

# Everyone's Work Will Be Tried by Fire

by Carter Conlon

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of focusing on Christ as the foundation of the church and avoiding divisions that can arise from carnal focus on personalities.*

**Duration:** 52:38

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 3:1

**Topics:** "Judgment Seat Of Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by praying for the congregation to focus on God and not on any human vessel. He then references 1 Corinthians 3:1-15, where the Apostle Paul warns about building on the foundation of Christ. The speaker emphasizes that not only ministers, but everyone who influences others, must be careful how they build upon this foundation. They caution against taking glory for oneself and not redirecting the focus to Christ, as only what is hidden in Christ and has His purity will stand the testing of God's truth.

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## Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing WORLDCHALLENGE PO BOX 260 LINDALE, TEXAS 75771 or calling 903-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friend. Nothing can be built but upon that foundation and call itself the Church of Jesus Christ. And the Apostle Paul, I'm going to share this morning, gives a solemn exhortation that we're to be careful how we build on that foundation.

Not only the ministers, but everyone who ministers or has any kind of an influence over anyone else's life must be careful how we build upon that foundation. Now, I know this morning that you understand the principle that the Holy Spirit doesn't see the way men see. Men would look like Samuel and come upon the sons of David and say, surely this one must be the king.

But God doesn't see that way. He looks upon the heart. And even in a church, the Holy Spirit begins to look sometimes and He sees things that are resident in the very bowels, the very inward workings of some of the people.

And He will send a warning, that's what He was doing through the Apostle Paul, lest any of these things that we're going to hear about today should develop in any of our lives and thus spoil the work that God has called us to do in building upon that foundation. The work can be spoiled corporately as well as it can be spoiled individually. I'm going to ask you to ask the Holy Spirit this morning to give you hearing ears, each one of us in this house, that this word would have an eternal weight.

Because God is building a house here in Times Square Church. He is building a house for His honor and for His glory. And He won't share that glory with any man.

He won't share it with any woman. No person will share the glory of Christ. He alone will be glorified.

And He is looking for a people, a people that will honor Him and glorify Him, that He can manifest His presence in and through. Christ is our only foundation. The title of my message this morning is, Everyone's work will be tried by fire.

Everyone's work. 1 Corinthians chapter 3, if you'll turn there as I pray. Now Lord, we're turning to your word today.

And Jesus, I thank you today for the privilege of standing upon the foundation of what you have accomplished on Calvary. What you did in the garden tomb. What you did after you rose from the dead.

What you accomplished in the early church. Lord, we stand today on that foundation. Of the apostles, prophets, Christ Jesus being the chief cornerstone.

Lord, I ask once again for the unction and anointing of the Holy Spirit. Lord, let it not be my voice. Let it not be my thoughts.

But let it be your voice that's heard today in your thoughts. Lord, that are implanted in the hearts and minds. As you open your word.

As you give revelation of truth. You said you shall know the truth. The truth shall set you free.

Lord, set us free from all captivity of the flesh. Lord, even spiritual things that appear to have some value. But yet in your sight they're of no value whatsoever.

God, give us understanding. Give us discernment. For our own hearts and for our own lives and as a church body.

Lord, I ask none other thing. But that this church will glorify you until the day you return. And even in the midst of the fires we would be a people found.

Praising you and glorifying you. Walking in sovereign divine strength that can only come from the Holy Spirit of Almighty God. Lord, thank you Father.

I want to be as an oracle of God today. Lord, let me glorify you. I ask that the people's eyes be taken off of any vessel.

Lord, that they would look to you and listen to you and hear you. Grant to me the privilege of standing behind the cross and disappearing. That you may be seen and heard.

Lord, I thank you for this. Father, I thank you for the freedom. I thank you that truth will find its lodging place today.

In the mighty and holy name of Jesus. Amen and Amen. 1 Corinthians chapter 3 beginning at verse 1. Every one's work will be tried by fire.

And I brethren could not speak unto you as spiritual but as unto carnal. Even as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with beef.

For hitherto you were not able to bear it. And neither yet now are you able. For you are yet carnal.

For whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions. Are you not carnal and walk as men? For while one saith I am of Paul. And another I am of Apollos.

Are you not carnal? Who then is Paul? And who then is Apollos? But ministers by whom you believed. Even as the Lord gave to every man. I have planted Apollos water.

But God gave the increase. So then neither is he that plants anything. Neither he that watereth.

But God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one. And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.

For we are laborers together with God. You are God's husbandry. Ye are God's building.

According to the grace of God which is given unto me. As a wise master builder. I have laid the foundation.

And another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that that is laid.

