



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

### The Sermons of Dan Duncan

1 Corinthians 3:10-17

“Building God's House”

1 Corinthians

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] We are in 1 Corinthians chapter 3 this morning. We're going to look verses 10 through 17. Paul writes:

"According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are."

May the Lord bless this reading of His Word. Let's bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we do thank you for your goodness to us and the blessings of this day. It is a blessed day to be with your people and to open the Bible with them and read a text like the one we've read and consider it. Any text that we read in your Word is great and glorious because it is your Word, it's your revelation to us. That's what we read in this book. It is your inerrant Word, and so what a privilege it is to

read it. But we come to a text this morning that really challenges us. And what it challenges us to do is live a life that's valuable. It challenges us not to waste our lives.

Now, we live in an age where there is so much and there are so many distractions, and they're not bad things, they're legitimate things, many good things but not always the best things. And they can be diversions, they can draw us away from what's really important, which is knowing you and serving you and serving you by serving your people. And so, Father, as Paul sought to give incentive and motivation, as well as correction, to the Corinthians, may he give that to us as well.

I pray that the Spirit of God would teach us, open our hearts to receive the things that we've read and what we will consider and build us up in the faith and through our time together this morning, equip us and prepare us for the week that's coming and bless us that we would be a blessing to your people and that we would carry out the work that you've given us to do. We've all been given a task, we've all been given a ministry. We have a service to perform. Help us to do that daily.

So we ask for your blessings on us spiritually in this hour and then again this evening when we come back to this place to remember our Lord and to be ministered to by those who will speak and the hymns that we'll sing and certainly to be ministered to by the elements, the bread and the wine which remind us of your Son and what He's done for us and remind us really of our triune God and the salvation that you've accomplished. Great salvation, eternal salvation that has its source in eternity past, really no beginning to it. From all eternity, you had us in your minds.

You chose us, you created us, you save us at the cross, you brought us to yourself through the work of your Spirit, and we're reminded of all of that through the Lord's table that we will sit before tonight. Bless that, bless all of the ministry today and the seeds that have been sown in the Sunday school classes. I pray that they bear fruit in our lives. And then, Lord, we pray you'd bless us materially because we have many, many needs and there's a long prayer request of people who have sought

our prayers, but even beyond that, there are needs that perhaps many of us don't even know. Yet you know them, you know every need that we have, and you know every need that we will have.

You know what's coming tomorrow, what's coming next week, next year, the trials that will come. I pray that you would bless those who are in trials today. Give them encouragement, lead them out, give them relief, healing, whatever is needed, and prepare us who may be facing a difficulty down the road, which we certainly will. We all will face difficulties. Prepare us for those today and next week and throughout our ministries together. We pray that you'd build us up and strengthen us. We pray that that will be the result of our time together this morning. Teach us and build us up in the faith, that we might serve you faithfully, and we pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

[Message] In Proverbs 9, Solomon gives a picture of wisdom as a skillful architect. She has built her house and we are invited to live in it. It has seven pillars, so it is stable and spacious. It is well built and all who live there with wisdom will live well and build well. That's Solomon's lesson in Proverbs 9. In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul gives a similar lesson. He calls himself an architect, a wise master builder. He, too, was building a house. It's the church, which is God's house. He calls it the Temple of God and all of us, all Christians, every believer in Jesus Christ is involved in its construction. So it is important that we build well. There's great reward for those who do and great loss for those who don't.

That's Paul's lesson in 1 Corinthians 3. It is an extension of what he taught in the previous verses where he compared the church to a field and explained that as God gives growth in agriculture, He gives growth in the church. God is sovereign. He gives success. That's the emphasis of the previous verses. But man is also responsible and accountable, and that's the emphasis in the text that we consider this morning. We have a real part to play in God's work. So in verse 10, we move from the farmyard to the construction site where Paul encourages us to live wisely, to be diligent builders.

The lesson here is really a correction as well as an encouragement. There were people in the church at Corinth who were not building the church; they were tearing it down. So Paul has a warning for them. Be careful, he says. Their work will be tested with fire and only that which is built of quality stuff will survive. This is not about building the Christian life, this passage. It is about building the church and, of course, the Christian life is a part of that – we can't really totally separate it – but the point that Paul is making here is we are involved in building the church.

