

# Take Care How You Build

by Arno Stegen

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*We are responsible for building our own house, and we need to make wise decisions and choices to build a house that will stand before God.*

**Duration:** 48:37

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 3:9

**Topics:** "Instruction"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the importance of building our lives on the foundation of Jesus Christ. He emphasizes the need for careful attention and focus in how we build upon this foundation. The preacher highlights how many people prioritize their financial well-being or their own self-interests above all else, but neglect the most important aspect of their lives. He warns that God will test the quality of the house we have built for Him, not just its design or size, and urges listeners to consider how they are building their lives.

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## Transcript

When I heard that I must take the service this morning, I prayed, I said, Lord, what must I pass on to your children? And I was led to 1 Corinthians chapter 3. 1 Corinthians chapter 3, and we'll start in the second part of verse 9. Your God's field, God's building, according to the grace of God which was given me as a wise master builder, I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now, if any man builds upon 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.

For the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire. In verse 10, the last part, but let each man be careful how he builds upon it, upon the foundation. Take care.

It needs attention. We need to focus on it. We take care of many things in life, and sometimes it's good that we take care of certain things.

But are we taking care of that which is most important and critical in our lives? Many people take care of their financial well-being. In fact, every day of that person's life, you'll find that's what he focuses on. That's

what he's busy with.

When he wakes up in the morning, he thinks about his financial state. He thinks of money and how he can make money. If he's got money, he wants to make more money.

The whole day he's busy with money. When he goes to bed, the last thing he thinks about is money. That's what he cares about.

Others just care about themselves. That's all that concerns them, is their own well-being. If it goes well with me, then I'm happy.

If things go my way, I'm happy. That's all I care about. Myself.

I don't think of others. I'm not concerned about them. It's myself I'm busy with.

And so people are busy with so many things. But here the Bible tells us what we should be caring about. Here our lives are likened to a house that we are building.

And the Bible tells us that is what we should be caring about. Whether I've got everything I need in life or not, what I need to be caring about is my spiritual well-being. This life which God has given me, which I am accountable to Him for, and the Lord says, take care how you build upon it.

And from that we already realize that we have options when it comes to building. And that's why it's important to take care how we build on it. So the first thing we need to do is let's look at building.

Yes, we need to build. We need to build on it. What is this it? What do we need to build on? And we've already read here that we need to build on the foundation.

And that that foundation is Christ. Dear friend, if you want a solid foundation, there's no better than the rock which is Jesus Christ. Many people go through life, they find all sorts of reasons and all sorts of other things and theories to build on.

But there's only one solid foundation. That rock which is Christ, which doesn't move. As a Christian, we're serving a God that we can rely on.

He doesn't change. Many things change. But God doesn't change.

And that helps us that we can be stable and steadfast in our Christian faith. God is not like people who one day say one thing, tomorrow they say another thing. Today they're standing boots on all for one thing.

Tomorrow when you meet them again, they're talking about something else. Suddenly they've changed direction. Now they stand for something else.

They no longer stand on what they stood yesterday. And even Christians today are trying to make God to be a God that changes. They say God said that in the Old Testament.

He even said it in the New Testament. But that applied to those times. We're living in different times now.

See, that's the way Paul saw things. But obviously we're living in different times. We need to adapt and modify.

But our God doesn't change. He is that firm foundation. And in Timothy we read about this foundation.

You know the word in 2 Timothy 2 verse 19. That the firm foundation of God stands. Having this seal, the Lord knows those who are His.

It's one of the things about this foundation. God knows who are His. It's wonderful to know that if we belong to Him, He knows us.

At the same time it's frightening. Because we realize that what is important is not that we claim to know Him. But that He knows us.

And that He will confess us before the Heavenly Father and His angels. Have you experienced the Lord in these days? Have you experienced Him in a way that you realize, the Lord knows me? The Lord has spoken to you. And He has confirmed that you are His child.

We need to experience it as we go through life here. Otherwise one day we will get to heaven and the Lord will say, I don't know you. The Lord knows those who are His.

And then the second seal of this foundation. Let everyone who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness. Do you build on this foundation? Have you parted from evil? If you claim to build on the foundation which is Christ, that is the sign that you are doing it.

If you want to recognize someone who is a real follower of Christ, that's the first sign. He parts from wickedness. In fact He even distances Himself from something which just has the form of ungodliness or of worldliness.

Like we heard about Peggy. Even though he didn't think he was sinning, he was with a group of people, he wasn't alone with one girl, and they were talking about the things of the Lord. But he said, if it's not a blessing to other people, I'd rather not do it.

Are you a follower of Christ? Are you building on this foundation? The first sign will be that you part from evil. You stop sinning. You can't be a Christian and just continue sinning.

You call yourself a Christian, but you have evil thoughts. You call yourself a Christian, but you say things which a Christian shouldn't say. So we can go on, there are many things.

If you're a Christian, if you're building on the foundation, that's the first sign, you stop sinning. You part from sin, and Christ has the power to save us from sin. So as we build our life, we build the house of our life, the first thing is to make sure that the foundation is right.