Which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. 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. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss. But he himself shall be saved. Yet so as by fire.

Now since the time of Christ. The powers of darkness have come with a ferocious assault. Against the unity of the local church body.

The devil knows that on the day of Pentecost. There were some key factors among the early church. Factors which he must undermine and oppose today.

Lest a new generation should lay hold of the fullness of God's presence. And power as this early church did. The devil will do everything he can.

To divert, to destroy, to take away the focus of the people. To cause disunity in the body. He will even bring in things that appear to be spiritual.

To cause there to be divisions in the body. Because he knows that when the people come together with one accord. And they are gathered with one purpose.

He knows the damage that is done to the kingdom of darkness. He remembers clearly the day of Pentecost. When the Holy Ghost came like fire upon those 120 people gathered in that upper room.

And they stood and because of the purity and presence of Christ on their lives. People were gathered of all nations and kindreds. And they said, what meaneth this? When they saw the spirit of God upon these people.

He remembered the day that Peter who a fore time was full of fear. And running from what his own bravery and his own bravado. Remembers Peter standing under the unction of the Holy Ghost.

And speaking that first day of Pentecost message. That brought the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. Into the hearts of 3000 people.

Who were pricked in their heart and said, men and brethren. What must we do? What must we do? We have crucified the Lord of Glory. There are some key factors that were evident.

In this first church gathering on the day of Pentecost. Firstly they were all aware of their own weaknesses. They had an awareness that each in his or her own way.

Had failed the Lord Jesus Christ. Even the strongest among them had forsaken him in his hour of need. No one in their midst was looking to either himself or to others for strength.

Before Christ was arrested in Gethsemane. We remember Peter making that brave boast. Though others forsake you I'll not forsake you.

I'll die for you. The scripture says the other 11 likewise said the same thing. But he knew that in themselves there was no strength.

They didn't know it yet but they were about to find out. That the only source of strength they were ever going to have. Was that inward working of the spirit of Almighty God within them.

They were gathered together and they knew they were weak. Their eyes were not on flesh. No man among them dared rise up and say follow me I'll be your leader.

Because every one of them had forsaken him. They'd all fled. They were all weak and they knew they were weak.

And secondly they were all praying. Acts 1 14 says these all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. They were praying because they had been given a promise.

And their hope for the future was in God. And in God alone fulfilling this promise. And folks we would be wise to understand today that our hope for the future is not in men.

It's not in women. Our hope for the future is solely in the promises of God. He has given us exceeding great and precious promises.

And if by faith we can understand that we can't fulfill these promises in our own strength. There's no one among us strong enough to fulfill the promises of God. If we will get our eyes off of men and off of flesh.

And get our eyes on to the only one who can fulfill those promises. With hearts of faith coming before him. Saying Lord if anything is going to happen God it's going to be you.

If my life is going to change you're going to change it. If I'm going to amount to anything it's going to be because you have come upon my life. And you are breathing and moving through my life.

And you are going to cause your plan and purpose to be fulfilled through me. He had given these people a promise in Acts chapter 1 and verse 8. He said you shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you. You shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in Judea.

And in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. They knew they couldn't be witnesses. They didn't have the strength.

But they had a promise. I thank God with all my heart for the promises of God. For I know this day I am absolutely nothing in myself.

Like Paul said I am convinced that in me that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. I want to do the things of God but I don't find within my own self the ability to perform those things Paul said that I want to do. Thanks be to God though through Jesus Christ my Lord.

Through whom I am crucified unto the world and the world is crucified unto me. Christ is our power. Christ is our wisdom.

Christ is everything that we have and are. Their focus was on Christ and Christ alone. The resurrection was fresh in their minds.

He had been raised from the dead by the power of God. And the promise that He gave them was that the same power would come upon them. And make them living testimonies.

And their faith in Him, their faith in the promises of God was now their hope. They were with one accord and they were all in one place. There was no agenda in that upper room but to obey God.

Every man, every woman who was there were there because they had been told to tarry until you be endued with power from on high. There was no agenda, there was no plan. There was indeed a sense among them that they were all in this together.

Their lives were surrendered to Him and to His purposes for them. The cross was fresh, the cost was fresh of following Christ. Every man knew he needed the others that were around him but most importantly they needed God.

They needed the presence and power of God. And their lives were surrendered to Him and to His purposes. Brethren, this was the beginnings of the church of Jesus Christ.

This is the church which is built on the foundation of Christ and of Christ alone. And Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 3 and verse 11, For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now not many years later, the Apostle Paul is addressing now one of his missionary churches in Corinth.