And the lesson is not just for a few men, it's not just for elders and teaches and evangelists. It's not just for Christian leaders. It is for all of us in the church. Because we all participate in the work of building it. It may seem paradoxical, but the builders are also the building. We are all believer priests and we are involved in the great work that God has given us to do in this world, the greatest work there is in the world, and that's building the church. Later on, we see that perhaps more clearly in chapters 12 through 14 where Paul discusses spiritual gifts, and there it explains that every Christian has a gift.

Every one of you have been sovereignly gifted by the Holy Spirit as He wills, not as we will, it's not what – we don't have the gift necessarily that we would like or that we ask for. Better than that, we have the gift that the sovereign all-wise God has given to us, what He's chosen to give us. So each one of us has a gift that He in His wisdom and His love has entrusted to us and with that, of course, He's given us all a ministry, a service to perform. And there Paul explains the whole purpose of the gifts. They're not given for our own personal edification. They're not given so that we each would be able to have an enhanced prayer life or something like that. The gifts were given, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:7, for the common good. We are to be at work, building up the church, edifying and encouraging one another.

So how are you building? That's the question that we all need to ask ourselves. What is our motivation and our goal in life and particular in relationship to our walk with God and our relationship to one another

and our involvement in the church? Are we edifying others? Are we building up or are we tearing down? The things we do have great consequences. That's what Paul is saying. The things we do – and I mean everything we do has eternal consequences. So we need to do things the right way. And Paul helps us here because he gives us the standard to follow, one by which we can measure ourselves and measure the things that we do. It is the foundation, he says, that he laid as a wise master builder. Every well-built house is raised on a sound foundation.

Up in Maine where we occasionally have the opportunity, the privilege, to go and take a vacation and get out of the Texas heat, there are a lot of old houses that have stood for generations because they're built on blocks of granite. You look at the ground level and you see the granite blocks and the house above it. One of the places I like to visit – and we go to the same place every year. Just a few miles just down the road is a place called the Olson House. It was made famous by the painter Andrew Wyeth, and it's a house that was built by an old sea captain named Olson. It's a wood frame house, stands about three stories high. It's a beautiful old house. Simple but beautiful. It's stood for generations because it's built on these blocks of granite. That's a solid foundation.

Every solid building is built on a solid foundation, and the foundation that Paul laid is like that. It's like granite. It is the rock of ages. He defines it in verse 11 as Jesus Christ. It is the person of Christ certainly but it's also – and mainly here – the doctrine of Christ. It is the person and work of Christ. After all, we can't know anyone if we don't know about the individual, and we can't know Christ personally without knowing who He is, knowing about Him. We know Him personally but we must know about Him, we must know the great doctrines of the faith, and that's what this is. This is doctrine that he's speaking of as the foundation, and the doctrine is specifically Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

What Paul wrote about back in chapter 2 verse 2 when he said that he determined to know only that when he came to Corinth. And that, in

fact, is the only foundation of the church. Paul laid it in Corinth, he laid it everywhere he preached. All around the Mediterranean, throughout the ancient world where he preached, he laid this foundation of the gospel and he says others were building on it. So he tells them, since they're building on it, he tells them there in Corinth, build well, but each man must be careful how he builds on it, how he builds on that foundation. There's no other foundation but the gospel of Christ, which is the gospel of the cross. It's the gospel of the crucified and resurrected Son of God. That's the foundation.

So careful building is, first of all, building on the one foundation. Laying any other foundation is the basis of a different work and a different building. Not the work of God and not the church. Well, men do that. Men lay such foundations. They build structures and organizations on a foundation of a purely human Jesus, of the Jesus who's a great example, or a foundation of works and ethics or a social or political gospel. But that's not the church going up. They're not building the church. There's one and only one foundation, and like the foundation of any building, it determines the size and shape of the structure.

A building can't be constructed off the foundation. Anything built off the foundation won't last. Well, in the same way, the gospel determines what we are and what we do. The church can only be built correctly when it is based on and directed by the gospel. That's what the church is about. The church is about Jesus Christ and Him crucified and resurrected and coming again. The first step then in building carefully is being consistent with the gospel of the cross, that there is only one way of salvation, that is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Son of man, who was crucified, buried, and raised again.

