

1 Corinthians 3:12-15

¹² Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

¹³ Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

¹⁴ If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

¹⁵ If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

I want to preach to you that “THE PAYOFF IS COMING”

I. The Foundation

In the scripture
That I just read,
The Apostle Paul
speaks of a foundation.

This foundation
That he is referring to
is Jesus Christ,
the solid rock
upon which we build our lives.

Everything we do
should be built
upon this foundation.
Our actions, our decisions,
our relationships -
all should be grounded in Christ.

It is not a foundation
that can be shaken
by the storms of life,
or eroded away
By the passage of time.
It is steadfast, reliable
and unchanging.

Everything we do,
And every step we take,
should be built
upon this solid foundation, Amen?

Our actions,
whether big or small,
our decisions,
whether easy or difficult,
our relationships,
whether smooth or challenging -
all should be grounded in Christ.

He is the cornerstone
that holds
all things together;
He is the anchor
in our times of storm,
And He is the compass
that guides us
when we are lost.

And let us not forget,
He is the light
that lights our path
when darkness surrounds us.
He is the wisdom
that helps us discern
right from wrong,
and the strength that empowers us
to stand firm in our faith,
even when the world around us is crumbling.

In Him, we find the courage
to face our fears,
the hope to overcome our disappointments,
and the love
that binds us all together.
He is not just our foundation,
He is our refuge,
He is our comforter,
He is our guide,
and He is our Savior.

We should strive
to live our lives
in a manner
that reflects His teachings,
His love, and His grace.

We need to be
the living testimonies
of His goodness and mercy.
And let us remember,
That no matter what we face,
we are never alone,
Because He is with us,
Each and every step of the way.

When we build
our lives on Christ,
we are building
on a foundation
that will not crumble
under pressure,
And it will not waver
in the face of adversity.

Instead, it will stand firm,
providing us
with the strength,
With the courage,
and with the resilience we need
to face whatever
comes our way.

Just as a house
built on sand
is swept away
when the storms come,
so too are the lives
that are built
on shaky foundations.

But when we build our lives on Christ,
we are building on a foundation
that is as solid as a rock.
Because Christ is our rock,
He is our fortress,
And He is our deliverer.

In Him, we find refuge and strength.
In Him, we find peace
In the middle of the storm.
In Him, we find hope
in the midst of despair.

We need to continue
to build our lives on Christ,
our solid foundation.
Because when the winds blow
and the storms rage,
we will not be shaken.
We will stand firm,
Because our foundation is strong.
Our foundation is Christ.

As we navigate
through the journey of life,
We should remember
these words
of the Apostle Paul,
and strive to build our lives
on the foundation
of Jesus Christ.

Because it is only in Him
that we find true stability,
True peace,
And true fulfillment.

We need to make Christ
the center of our lives,
the foundation
upon which
everything else stands.

Because a life built on Christ
is a life
that is truly blessed
and eternally secure." Amen?

Building our lives
on the foundation
of Jesus Christ
is like constructing a house
on solid bedrock.

When the winds begin to blow,
It stands firm.
When the rains
Begin to pour,
it does not waver.
When the floods come,
it does not get swept away.

And this foundation
Isn't just about belief,
It's also about a relationship.
It's about walking
with Christ,
talking with Him,
and allowing Him
to guide our steps.

It's about letting His teachings
Spread through our thoughts,
influence our actions,
and shape our decisions.

When we build
our lives on Christ,
we are not
just building a life,
We are also
building a legacy.

We are building
A legacy of faith,
A legacy of hope,
and a legacy of love
that can be passed down
to future generations.

A legacy that speaks
of God's faithfulness,
A legacy that speaks
Of God's mercy,
And a legacy that speaks of God's grace.

Christ is not
just the foundation
of our lives,
but He is also the architect
and the builder.

He formed the blueprint
of our lives
Before He ever formed us
In the womb,
and He knows
what is best for us.

He shapes us
And He molds us
according to His divine plan,
chipping away our imperfections,
and refining us
into His likeness. Amen?

Building on this foundation
requires our surrender,
It requires our trust,
And it requires our obedience.

It requires surrendering our plans
to His will,
trusting in His promises,
and obeying His commands.

And, It's not always easy,
but it's always worth it.
A life built on Christ
is not just secure,
but also meaningful.

It's a life
filled with purpose,
A life filled with joy,
and a life filled with peace.

It's a life
that reflects the light
of Christ,
bringing hope
to the hopeless,
comfort to the hurting,
and love to the unloved.

We should be
building our lives
on the solid foundation
of Jesus Christ.

And, In doing so,
we are not just securing our lives
here on earth,
but we are also securing
our eternal destiny in heaven. Amen?

Remember, **1 Corinthians 3:11** says
**“For no other foundation
can anyone lay
than that which is laid,
which is Jesus Christ.”**

Let's build wisely.
Let's build intelligently.
Let's build eternally.
Let's build on Christ.

II. The Building Materials

In our scripture this afternoon,
Paul speaks
of different building materials:
gold, silver, precious stones,
wood, hay, and stubble.
These things represent
the quality
of our works.