And he's addressing this church about, among other things, like there are several things he talks about in his letters to the church in Corinth. But among other things, he's addressing the church about an issue of division that has come into them, which Paul says identifies these believers as both immature and carnal. In chapter 3, verse 1, he says, I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

Now Paul is saying there are some things that God has given me that I desire to give to you. But you can't hear them yet. He said, because there's something in you that has kept you in a state of immaturity.

Now Paul is about to speak to them about what the state is that causes their ears to be closed to the deeper things of God. He says in verse 3, he says, For you are yet carnal, for whereas there is among you envy and strife and divisions. Are you not carnal and walk as men? Now some divisions in the church of Jesus Christ are blatantly evil.

We have seen cases of divisions along the lines of race and social class and things of such nature, which have no foundation in truth, they have no foundation in God. Divisions because of unforgiveness and bitterness, because some people might be different than others. Paul, in writing to Titus, in Titus chapter 1, verses 12 and 13, says, One of themselves, he said, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

This witness is true, and Paul says to Titus, Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. Paul's writing to Titus about a division that's come because there's a prophet of sorts who's risen up and is using his office to cast down another culture, another class of people. Also the apostle James, in the book of James, talks about another division that can come into the church.

A division of class. He says, If it comes in a man in nice clothing and obviously well-to-do financially, and you say to that man, Here, have a wonderful seat, have the best seat in the house. And another man comes in, in poor clothing and in vile raiment, and you say to that man, Here, sit on the floor, sit on my footstool.

He said, in effect, if you start to give partiality to people that you believe can give back to you in a financial sense, and you start to distinguish between classes in the house of God, he said, Have you not become judges with evil thoughts? And so God, through James, takes a strong stand against all these types of division that can find a place in the house of God. Now I thank God with all of my heart that these divisions are not here in Times Square Church. If you will look around you, you will begin to see, and I hope that there's nobody here who's divided by race.

I hope that that finally has gotten out of your heart, and begin to realize that in Christ Jesus there's no color distinction, there's no class distinction, there's no distinction by gender, there's no distinction, we are all one new man in Christ Jesus. And I thank God that this is a very, very unique church body because there are over 103 different cultures represented in one church body. And we don't find, coming into this church, little pockets of people in different corners, but everybody is all mixed together, worshiping God.

And that is wonderful because it's a foretaste of what it's going to be like in heaven. An absolute foretaste. And I thank God with all my heart.

I thank God that a poor man can come into Times Square Church and sit anywhere he wants to sit. And a rich man can come in and there's no guarantees he's even going to get a seat in this place. I thank God for that with all of my heart.

But there are some other divisions that can come into the house of God. And some of these may even have an appearance of spirituality. In 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 10, Paul says it this way, Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same

judgment.

For it has been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the household of Clo, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, Now here's the division. I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.

Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? And here's what had begun to happen in this Corinthian church. Paul the Apostle had come in, and he had established this church on a solid and firm foundation, the foundation of Jesus Christ. And there were some who said, My allegiance is to Paul.

He's an apostle, he's a founder, and he's a godly man. And then Apollos now, a little later on, arises on the scene, and Apollos is a mighty teacher of the Word of God. Apollos was an orator, a powerful speaker who could dig into the Word and prove beyond any doubt that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.

And there were some who began to annex themselves, in a sense, to Apollos, and say, I follow the teacher. And another, Cephas, or Peter. Peter was a marvelous exhorter.

You'll look in the writings of Peter, and because Peter had known weakness, and he had begun to understand the strength of Christ, because he had been a broken man, Peter became a tremendous exhorter in the body of Jesus Christ. You'll find the underpinnings of the writings of Peter are the perseverance of faith through trial, and understanding the faithfulness of God. And many were ministered to by the messages of Peter, and so they said, well, we are of Cephas.

We are of Peter's disciples. And others said, we are of Christ's. Now this is twofold, because as you read the book of Corinthians, you begin to understand there were those who became a law unto themselves.

They tried to pull away from the teachings of Paul, and they said, we don't need any ruler over us. We don't need any leaders. We are of Christ, and of Christ alone.

This was an independent, it was a rebellious spirit. There are some commentators say that this is what Paul was in effect referring to. The other possibility is that there was a fourth class of people who simply said, we are of Christ.

They acknowledged the leadership. The Bible says that we are to give honor to whom honor is due. But we are not to place our confidence in men.

We are not to put our confidence in the arm of flesh. We are not to create distinctions in the body. And those, there were others perhaps who just said, we acknowledge leadership, but we have chosen to set our affections upon Christ.