So that's our foundation, but the fact is, even when people build on the right foundation, they can build poorly. They can do sloppy work. They can use inferior materials. Paul lists some of the materials that are used in building here in verse 12. He writes of gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble or straw. Now, I don't think Paul means for

us to analyze each one of those elements and give some particular meaning to them to find out well, gold represents this and silver, that. He was simply giving two kinds of building materials. One valuable, one worthless. One can stand up under God's test and one cannot. Gold, silver, precious stones seem like odd things to use in building, but they're durable. That, at least, is one aspect of those materials. They won't burn up. They endure the test.

The temple also incorporated these kinds of materials. It was expensively built. Solomon, when he built the temple, used the best, and that, too, is illustrated here in these materials that he describes. We're to use the best, produce the best, when we're building in the church, so we should give the best, the most valuable we have in this work. The point is the quality of the work, not the quantity of the work. Not the size of the work but the character of the work. You can build bigger and more easily with wood and straw than you can with gold and silver. And it may be a structure that is impressive in its size but it's dangerously flammable.

I've had an illustration of that some years ago. I traveled to eastern Europe on numerous occasions, we'd go to Romania, and I learned something about dictators back then – this was when it was a communist country – and particularly what communist dictators did, men like Stalin. They would build big things. They'd build big buildings and big statues. They wanted to overwhelm people with the size of these things and with their size. I'm not a psychologist but it just seems to me that that must be the point, to so overwhelm people with the size of what they could do that it just seems right and good and true – "Look how big it is."

Well, I saw that in Romania when it was a communist country, and on the main boulevard into Bucharest, which is the capital city, there's a beautiful grand granite arch. It's patterned after the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. It was built long before the communist era and it stands there in this large, long boulevard into the city, and it's very impressive. But about 20 years ago, a second arch was built a few hundred yards from

that one, just down the road, fairly close to it, and it was built in honor of the then president, Nicolae Ceausescu. It was larger than the original stone arch. It even towered above it. It towered above that original granite arch. But this one was built of different stuff. It was built of plywood and paint.

It stood for a few years. I'd see it on these visits I would make, and then on one visit, I noticed it was gone. I asked what happened to that arch and they told me someone burned it up. It was an eyesore and suddenly it was up in flames. Well, what Paul is saying here is there's plenty of stuff like that that passes as Christian work. It's big and impressive but worthless. It's cheap and flammable, and someday it will burn up. Someday God is going to test the quality of our work as Christians. That's what he says in verse 13. Each man's work will become evident for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

A lot of work is exposed for what it really is in time. It just doesn't last. It's built on a false foundation, it's built on a foundation like a charismatic personality, and when that person or that personality is gone, the work goes away. But Paul is not referring to the test of time. That is a real test but that's not what he's referring to here. He's speaking of a day of testing, he's speaking of a specific day, he's speaking of a final day, a day of reckoning or judgment when Christ will evaluate our Christian service and He will put it to the test. He speaks of it in 2 Corinthians 5:10 where he says we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds, whether good or bad.

Now, that judgment seat is not going to determine whether we're saved or not. It's a judgment seat for the saved, but there our works, our deeds, our lives will be examined. That's what he speaks of in the next chapter of our book, in chapter 4 verse 5: "Therefore, do not go on passing judgment before the time" – the specific time he's referring to – "but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then

each man's praise will come to him from God." Now, the Lord's return is a day of glory. We long for that day.

We should long for it, we should be praying for it and hastening the day of the Lord as John tells us. It's a day of deliverance, it's a day of fulfillment. It is the day that will bring the kingdom of God to earth. It will be a day of glory, a day of rest. It will be a great, great moment, but it is also a day of trial by fire, and the picture that Paul gives is of a fire sweeping through a building and everything that is transient like wood or hay is burned up. But the good things, the quality things, the things of true workmanship will survive.

Now, the results of the test are given in the next verses, verses 14 and 15: "If any man's work which he has built on it" – on this foundation of Christ – "remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." A lot of theology has been poured into these verses and a lot of it is not good. Some have interpreted these verses of perdition and others of purgatory. Many of the church fathers understood "will be saved" as "will be preserved" so that the work of the false teacher will be destroyed but he will be saved, meaning he will be preserved, he will be kept alive in the midst of the fire of hell.