We're all busy building our house whether we like it or not. If you're one day old, or if you're 10 years old, or 100 years old, you're busy building your house. Every day, every moment, you're busy putting bricks in that wall of your house.

I don't know how far you are with your house, because I don't know when the Lord will say, Okay, now is your time to give account for what you have done. Young couples getting engaged today, we don't know how far their house is. Humanly speaking, we think, Okay, now they're only starting their life, they're getting engaged, they're getting married, there's a long road ahead.

But many people, when they get engaged, they're actually putting on the last few screws on the roof. Because maybe they're engaged, they won't even get married, the Lord will call them before they get married. Others, they get married, they only married for a few days.

Not so long ago, there was a couple that got married, and they went and they took all their wedding presents to a place where they were going to spend the first night together. But unfortunately, there were other people who had other motives. They knew that there were wedding presents in their room, so they planned to steal them.

There are such people. They only think of how they can deprive others of what they've got. They don't thank the Lord for blessing their brother.

When they see someone, the first thought is, How can I get what he's got? Like when there's an accident. People are in the car, they are badly injured. People come to them, they see these people in need, but they don't think of helping these people.

All they think of is that they steal their watch. They steal their cell phone. They look in the car for anything that is of value.

They take that, and off they go, and those people they leave behind. Can you imagine that we live in such times? And sometimes they steal it from people who are just as much in need as they are. In fact, sometimes those people are more in need than these thieves.

But that's all they are busy with. So these thieves came to steal these wedding presents. And the bridegroom heard the noise.

He got up to investigate. And when the thieves, the robbers, saw that he had noticed them, they killed him. They weren't even married one day.

See why I say, I don't know when your house is going to be finished. Only God knows that. You may think I'm young.

I've still got time to see that I sort my life out. Yes, I've started building my house. Maybe the walls aren't quite straight.

I'll straighten them later. Maybe you'll never get that chance. Maybe you're 14 years old, and God knows you're actually putting on the roof now.

This is the last screw, and then He will fetch you. And then you've got to give account of the house that you've built. I don't know how long you live.

But what I know is that God is going to test the house that you've built for Him. And He won't just look to see what house it was, what design it was, what size it was. He'll test the quality of it.

And that's why the Bible says, test, or make sure, take care, how you build. How are you building your house? For this couple, the engagement period is the stage in the building of their house. They've got to take care how they build in this time.

Otherwise, if they don't take care, this part of the building can become a weak link in the chain. It can become a weak spot in this whole building, in the structure. You've got to make sure that from the

foundation, from the first brick you lay, right to the end of that house, when you finish that house, that we build with quality.

We read here that we can build with different things. With gold, with silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw. See, we need to take care what we build with.

Because while we go through life the way we think, the way we talk, the way we walk, our whole life we're busy putting bricks in the wall. And many people choose the easy way. Young people, when they want to get married, look around, oh here's a nice one, I'll marry this one.

If I don't like her, I'll just drop her. They're not careful how they're building. That type of building will not stand the test, the quality test, when it is tested.

So dear Christian, dear friend, when you go through life, how are you building? Do you just always choose the easy way? It's so much easier to build with hay and with straw. You can go outside and you just go and cut some grass, some hay, and you build with it. It's the easiest way.

But that won't last. That building doesn't even stand the test of time, let alone eternity. But there's also a way of building with quality.

To build with gold and with silver and precious stones, it's not always easy. But in the long run, it pays. The problem is so many people in this world, they take a short-sighted view of life.

I need to make a decision now. You make the easiest decision that you can. You're not prepared to dig down into God's will and to find out what He wants you to do.

To get to the gold, you've got to dig deep. It's hard work. But most people are not prepared to go to that trouble.

No, we must take the easiest route. The easiest way out. Forget about the future, forget about eternity.

This is what I want now. This is pleasing to my eyes now. And then I am a fool and I do that, which is going to break down the quality of my house.

So dear friend, God is going to test your house. And maybe you won't even have to wait till Judgment Day, because that's the ultimate test. For that day will come when everything will be revealed.

Because very often we Christians, we get away with a lot of things. We are specialists in plastering. Many Christians, they make a mess of things and then they just try and use plaster, whitewash, and then they try and make it look good.

If you've made a mistake as you've built your house, there's only one way to fix it, and that's to come to the cross with it. There's only one way of getting the old things. There's only one way to fix the old things which were wrong, and that is to come to Christ who makes all things new.

But we Christians, we just put plaster on. Most of the Christian artisans are plasterers. But God will test that house.

He'll scratch that plaster off, and He'll show you and He'll show the world what you were really made of. He'll put you through the fire, and everything that was not made of gold and precious stones will burn. So

what we need to do as Christians is always put ourselves in the fire of God's holy presence.

That we'll pray and say, Lord, show me if there's any wicked way in me. That we'll draw nigh to His marvellous light. That light which doesn't just light up a tree, where we just see the outward appearance, but will stand in His holy presence, that light which reveals even the roots of the tree.

And in that way, whatever is not going to withstand that test on that day, let it rather burn now and be removed now. Dear friend, what are you building with? Are you building with that which is going to stand before God? And in fact, there's something even better than gold that we can build with. But gold is just an illustration of what we can and should build with.