Now Paul here is addressing the fact that people were beginning to focus on what others were doing, and they had begun to identify with, and to glory in men. Now this is the point that I want to make today, and I want you to listen. And I believe the Holy Spirit has put this on my heart, as a way of admonishing this church body, lest we should ever fall into the snare of the enemy.

There is an incredible danger, when any church begins to carnally focus on personalities. There is an incredible danger. Proverbs chapter 23 verse 7 says it this way, For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.

Divisions which begin as personality focus, if they're unchecked, will spread throughout the body, and begin to become part of the very corporate fabric of the church. You need to hear me, if you've ever heard me in your life, you need to hear me this morning. Divisions, I'm going to read it again, as the Holy Spirit gave me, which begin as personality focus, if unchecked, will spread throughout the body, and begin to become part of the corporate fabric of the church.

When people begin to focus on people, you begin to come into the church and say, well, I am of Paul, I'm of Apollos, I'm of Cephas, I'm of Christ. When a personality focus begins to come into the church, into the hearts of the people, because the focus has shifted from Christ, ever so subtly, and people are now beginning to focus on speakers, and on men or women that God is using for His honor and glory. Because they're focusing now on flesh, and they're not focusing on Christ, a desire to be seen will come into the body.

It will become the norm in the body, because as the body thinks, they will become. There will be a desire to be seen, get into the heart of those who are in every facet of ministry throughout the church. People will no longer be content just to disappear, and to let Christ flow through them and use them.

But as they have focused on personalities, you see, they have a wrong focus. And because they have focused on personalities, that will find a root in their heart, and in whatever ministry God gives to them, they will begin to desire also to be seen by men. Personal ambition will rise, and it will begin to flourish in the body.

And competition, rather than cooperation, will arise among many ministries of the church. As the church thinks, so it will become. Now in 1 Corinthians, again, chapter 3 and verse 5, Paul tries to redirect the focus of the church.

In chapter 3, verse 5, 1 Corinthians, Paul says, Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos? But ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. Verse 6, he says, I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, and neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.

Paul is saying to this church, we are absolutely nothing. God calls and places in the body as the Holy Spirit directs, as He wishes. He places people severally in the body.

It's not because one man is any better than another man, or one woman is any better than another woman. We are all nothing before God. We are all weak before God.

You take the Holy Spirit out of anybody's life that is being used by God, and we are absolutely the same as any other man without God in society. It is not Paul he's saying, I'm nothing of myself. It's not Apollos.

We are called by God, and we speak as the oracles of God. And one plants, and another waters. Each one of us have a different function, a different calling in the body.

Paul was an apostle. Apollos was a teacher. Peter was an exhorter.

He said, in effect, we have all a different function, but we are nothing in ourselves. It is Christ. It is Christ alone who is everything.

We can speak, and we can preach, but nothing would take root if the Holy Spirit wasn't involved in it. If God wasn't here, our words would just simply fall over the edge of the pulpit to the floor. There would be no ability even for you to hear.

There would be no growth. Because it's Christ. It's Christ alone that causes His church to grow.

And it's the church that's built on this understanding, on this foundation, that will grow, that will flourish, that will bring honor and glory to His name, because their focus will not be on men and women. Their focus will be on Him and Him alone. Hallelujah to the Lamb of God.

In verse 8, he says, Now he that plants, and he that waters are one. And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are laborers together with God.

You are God's husbandry. You are God's building. Paul is saying, folks, we're a team.

We're working together with God. We're working together with God that His purposes might be accomplished in you and through you. You are His building.

You are what God is doing. We're not what God is doing. You are what God is doing.

And we are working together with God to see Christ formed in you. To see Christ alive in you. To see you grow into maturity.

To see your heart expand and your ears and eyes be opened. That you can begin to receive the deeper things of God that can only come to those whose focus is away from flesh and on Christ and Christ alone. Without Christ, there'd be no workers in the church.

Without Christ, there'd be no wisdom. Without Christ, there'd be no power. Without Christ, there would be no eternal plan.

Just the schemes and devices of the hearts and minds of men. Paul says in verse 10, he says, According to the grace of God which is given to me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds thereon. But let every man take heed how he builds thereon.

For other foundation can no man lay than that that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Paul's saying to this church in Corinth, God has given me the wisdom to lay the foundation of this church. And I have laid the foundation, Paul says, on Jesus Christ.

That is the only foundation. And Paul says, now let every man take heed, let every man who follows take heed how he builds on that foundation. If any man build upon this foundation, verse 12, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest.

The day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire. And the fire will try every man's work of what sort it is. And Paul was saying every one of us one day are going to stand before God.