That idea of the word "saved" is not really consistent with the normal meaning of the word, and so it's very unlikely here – it doesn't really fit the context. The Roman Catholic church has used this text to support its doctrine of purgatory, a place of punishment where a person's unforgiven sins are purged away, burned away, before they enter into heaven. But this has nothing to do with purifying a person; it's about testing works. Paul is describing a specific day, he's not describing some period of time in a post-mortal state, a condition after death. This is a day of reckoning, not a period of cleansing. There's no Biblical support for purgatory. It's a doctrine that's based on tradition.

The only text of any kind of purgatory is Hebrews 1:3, which says that when Christ made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. That work is done. He has completed the work

of purification. He paid for all of the sins of all of the people for whom He died, all of the sins of all those who believe in Him have been taken care of, they've been purged at the cross. That's settled. That issue is over. This text isn't about purgatory. It doesn't distinguish between the saved and the unsaved. Everyone considered here is saved. They are all building on the one foundation. This is about judging the service of believers.

The works of all will be tested. Those which are worthless will be burned up but not the person. The works but not the person. Unlike his works, he or she will be saved though barely. That's the idea. Yet as through fire. It's like our expression "by the skin of his teeth." The picture that's given here is of a man running out of a burning house. He's saved but with nothing to show for it. He's saved, his life is preserved, but everything he had is gone. Now, that's no small thing, of course. That is not to be diminished at all. He or she is saved. That means they have eternal life. There's nothing greater than that. But they will have a lower place in the kingdom of heaven than they would have had.

That is how Charles Hodge interpreted that, and I think he's right. I think that's exactly what Paul is saying. There'd be loss in the kingdom to come, which is to say the things that we do in life – and when I say that, I mean everything we do in this life – counts for all eternity. Now, this text has reference to Christian service, and it is particularly sobering for those who occupy positions of authority in the church, elders and deacons and teachers. God will judge our work, so what are we building? Is it a structure, a ministry that is in line with the foundation, that's consistent with the foundation? Does it exalt Christ? Does it promote him and his glory? There's a lot of activity in the modern church, but is it good?

In Corinth, there was a lot of activity, lots of preaching and worship, but it was not good. In Corinth, there were personality cults. Some were of Paul, some were of Apollos, some were of someone else. They were exalting a man over Christ. The danger is becoming man-

centered. That's a danger we all face. They faced it in Corinth, we face it today. If not by exalting a person then by adopting human methods and goals at the expense of looking to Christ for guidance and seeking His glory. He's the builder, really. He's the architect. He's given us the blueprints, and He's the one that enables us to work, but we're to be looking to Him, not to our own designs and our own desires.

Churches should grow. That's a sign of vitality. Paul's previous analogy was the field. Well, you know a field is good if things are growing in it, if good things are growing in it. If a field can't produce wheat and corn or any other crop, it's not a good field. If it's good, things grow there. And if a child has vitality and health, he or she is going to grow, and so the same is true of a church. It should grow. But good growth may not be great growth – that is, large growth. It will be the growth that is the result of faithfulness to God's Word, and we don't know what that looks like necessarily. Christ is building His church. What we're to do is be faithful to what He gives us to do, and He'll produce the right thing.

So again, the question is: What are we doing and why do we do what we do? What are our motives? That's what Christ will examine, were we faithful with what He gave us to do with our opportunity, with this moment, this day, this week, this year, this lifetime that we've been given, were we faithful to the opportunities that God gave us in this oh-so-brief life. So Paul is saying, "Ministers, beware. Build well." But again, he is speaking more broadly than that because again, all Christians have a service and are builders of God's house. So this is a sobering passage for all of us. Don't just look at me. It's sobering for me but it's sobering for you, too. Someday we will be examined, our works will be tested.

And we might just see it all go up in flames. What a tragedy that would be. If you've ever stood and watched a house burn down, you know what a tragedy it is and the sorrow that people feel knowing that irreplaceable things are lost forever. They may not be valuable things, they're personal things and they're gone. They're ashes. Can't replace it.