Some works are valuable
and enduring,
like gold, silver, and precious stones.
While others are temporary and perishable
like wood, hay, and stubble.

Now Paul's metaphor
of building materials
not only speaks
to the quality
of our works,
but it also speaks
to the intention
and the spirit behind them.

The gold, silver, and precious stones
represent works
That are born
out of love,
Born out of faith,
and born out of
obedience to God.

They are the acts
of kindness we do
without expecting anything
in return.
It is the love we show
to our neighbors,
and the faith we demonstrate
in our daily lives.

These works,
like precious metals and gemstones,
withstand the test of time
and the fires
of trials and tribulations.

But, on the other hand,
the **wood, hay, and stubble**
symbolize works
that are self-serving,
or they are done
for the wrong reasons.

They may include
acts done for personal gain, recognition,
or out of a sense of obligation,
rather than just being done
Out of genuine faith.

Just as wood, hay, and stubble
are consumed by fire,
these works do not endure
when they are tested
by the challenges of life.

In essence,
Paul is encouraging us
to build our lives and faith
on the solid foundation of Christ,
using materials
that reflect the purity
of our intentions,
and the sincerity
of our faith.

This way, our works
will not only endure,
but they will also glorify God,
and they will bear witness
to His love and grace.

Paul's metaphor
serves as a powerful reminder
for us to examine
the foundation
of our lives
and the quality
of our works.

Are we building our lives
on the solid foundation
of Christ, using materials
that reflect the purity
of our intentions
and the sincerity
of our faith?

Or are we using
perishable materials
that will not stand
the test of time?

In essence,
Paul is encouraging us
to strive for a life
that not only endures,
but again,
also glorifies God
and bears witness
to His love and grace.

He is urging us
to invest in works
that have eternal value;
works that reflect God's character,
Works that promote His kingdom,
And works that bless others.

This way,
when our works are tested,
they will not be
found wanting,
but will shine brightly,
reflecting the glory of God
and the authenticity
of our faith.

We need to remember
Once again,
that it is not the quantity
of our works
that matters,
but the quality.

It is not about
how much we do;
It's about
why and how
we do it.

We should strive
to build our lives
with gold, silver,
and precious stones;
with works
that are pleasing to God,
Works that are
beneficial to others,
And works that are
rewarding to us.

The **gold, silver,**
and precious stones
in our lives
are the **selfless acts of service**
That we perform,
the **compassionate words**
that we speak,
and the **unconditional love**
That we extend to others.

They are the **prayers**
we offer in solitude,
the **faith** we hold onto
in times of despair,
and the **hope** we cling to
in the face of adversity.

Just as gold, silver,
and precious stones
are refined by fire,
so too are we refined
by the trials and tribulations
We face.

These challenges,
though they may seem daunting,
serve to purify us,
to remove the impurities
from our character,
and to make us more like Christ.

The gold in our lives
represents the selfless acts
of service we perform.
Each act of kindness,
no matter how small,
is a nugget of gold
that adds value
to the kingdom of God.

It's in these moments of service
that we reflect
the heart of Jesus,
who said in **Matthew 20:28**,
**"I did not come
to be served, but to serve"**.

The silver symbolizes
the compassionate words
we speak.

Proverbs 10:20 says,
“The tongue of the righteous
is choice silver.”

Our words have the power
to uplift and to heal,
And they have the power
to bring comfort and encouragement
to those who are hurting.

When we use our words wisely,
they become a precious treasure;
a gift that keeps on giving.

The precious stones
are the unconditional love
we extend to others.
This love, which mirrors
the love God has for us,
is a rare and beautiful gem
in this world.

It's a love that "bears all things,
believes all things,
hopes all things,
endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13:7).

In the quiet moments of solitude,
our prayers rise
like incense
before the throne of God (Psalm 141:2).

They are a sweet aroma,
a sacred offering
of our hearts' deepest longings and desires.

In times of despair,
our faith becomes the anchor
for our souls,
firm and secure (Hebrews 6:19).
It's the substance
of things hoped for,
the evidence
of things unseen (Hebrews 11:1).

"In today's fast-paced world,
we often find ourselves
caught up
in the hustle and bustle of life.

We are constantly bombarded
with society pressuring us
to do more,
To achieve more,
and to be more.

The world measures success
by the number
of tasks we complete,
the number of goals
we achieve,
or the number of accolades
we receive.

But as followers of Christ,
we are called
to a different standard.

Let me remind you
Once again,
That it is not
the quantity of our works
that matters,
but the quality.

Let me remind you
Once again
That It is not about
how much we do,
but why and how
we do it.

This is a timeless truth
that is especially relevant
in today's society.

In a world that values
quantity over quality,
we are called
to prioritize the latter.

In this digital age,
where our lives
are increasingly intertwined
with technology,
it's easy to lose sight
of the importance
of genuine, heartfelt actions.

We may find ourselves
doing things
for the sake of appearances,
or out of a sense
of obligation,
rather than out of love
and obedience to God.