And what we have done in the name of the Lord, the purity of Jesus will touch it. It will be examined by the pureness of Christ. And everything that had flesh attached to it will burn.

It may have been magnificent in the sight of man, but if it didn't have the pureness of Christ attached to it, it will burn. And it will have been of no avail whatsoever to the kingdom of God. He says, if any man builds

on this foundation, gold.

Now, in the book of 2 Chronicles chapter 3, if you want to turn there with me just for a moment. In the Old Testament, 2 Chronicles chapter 3. Also keep a marker please in 1 Corinthians 3. If any man builds gold on this foundation. Now this chapter in the Old Testament tells us about when Solomon began to build the temple of the Lord.

In verse 4 it talks about one aspect of the building of that temple. And the porch that was in the front of the house, the length of it was according to the breadth of the house. 20 cubits and the height was 120.

And he overlaid it within with pure gold. Now I want you to just take notice of the word gold. This is the end of side 1. Gold on this foundation.

And so we're seeing the beginning of this house that Solomon is building. And it's overlaid with gold, pure gold. Can you imagine how that must have shone? And the greater house he sealed with fir tree, which he overlaid again with fine gold.

And set thereupon palm trees and chains. Verse 6, he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty. And the gold was gold of parvaim.

He overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts. And the walls thereof and the doors thereof with gold. And grave cherubims on the walls.

And he made the most holy house. The length thereof was according to the breadth of the house, 20 cubits. And the breadth thereof 20 cubits.

And he overlaid it again with fine gold. Amounting to 600 talents. And the weight of the nails was 50 shekels of gold.

And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold. And the most holy house, he made two cherubims of image work. And overlaid them with gold.

Now, Paul's saying if any man builds on this foundation of gold. If you and I would have been there and had the opportunity to walk into Solomon's temple. The presence of the gold would have been virtually overwhelming.

Gold was covering virtually everything. The glory, the brilliance of that gold. And that's what gold is known for.

It's shining, it's glory, it's brilliance. The work that God gives you to do. Or me to do.

May appear glorious. And it may be a work which is highly visible before all. There are workers in gold, in a sense, in the church of Jesus Christ today.

In effect, that means when the people come in. This is perhaps the first thing that they see. Or perhaps it occupies very much of their mind and their attention.

Somebody that God has raised. A visible work in the house of God. But this work will be tried like every other work.

Jeremiah, the prophet. The Lord was speaking to him in chapter 5 about Israel. And he talked about workers that had arisen up in Israel.

And he said they shine. In other words, the people come in and they look at these workers and they say. Oh, what a presence of God.

What an anointing. What a glory. What a glow.

But the Lord said to Jeremiah. But they overpass the deeds of the wicked. And they don't judge the needs of the fathers and the widows in their midst.

He says, shall I not visit for these things? In other words, they may shine. But there's a flaw in their work. And folks, even if God raises you.

He could raise anybody in this building. And uses your life in a very visible, a highly visible way. Make sure that you are building your ministry on that one solid foundation.

If you're going to ask for anything. Ask for the heart of John the Baptist. That Christ may appear on the scene.

And that you may decrease and he may increase within your life. Be prepared to disappear that Christ may appear. It's a dangerous thing to be given a public ministry.

For there are many men and women that have risen up. Especially in the western world in the last say 2, 3, 4, 5 decades. They've risen up.

And God has used them in a marvelous way. But they have taken the glory upon themselves. The shift was subtle.

They began to let the people look to them. And didn't redirect their focus to Christ. Or they may have given a token finger in the air type thing.

When the people would applaud them. But in their heart they began to wallow in the glory. That belongs to God and God alone.

God says in effect if I use you. If I give you a public ministry. Remember that only what's hidden in me.

Only what has the purity of Christ attached to it will stand. When I put the testing of my truth to it one day. When you stand before my throne.

Paul says if any man builds silver on this foundation. Psalm chapter 12 verse 6 said the words of the Lord are pure words. As silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times.

If you're a teacher. If you teach others. Be careful that you teach Christ.

I speak to every teacher in this body. From Sunday school teachers to kindergarten teachers. To nursery workers.

To those with new believers. To everyone around you. If you teach be sure to teach Christ.

And don't draw to yourself. Folks those who come in who are new to Christ. They will be impressed by the knowledge.

Perhaps that God alone has given you. Of the scriptures. And sad to say many teachers fall into a trap.

And so do their students fall. Because they will allow the people to be drawn to them. And to their knowledge.

If you teach. Teach Christ. Don't draw to yourself.

You see what happens when. If we allow people to be drawn to us. Something gets hold of the heart.