That's the idea here. Great loss that will result from careless service and careless living. "Only one life, 'twill soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last." Now, that's the warning here, but that's also the encouragement. What's done for Christ will last. It will last for all eternity. That's what Paul says.

If any man's work remains, he will receive a reward. Now, some have difficulty with the notion of rewards. It seems to conflict with the idea of free grace. It seems to suggest that God's blessings are conditional and that we can merit His favor. We do certain things, He rewards us for it, it's all conditional. But Paul does speak of rewards here. So first of all, we can't deny that the Bible teaches rewards. Paul says, "He will receive a reward," and he's not the only one that taught that. Jesus taught the same thing. In Matthew 6, He says, "Your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you." So our Lord speaks of rewards, and there's a sermon right there in that verse. What the Father – what is done in secret, the Father sees and He'll reward.

He's not talking simply about this. You see what I'm doing. There are things that are done in secret. Nobody sees them. Things in the heart nobody sees. There'll be rewards for attitudes of the heart. There'll be rewards for things that you do in a very small way, at least in your mind, but God sees it and it's important. But the point is there are rewards. But that in no way, in no wise, jeopardizes the freedom of grace. Paul's previous analogy or comparison of the church with a field in which God gives the growth indicates that. All the success that we have in Christian service is due to God's enabling grace. We may plant, we may water, we may reap, but it is God who gives the growth. We can't do that.

And in verse 10, Paul begins this second illustration, his analogy of architecture, by marveling over God's grace. "According to the grace given to me, I laid a foundation." How was I able to lay a foundation in Corinth or in Ephesus or anywhere I went? The grace of God alone. It's only according to God's sovereign grace that he was a wise master builder. God's grace is the source of all blessing. It was the source of

Paul's apostleship. He didn't seek apostleship. He didn't earn apostleship. He was snatched like a brand from the burning.

He was on his way to kill Christians when God snatched him out of that and made him an apostle, gave him a new heart, gave him faith, justified him, made him a child of God in that moment. It's all of grace, and that's the reason that he had a ministry, a ministry with the Gentiles, the reason he had ability, the reason he worked. Later in chapter 15 and verse 10, he says that very thing, he says, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." And then he speaks of his labors and how they were not in vain. In fact, he speaks of how he labored more than all of the other apostles. He's the least of the apostles but he worked more than all of the apostles, but he wasn't bragging about that, he was boasting about all that he did, because he said it by the grace of God. It's grace that enabled him to do all that he did.

Ultimately, of course, God rewards us for what He has done in us, not what we have done to earn His favor. His favor, His power, causes us to work. But that's the amazing thing about God's grace. He calls us to Himself, He regenerates us, we're born again by His grace, He gives us a gift, He gives us opportunities, He gives us the ability, the enablement to do it, and then He rewards us for it. And His rewards, whatever they are, great responsibilities and blessings in the kingdom to come, we don't really know what these rewards are, but whatever they are, they're very, very generous. And that should motivate us to serve diligently now.

Paul is giving this to us, to the Corinthians and to us, to the church down through the ages, as incentive to serve and serve faithfully. But it also shows how important the church is to God. He holds people to account for how we build the church. There is great reward for faithful service but great loss for careless work, and Paul justifies that in verse 16. He shows why the church is so important to God and why He judges our work so seriously. We're not building just any building. We are building God's temple. That's what we are, Paul says. The Holy Spirit dwells in us, in the church. He is present here right now. You think this

is just another gathering of people. The Spirit of God is here. So the work we do is very important. It's, first of all, not for us, it is for Him. It is His house, not ours, so it's not our taste that matters but His. He wants the church built His way, to His liking.

The world of Paul's day could appreciate that, I think, because it was a world of temples. Every city had its temples. Many of them still stand today. They're in ruins, but you can see the glory of them, at least the architectural glory. If you've ever been to Athens, you go up on the Parthenon, it's covered with temples – or, rather, the Acropolis, it's covered with temples, with the Parthenon and others there, and then you can look down and you can see the temple to Zeus, the great columns that still stand, and then on the other side in the agora, there's the Temple of Hephaestus. In Corinth, it was the same way. There was the Temple of Apollo. It still stands in the ruins of Corinth.