But God sees our hearts.
He knows our motives.
And it is our heart's intentions
that truly matters to Him.

III. The Day of Testing

Paul warns us
that a day of testing
will come.
Our works
will be revealed by fire.

This fire represents
God's judgment.
It will test the quality
of our works.

The valuable and enduring works
will withstand the fire,
while the temporary and perishable works
will be consumed.

Paul, in his wisdom
and foresight,
warns us
of a day of reckoning
That is inevitable.

This day of testing
is not one of earthly trials,
but a divine evaluation
that will lay bare
the true nature
of our works.

Our deeds, our actions,
and our contributions
to this world
will be revealed and scrutinized
by the purifying fire
of God's judgment.

This fire is not a literal,
physical flame,
but it is
a metaphorical representation
of God's righteous judgment.

It is a divine tool
that discerns the quality
of our works,
separating the enduring
from the temporary.

It is a testament
to the fact
that God values quality over quantity,
substance over appearance,
and the eternal over the temporary.

The works
that are valuable
and enduring,
those that are rooted
in love, faith,
and service to others,
will withstand this fire.

They are like gold, silver,
and precious stones,
which are refined and purified
when subjected to flame.

These works
have eternal value
and will earn us rewards
in the Kingdom of Heaven.

On the other hand,
the works
that are temporary and perishable,
those that are self-serving,
superficial, or done for the wrong reasons,
will be consumed
by this fire.

They are like wood,
hay, and straw,
which are quickly
reduced to ashes
when exposed to flame.

These works
have no lasting value
and will not withstand
God's scrutiny.

So, we should strive
to live our lives
in a manner
that produces valuable
and enduring works.

We need to invest our time,
Our talents,
and our treasures
in serving God
And serving others.

Because the day of testing
will come,
and only what is truly valuable
will remain."

IV. The Payoff

If our works
abide the fire,
we will receive
a reward.

This is not
a material or worldly reward,
but a heavenly
and eternal reward.

The payoff is coming,
but it is not
the kind of payoff
the world often seeks.

It's not about wealth,
It's not about fame,
And it's not about power.
It's about something
far more valuable
Than any of those.

It's about **validation** and **vindication**
from the One
And only One
who matters most.

When our works
withstand the fire,
it's a testament
to the quality
of our faith
and the sincerity
of our devotion.

It's proof
that we've built our lives
on the solid rock
of Christ,
not the shifting sands
of worldly desires.

This reward
is not a trophy
to be displayed
or a prize to be flaunted.

It's a **crown of righteousness**,
It is a **crown of life**,
And it is a **crown of glory**
that will never fade away.

It's the **assurance**
of our eternal inheritance,
the **confirmation** of our
citizenship in heaven.

And the greatest reward of all?
It's hearing our Lord say,
"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

These words,
more precious
than gold or silver,
are the ultimate affirmation
of our service to Christ.

They are the culmination
of our journey of faith,
the final proof
that our labor in the Lord
was not in vain.

So we need to press on,
not for worldly gain,
but for the heavenly reward
that awaits.

We should build
with care,
And with love,
And with faith,
knowing that our work
will be tested,
but confident that the payoff -
our Lord's approval -
is well worth the effort."

Conclusion

My prayer
is that all of us
strive to do works
that are valuable
and enduring.

Let us build
upon the foundation of Christ
with gold, silver,
and precious stones.

Because the day of testing
will come,
and the fire
will reveal the quality
of our works.

But take heart,
Because the payoff
is coming.

If our works abide,
we shall receive
our heavenly reward.

Let's press on
with diligence and faith.
Let's remember
that every act of kindness,
every word of encouragement,
every gesture of love,
is a precious stone added
to our spiritual construction.

Each prayer we pray,
each sacrifice we make,
each step we take in faith,
is a piece of gold or silver
that enriches our spiritual treasury.

The day of testing
will indeed come,
as certain as the dawn
follows the night.

The fires of trials and tribulations
will blaze,
but they are not meant
to destroy us.
Instead, they serve
to purify us,
to refine us,
to reveal the true quality
of our works.

When that day comes,
may we stand firm,
not in our own strength,
but in the strength
of Christ,
our solid foundation.

May we face the fire with courage,
knowing that our works,
born out of love
and obedience to God,
will withstand the heat.

And yes,
take heart,
Because once again,
The payoff is coming.

The struggles of today
cannot compare
to the glory
that awaits us.

If our works abide,
if they pass
through the fire unscathed,
we shall receive
our heavenly reward.

A reward that is imperishable,
undefiled, and unfading,
kept in heaven for us.
So, let us keep building,
not for the praise of men,
but for the glory of God.

Let us keep serving,
not for earthly rewards,
but for heavenly treasures.
Let us keep striving,
not in our own might,
but in the power of Christ.

In closing,
let us remember
the words of the Apostle Paul
in **1 Corinthians 15:58**:
**“Therefore, my beloved brethren,
be ye steadfast,
Unmoveable,
always abounding
in the work of the Lord,
forasmuch as ye know
that your labor
is not in vain
in the Lord.”**