And when Jesus came. He spoke to those who were teachers. The Pharisees and the scribes.

In Matthew 23. This is the issue of heart that gets into the people. He said you love the uppermost rooms at feasts.

And the chief seats in the synagogues. And greetings in the markets. In other words you love public recognition.

And to be called of men. Rabbi. Rabbi.

Or teacher. Teacher. If there's anybody here today.

And that's getting in your heart. You need to run to this altar. You need to ask God get that out of my heart.

Get out of my heart the desire to be seen. That's the beginning of spiritual death. That's the beginning of the shutting of the ears.

The closing of the eyes. That becoming again a babe in Christ. As Paul speaks about to the Corinthians.

He says I want to speak to you. Meet. But you can't hear it.

Because this thing is still in your heart. If anyone builds precious stones. First Peter chapter 2 verse 5. The apostle Peter says.

You also as lively stones. Are build up a spiritual house. A holy priesthood.

To offer up spiritual sacrifices. Acceptable to God. By Jesus Christ.

Those who have influence in the lives of young and new believers. Especially. These precious stones that we gather out of the mountains.

And bring to be formed in the house of God. Be careful to build them on Christ. And don't let them be drawn to you.

Don't. Don't fall into the trap of thinking. You have to become their spiritual source.

That you have to become their life. Point them to the only one. Point them to the prayer closet.

You know why? When people get into trouble. They get on the phone. And they phone everybody.

Because they've never been. They've never somehow understood the principle of the prayer closet. They've never come to the knowledge.

They're still yet carnal. They're still babes. That's why they call flesh looking for help.

Instead of going into the prayer closet. And calling on the one. Who's able to raise them from the dead.

Who's able to give them every promise. That has ever been made in this book to them. Hallelujah Lamb of God.

If any man builds wood. On this foundation. Now when Solomon's temple was being constructed.

In the book of 1 Kings chapter 6. The scripture says. The cedar of the house. Within was carved with knobs and open flowers.

And all was cedar. And there was no stone seen. And he carved all the walls of the house.

Round about with carved figures of cherubim. And palm trees and open flowers. Within and without.

God was building a temple. And part of the building of that temple. Was to call skilled craftsmen in.

That he had given giftings to. And they were able to carve. Marvelous carvings.

With palm trees and flowers. And cherubims. And they carved these things out of wood.

Inside of the temple. The house of God. They were skilled and gifted workers.

Remember. Those who operate in the gifts of the spirit. These are given.

These gifts of God. Are given to glorify Christ. And to edify the body.

If God gives you a gift. Do not use this gift to draw attention to yourself. If we were to go farther.

Into the book of Corinthians. We see a chapter talking about the giftings. Of the spirit.

And oft times. I've inquired of the Lord. Because I see in the Bible.

No reason why the giftings that are listed there. Should not be in full operation. In the church of Jesus Christ today.

There are gifts of healing. There are workings of miracles. There are discerning of spirits.

There are tongues. Interpretations of tongues. There are words of knowledge.

Words of wisdom. And I felt as I was praying. That the Lord spoke to my heart very very clearly.

That in times past. He had given these gifts unto men and women. In the body.

But because the focus of many of the people. Was still on flesh. He's had to withhold.

Many of these things that he wants to do. In his church. Because the moment somebody.

In this body. Let's say it was you. That God gave you the ability to lay hands.

On the sick and they would all recover. They would be healed. There is a gift of healing.

That's one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Can you honestly say in your heart today. I would not allow people to be drawn to me.

I would not be raised up in pride. Folks over the years. God has given these gifts to many.

But sad to say by and large. They have created cult like followings. Around themselves.

They've taken the gifts of God. And used it for financial gain. And made a circus out of the things of God.

And brought disgrace to the name of Christ. And we wonder today. Oh Lord why? Why are your giftings not working in full operation like they did? And I believe that God is saying.

If I can find a people. Who are built on a solid foundation. If I can find a people who are dead to themselves.

And who are not looking to flesh. If I can find a man. If I can find some women.

If I can find a people. Who will not draw to themselves. I will work in power.

In the midst of my church. And the former glory will be. The latter glory will be greater than the former.

He's looking again to a people. Western society is a man focused society. We elect officials to office.

Right straight out of jail in some cases. Proven immoral. Proven corrupt.

And they get elected to office because of their personality. An entire society that's become man focused. God forbid.

That that should be found in the house of Jesus Christ. In the temple of almighty God. I believe that the Lord wants to work.

In a way that we've never dreamt before. But for God to work that way in our midst. Our eyes have got to be off of men.

They've got to be off of women. They've got to be off of personality. They've got to be off of flesh.

