock, and forgive constantly.
- 3) encourage one another in Christ, to keep oneness at all times, for his sake for his glory!
- 4) Know that everything else is of our own sinful flesh, is division and is a foundation of sand. If I cannot forgive and keep unity it is fleshly; it is not of God—no matter how I might attempt to justify it by God's word! Christ said,

Matthew 7:24: Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26: And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Amen!