

God's Building

Key Verse: “*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*”

—*I Corinthians 3:11*

Selected Scripture:
I Corinthians 3:9-17

IRRESPECTIVE OF HOW

beautiful and structurally sound a building might be, if it is not set upon an adequate foundation, it will not last. Cracks will soon appear, floors and walls will warp, the roof will sag, pieces will begin to fall, and the once stately monument of man's craftsmanship becomes unus-

able, an abandoned eyesore, fit only for destruction. How important is a solid, unmovable foundation, one that is level and square, adequate to sustain that which is built upon it through many passing generations. Just such a sure and everlasting foundation has been laid for us upon which to build our structure of faith in God and his promises. As the Apostle Paul tells us in our Key Verse, that foundation is Jesus Christ.

Enlarging upon this picture, the apostle wrote, “Ye are God's building,” emphasizing that each of the Lord's consecrated children is constructing upon this solid foundation of Christ a structure of character acceptable to God.—*I Cor. 3:9*

The meaning of this illustration is stated in other words by the Apostle Paul when he wrote, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” (*II Cor. 5:17*) How do we come into Christ? First, we must know about him and of his fundamental part in God's plan of salvation. We must recognize that as an expression of the love of

his Heavenly Father, and of his own love, Jesus laid down his life as a ransom, a substitute for the forfeited life of Adam and the race that was condemned through him. (Rom. 5:18,19; I Tim. 2:5,6) This means the recognition of Jesus as our Redeemer, the foundation laid for our salvation.

To truly understand what Christ has done for us, and to believe it with our whole heart, results in a tremendous change in the direction of our lives. The apostle explains: “The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”—II Cor. 5:14,15

In the setting of our lesson, Paul likens this work to that of building upon the foundation of Christ with “gold, silver, precious stones,” representing the valuable truths and precious promises of his Word. (I Cor. 3:12) “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus into good works, ... that we should walk in them.”—Eph. 2:10

One of the essentials for Christian growth is faith in the invisible things of God. The church at Corinth, to whom Paul was writing, was having trouble along this line. He said they were carnal—that is, earthly, or human in their viewpoints. As a result, they were giving too much prominence to visible human leaders.—I Cor. 3:1-4

Here is pointed out the importance of how we build on the foundation provided. The apostle intimates that some were building with “wood, hay, stubble”—along human lines, expressing the spirit of the flesh—which would not stand the test of God’s judgment. (vss. 12-15) Paul knew that the Christian’s building work required it to be founded upon recognition of the invisible leadership of Christ and God. “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, ... I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.”—vss. 5,6 ■