Our lives have got to be built on the one only true foundation. That is Jesus Christ. And Christ alone.

If any man builds hay on this foundation. 1 Kings 5 verse 15 says, Solomon had three score and ten thousand that bear burdens and four score thousand hewers in the mountains. These are the workers.

If any man builds hay on this. These are the people who labor. Are not seen in many respects.

But they labor in the house of God. And for the kingdom of God. Their labor is not seen.

But God is saying, I see your labor. And everything you do, do it for me. And do it for me alone.

Don't do it for the praise nor the admiration of men. Pastor David and I and others come every Sunday. And we preach at this pulpit.

And it's full of fingerprints. And we spit all over it. And we make a mess of it by the time Sunday is done.

And somebody in this church. Because every time I come back to it. It's polished and it's clean.  
Somebody comes and cleans this pulpit. I don't know who it is. And I hope I never know.  
But God knows who you are. You come into the sanctuary. I'm sure when nobody is here.  
Everything is empty. The big lights are off. Nothing can be seen.  
And you're all alone. You walk in with your cloth. And you clean it.  
And you do it as unto the Lord. I tell you. You have a reward in heaven if you will do it as unto God.  
If any man builds stubble. On this foundation. Now stubble speaks to my heart.  
Of the little things that men fail to notice. The little works. Everybody runs in and everybody is looking for the gold.  
And they're looking for the silver. The precious stones. But there are works of stubble in the house of God.  
Little things. That people fail to notice. But Jesus never fails to notice them.  
Men were coming into the temple. And casting in of a tremendous abundance into the treasury. And in walks a little widow.  
She just has a few coins. And she puts it into the treasury. And walks out.  
Most people would not have even noticed her. Just a stubble work in a sense. To men in the house of God.  
And she walks in and walks out. But Jesus took notice of what she had done. And he said to the men that were gathered around him.  
She has done more. Than everybody else. Has done in putting this into the treasury.  
Because she put everything she had into it. And folks that's a key. It's whatever God gives us to do.  
We don't do it for men. We get our focus off of flesh. We don't do it for recognition.  
We do it for him. And we do it for him alone. Trusting that he will notice the little things.  
Men may never notice. The pastor may pass you by. For the rest of your life in this church.  
And never notice what you do. But Jesus Christ notices. And in 1 Corinthians chapter 3. He says.  
Every man's work shall be made manifest. The day shall declare it. It shall be revealed by fire.  
And the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide. Which he has built thereon.  
He shall receive a reward. If it abides. Now here's a wonderful truth.  
If you can hear it today. In Matthew chapter 19 verse 30. Just listen to these words.

Jesus said. But many that are first shall be last. And the last shall be first.

There are many who had highly visible positions. In the church of Jesus Christ. All throughout the land.

And throughout history. But if it was not pure. Before God.

One day it will be touched. With the fire of God. The purity of Christ will touch it.

And there will be so little left. Some will have nothing left. But yet the scripture says.

They will be saved. Yet as by fire. And yet here comes this double worker.

Didn't have much to do. That was of any significance to man. But did it faithfully.

And did it as unto the Lord. Eyes away from flesh. But just did it as unto God.

And the Lord looks down. And shall not. The judge of all the earth do right.

And says well done. Well done. You see folks.

It's not how much we do. It's that we do what God has asked us to do. And we do it for him.

And we do it for him alone. And he says well done. And I can see half of the church.

Looking at some of the grandmothers. And the little old ladies that nobody else notices. And the little old men.

What did he do? I never noticed him doing anything. And the Lord looks down with this great big smile. And says well done.

You will rule five cities with me. And yet somebody who may have had a high position. But allowed the focus of men to be drawn to them.

Everything will be burnt. It will all be gone. And the Lord will say.

You're saved. Yet as by fire. If we should cry for anything here in Times Square Church.

We should ask God to test our works today in his presence. Firstly was what we do. Was it birthed in Christ? Is it something that God spoke to our heart? Or something that we wanted to do? Can we honestly say it's not my will.

But it's the will of God. For my life to do this. That he's given me to do.

Was it birthed in Christ? Was it dedicated to Christ? You remember Hannah coming into the temple and praying. Oh God. Give me something.

Birth something within my life. And Lord I will bring it back to you. I will dedicate it to your honor and to your glory.

Have you dedicated your ministry. Whatever it is. Have you dedicated it to Christ.

For his honor and his glory alone. If you truly said Lord. Just don't let people look at me.

Turn their eyes from me. And what I do. May it be just for you.

And for you alone. Was the chief focus of your ministry. The honor of Christ.