There were temples everywhere. But Paul was saying we are the true temple. You live in a world full of temples and they're not – we, the church, are the real dwelling place of God, not stone buildings. He dwells in us, He dwells in His people. Jews could especially appreciate that. The Temple of Jerusalem was still standing when Paul wrote this letter, and it was impressive in its size and materials of limestone and marble and gold and silver. It shone in the sun. It was magnificent. In the Old Testament, the Shekinah glory dwelt in it. But God is finished with that. He's finished with stone buildings.

Now the Holy Spirit dwells in the church. He dwells in every believer. He dwells in every separate church. He dwells in the whole church universal. Here, Paul is speaking of the local church. It's God's shrine. We, those of us here, gathered this morning in this simple place, are God's house. Not the building, that's not the church. This is, as the first elders of Believers Chapel chose to name this church, a chapel. They meant this building is a chapel, the church meets inside of it. You're the church. You're the temple. Christ is here with us presently. He's with us through the Holy Spirit. That's the reality.

I don't know if that's impressive to you. It should be. God dwells with us and in us, He's here. This place, you, are more impressive to God than the cathedrals of Europe. God the Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, dwells in this church with all His transforming power and glory. He is our protector and guide. That's what Paul is saying here. It's not one man or a group of men that is important. We're not to exalt some individual or divide into parties, that's the problem that Paul is addressing here in the book. We're not to follow human inventions and methods. We have the Spirit of God in us and among us. He is our guide, we are to follow Him and to honor Him.

Christ, through the Spirit, is building the church and we're to follow His instruction and follow His lead and look to Him constantly daily. As we do that – in fact, only as we do that – can we function according to God's purpose and be used by Him to do good and to reflect His glory in the world. This is the reason building well is so important. This is the reason that keeping the church pure is so important. This is the reason God is so concerned for the church. We are His temple. You know, there's no greater work done in the world today than the work that you do in serving Him and building His temple.

That's the reason Paul gives the next warning in verse 17: "If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are." The warning is not directed to those who build carelessly on the one foundation. These are unbelievers here that are warned in verse 17, people who infiltrate the church and try to do harm to the ministry. It was surely a warning to those who were causing divisions in the church, to examine those souls, that they be found in the faith because God protects His church and He will punish those to harm it. That's what he's saying.

These are his words, not mine. The punishment is as serious as it could be, and it's not arbitrary. It will fit the crime. Those who destroy will be destroyed, and the destruction he's talking about here is eternal destruction. Our duty is to protect the church from all destructive influences, from heresy, from false teaching, from persuasive powers

that water down the gospel and entertain people to death. I'm not against entertaining people, I'm not against – I don't think God's going to reward any preacher for being boring. We should try to present as interesting and compelling a sermon or lesson as we can, but what we see going on in the church today so often is we're entertaining people to death. That's become – that's our culture. We're to protect ourselves from that.

We are responsible to follow the foundation, to build according to the foundation. Not off it, on it, according to it, to exalt Jesus Christ and Him crucified, to proclaim the unadulterated doctrines of Scripture, to proclaim the full counsel of God. And to live graciously toward others. To live it out. Not just think it but live it. Those who do that are living in wisdom's house of seven pillars. They're living wisely. They are building well and building a work that will last, so may God help us to do that. Help us not to waste our lives but to live for Him, to live well and build well.

If you're here without Christ, though, we invite you to come to Him, to believe in Him and become part of God's temple, and in becoming part of God's temple, become one of His builders. There is eternal reward in it, but most importantly, there is eternal life for all who come. So may God help you to believe and help all of us to serve Him faithfully. Let's pray.

[Prayer] Father, we do ask that. We've been reminded from the apostle of the importance of the things that we do and that someday you'll examine it all. You'll test it all. Help us to bear that in mind and to live for eternity and not for time. You could do that by your grace and only by your grace, and we must confess, as Paul explains, says it himself, when we examine it all, every good work we do, it's ultimately only because of your grace, your enabling grace, that we did anything. And the rewards that we receive will only be what we receive because of your grace. So we give you praise and thanks and pray that you would move us to live lives that are wise and helpful, that bring glory to our triune God. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.