In Proverbs 16 verse 16, it says how much better is it to get wisdom than gold, and to get understanding is to be chosen above silver. See, so if we want to build with gold, we need to pray for wisdom. And for understanding, if we want to build a house that will stand before God, we need wisdom, we need understanding, we need love, the love of God in our lives.

Is that what your house consists of? Or are you just a superficial Christian that's happy just building with straw and with hay, things that will burn one day? You can build with these worthless things. But there's something better. There is the option of building with gold and silver and precious stones.

But you can go out and get engaged and get married out there. But you can also choose the better way, the way these young people have chosen. We say we want to build with gold.

We want to build and live our lives in such a way that it will stand the test one day. And remember, dear friend, this house that you're building, you're not a contractor building for someone else. This house that you're building, this life you're living, it's your own house.

And the decisions you make when you build your house, you've got to live with. Are you making the right choices? Are you making quality decisions? Those choices, those decisions that will stand on that day when you're tested with fire? But many people live like fools in this world. Because they have the impression that the house they're building, they're just doing it for someone else.

Young people who do things just to keep the pastor happy. And then they take chances. Because when the minister's not there, the pastor's not there, or the parents are not there, they'll do something else.

See, they think they're building for the pastor. They think they're just trying to keep their parents happy, as if they're building for their parents. No young person, you're building your own house.

You've got to live in it. Your father doesn't need to live in it, your mother doesn't need to either. You've got to live in it.

But many people build houses that they're scared to live in themselves. They know they won't survive on that great day. So never forget, you're building your own house.

You know the story of that couple, that also young couple that got married. Uncle Elios told that story. What were they? Yannen, Sofi, Omari.

See Omari was a faithful person. And her boss wanted to do something special for her. So he told Yann, here's some money.

I'm just going to cut it short, because you probably know the story. Build a house that you and Omari can live in. Just build me a house, here's some money.

So the owner of the place, the boss, went away and Yann was left with this huge amount of money he had to build the boss a house. Now Yann was a worthless fellow. I don't know how some wives who are good and faithful can end up with some worthless husbands.

If you think you've got a worthless husband, you need to pray for him. And pray that you'll be a godly wife. That you can bring value into his life.

Even if he was worthless, that he will become something worthwhile. So Yann, this worthless fellow that he was, did like probably most people would do nowadays and says, I'm not going to spend all this money on the house. I'm going to cut corners, I'm going to take chances.

I'm going to get fake material, not the genuine article and I'm going to put the rest of the money in my pocket. And he went partying with his friends with that money and he built the house in the cheapest possible way. He had the plan which he had to build according to.

He had the engineer's specifications of how he should build it and what mixture he should use in the cement. But he thought he was clever. He said, I'm just going to weaken the cement mixture.

And so he built this house. He thought for his boss. You do it for your parents, you do it for the teacher, you do it for the pastor.

So maybe your name is Yann as well. And eventually the house was finished. And the boss returned.

He inspected the house. He probably noticed what had happened. But he didn't say much.

Then he said, Yann, you know that Maori has been so good to us and just as a thank you, I want to give this house to you and to Maori to live in. This is your house. Yann thought he was building it for the boss.

Now he had to live in it. And it soon started to show that he had taken chances and he had made wrong decisions as he was building the house. He wasn't careful how he was building.

And Yann lived in fear in this house. He knew of all the weaknesses. When the wind blew, he was waiting for the house to fall on top of them any moment.

He didn't sleep well at night. Like many people who don't build their houses well, people who don't live a good life, a holy life, they can't sleep well because their conscience troubles them. They don't have peace within.

They take chances. They make wrong decisions. They are building their own house.

Dear friend, how are you building your house? Dear young person, how are you building your house? Will your house stand? Or will it not stand the test that God will put it to? Remember, no one else is going to live in this house you're building. You've got to live in it. If you make the wrong decisions, make the wrong choices, you're going to have to live with them.

But blessed is the one who is a wise builder. And Paul speaks of himself. He says, I, as a master builder, laid a good foundation.

If you don't know how to build a proper and a good house, God gives us His plan. But He's also given us master builders, people we can go to for advice. So we have no excuse.

Be careful how you build. And remember, what you're building will be put to the test. Will your house stand when it's put to the test? Let us pray.

Lord, your word is clear. Even a small child has heard and has seen. All has been put before us.

We need to choose. We need to make decisions, and we need to make the right decisions. We've been reminded, Lord, that the house we're building, no one else is going to live in.

We ourselves have to live in it. Help us, Lord, to be wise. People who will learn from these lessons that we've been taught.

Lord, as we are taught, may we also be obedient and put into action what we have heard. That when we stand before you one day, that we won't have to try and look for excuses and say, oh Lord, we didn't know. Thank you, Lord, for your word that is clear and your word that is alive.

May it be seen in our lives, Lord, that we are living according to your living word. Lord, keep us and help us that it will be evident that we are building with gold, silver and precious stones. That quality will be evident in our lives.

Lord, please continue with us. Reveal yourself to us always. We pray for your grace, Lord Jesus.

May your grace and the love of the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and forevermore. Amen.

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