Strictly to bring honor to him. And not to yourself. John 5.44 is speaking to the Pharisees.

Who were blind. And he said to them. How can you believe.

Which receive honor one of another. And seek not the honor that comes from God only. In other words.

He was saying here you are. And what you do. You are doing it for the praise of men.

Because your eyes are focused on men. And he said because of this. How can you believe.

How can you believe because of this thing. That has come into your heart. Did our ministry turn the affections of others.

Towards Christ. Paul says. In Colossians 3.1 If you be risen with Christ.

Seek those things which are above. Where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above.

And not on things of the earth. And lastly. Did it cause others to trust.

And to worship him. And him alone. Acts chapter 3. Peter and John.

Had just raised up the lame man. And they were walking into the temple. And the lame man was clinging on to them.

The people turned. And began to look at them. As if they were something special and holy.

And when Peter saw it. He answered the people. And said you men of Israel.

Why marvel you at this. Or why do you look so earnestly on us. As though by our own power or holiness.

We had made this man to walk. You see that is why God could use them. Because they were deferring from themselves.

Verse 13. Acts 3. He says the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob. The God of our fathers.

Has glorified his son Jesus. Why do you look on us. Peter is saying we are weak.

We have nothing in ourselves to offer you. We can only bring you to the one who can heal you. And who can raise you up.

Look away from us. You see that in the book of Acts later on. When the apostle Paul lands in a certain place.

On his missionary journey. And the people want to worship him. And want to declare him to be a God.

And he runs out and says no. Don't do this thing. We are turning you from this thing.

And turning your eyes and your focus. To the one true and the living God. The cry of my heart is Lord.

Purify my heart. Purify my focus. Purify the ministry that you have given to me.

For one day I know I will stand before you. And only that which is pure is going to remain. I am not interested in dead works.

And I don't care for the praise of man. Only that Christ would be honored and glorified. That he would be lifted up.

There are some here today. That with truth. You would have to say Lord.

I have focused on men. I know that I have heard from God. I have been sick for two weeks.

But God has been speaking to me. There are some in this body. That I have begun to let that.

In your conversation. It has given you away. And the Holy Spirit knows.

And in your conversations after it is all over. There are some here saying I am of Paul. Some I am of Apollos.

No I am of Cephas. I am of Christ. And Paul says because of these things.

If you allow this to take root in your heart. You cannot receive the meat. That I want to give to you.

It cannot be given to those. Whose focus is on men. It can only be given to those.

Whose focus is on Christ. Folks. Here in Times Square Church.

Pastor David and I are doing everything in our power. To turn your focus away from the ministers. And to turn your focus to Christ.

That is why we don't announce. And we won't be announcing speakers anymore. We don't want you to come.

Because of personalities. We want you to come because of Jesus Christ. And of him alone.

You will have to trust. That the Holy Spirit speaks to us. And we will not allow men or women in this pulpit.

Who will not bring you a word from God. But if you've come into the house. And you sit down in your seat.

And all of a sudden you're wondering who's going to be speaking. And all of a sudden. Somebody's introduced that you know.

Or somebody's introduced that you don't know. And they come and stand in this pulpit. And there's a sinking in your heart.

And you say oh I wish it would have been Apollos. You see what you're saying is I am of Apollos. Your focus is shifted.

God can take the least esteemed. In this church body. And set him or her in this pulpit.

And give you a blazing word right from his throne. We don't look to men or women. We don't look to flesh.

We look to Christ. We look to the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. Who touches and gives that living word.

And God does not want your focus on men or women. Our focus is to be on Christ. And I challenge you today.

If this thing has gotten in your heart. If you have begun in your conversation. To say oh I wish he would speak.

Or I wish she would speak. I wish this person was here. I wish that person was here.

Could I challenge you today. To come and acknowledge that before God and repent. There's no other way I can put it.

Repent. And say Lord this is wrong. Because in doing this thing.

I am going to cut myself off from the revelation. That you want to give me. As a member of your church.

I will allow carnality. To be sown within my life. And my focus.

Even the ministry God that you give me. Is going to become self centered. Because I have a wrong perspective.

And a wrong focus. I've focused on men. And subsequently I've begun.

To desire people's attention. To be focused on me. See that's what happens.

When you focus on men. As surely as he thinketh in his heart. So is he.

As surely as you begin to focus on men. You will eventually desire that men's focus be upon you. The only thing I can say.

That you could pray today. If that applies to your life. Is God drive this from my heart.

And let only the purity of Jesus be found. In all that I am. In everything that I do.

The Lord is building a church. That church is being built. On one foundation.

Jesus Christ. Amen. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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