

1 Corinthians 3 (Part 2): 10-23 • The People of Christ

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Life Bible Ministry

Alright, open your Bibles to 1 Corinthians, chapter 3. We're going to be reading beginning at verse 10. I'm reading from the ESV. Follow along as I read.

1 Corinthians 3:10-23 (ESV)

According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:10-23 (ESV)

Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— (your Bible may say, stubble) each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

1 Corinthians 3:10-23 (ESV)

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

1 Corinthians 3:10-23 (ESV)

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile." So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile." So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's." (ESV)

Let's pray.

Holy Spirit, we come to You, Lord of all. Lord of all wisdom, Lord of all truth. We invite You to do what You do so well. Reveal Jesus. Reveal Christ to our hearts. Open our eyes to see, open our ears to hear. Open us, Lord God, to hear Your Word. We look to you in Jesus name, we pray, amen.

When we began 1 Corinthians chapter 3, we talked about what it means for you to become a child of God. In other words, to become, all the implications of what it means to be a child of God. We talked about that last week. If you missed that message, I would encourage you to go back on our website and check it out because it's pretty powerful. It all centers around how Paul was saying to the Corinthians, you guys are acting like mere human beings, you're not just mere human beings, you are children of God. And that is the implication, that we're different.

Well, we dealt with what we become when we receive Christ as our Savior individually last week. Now this week, we're going to talk about what we become as a collective unit of Christ as we become the redeemed Children of God. And what we're talking about here is we're talking about us. All right.

And Paul redeemed or reveals rather what we become in verse 16. Look with me again in your Bible. We'll read it again. It says, *"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?"* You might say, well, of course I knew that, pastor Paul. It says elsewhere that, Paul says, do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit? (1 Corinthians 6:19)

It's not what Paul's talking about exactly right here, because the you in this verse is plural, right? It's not just you, individually you, it's you, collectively us, or if you're from the South, remember, it's y'all, right? Paul could literally be saying here, do y'all not know that y'all... that almost sounds sacrilegious, doesn't it? A little bit. That y'all are God's temple. I'm having fun. And the God Spirit dwells in y'all. It's literally what he's saying because the you is plural, so it's us.

Can I get you to just step back a little bit from thinking about this passage in an individual me oriented sense. We dealt with that last week. You are a child of God, but what are we? We, Paul says, are the temple of the Lord. Now, I don't know how you feel about being called a building, but it's symbolic and we are not just a building.

Notice he says that we are *"God's temple."* Now think about the implications of that. The whole idea, the picture of God's temple, of course, begins in the Old Testament. And God, first of all, had the children of Israel build a, basically put together a tent. Right. Which they called The Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant was in The Tabernacle. And the Jews would go to The Tabernacle to meet with God because there in The Tabernacle in the Ark of the Covenant was God's presence.

In fact only the high priest could go into the inner place where the Ark of the Covenant was, the rest of the Jews couldn't go, they couldn't go there. They couldn't meet that in that face to face way with God. But if you even wanted to even get close to His presence, you had to go to The Tabernacle.

Well, the tabernacle then eventually got taken down and they built a temple, originally built by Solomon. Remember, David put the plans together in his mind and laid them all out, and put together a lot of the things that they built it with, but Solomon actually did the building. Glorious place, wonderful place, but once again the Ark of the Covenant was placed inside, into the Holy of

Holies. But then you had the Holy Place outside of that, and then there's the outer court and well; the inner and the outer court.

Anyway, you would go to the temple to experience the presence of God. You had to go somewhere to do that. That's Old Covenant. Guess what New Covenant is? You are the temple. We together are the temple.

We don't go anywhere now to experience the presence of God because the presence of God is in the midst of us. As we come together, the Bible says, He is enthroned on the praises of His people. (Psalm 22:3) And as we the body of Christ come together, as we join ourselves together as the redeemed of God, the very presence of God is here. And that's one of the reasons you guys that we don't make a big deal of buildings. They did in the Old Covenant, it was the temple.

Well, if you ever, any of you guys raised in a in church situations where they talked about, this is the house of God. And maybe your parents even told you, don't run, don't run in the house of God. It's not the house of God, it's a building. This is just a building. And I rather like that it looks like an onion shed on the outside because it's just a building, right.

What is the house of God? You are the house of God. We are the house of God and now we come together and we find that the presence of God is among us as we gather. This morning as we worship the Lord, and exalt Him, and sing about His faithfulness, and His goodness, God's presence is here. But God's presence is wherever God's people gather, okay. There's nothing special about this place. It's you who are special, so I think that's pretty cool. Peter actually talks about this process of spiritual building. Put this one, 1 Peter 2:4 and 5.

1 Peter 2:4-5 (ESV)

As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

As you come to him, a living stone (he's talking about Jesus there) rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, (look what he says about you, he says,) you yourselves (and that is plural) like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, (once again, just called you and I a building, but again, it's symbolic and we are the building of the Lord. We are the habitation if you will, of the presence of God) to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

It's a pretty crazy sort of an idea, but I'm not talking about just Calvary Chapel. I'm not talking about any other individual church. I'm talking about the body of Christ. Do you know there's no divisions in the body of Christ in a true spiritual sense?

We meet in different buildings but we are the body of Christ. There's just the kingdom of God. And when we go and stand before the Lord, there's not going to be a little place over there for the Baptists, and a little place over there for those, that group, and this one, and then, oh, hey, there's the Calvary Chapel area. There's none of that!

We are the kingdom of God, together, and the presence of God is in the midst of the people of God. The beautiful symbolism of who we are collectively as the body of Christ.

Now it would be wonderful if all of that was complete and beyond danger, wouldn't it? It'd be wonderful if we could just say, we are the temple of the Lord, the very presence of God is among us, and we're good. Well, it is good, but it is not without its threats and without its challenges.

And Paul talks in this passage about some of the threats, some of the benefits, and some of the threats that might come our way. And he's going to do it to speak of 3 different kinds of things that can be added onto the foundation of the body of Christ. Let me just, I'll put these up for you taking notes. He's going to talk here, and those are the respective verses that they cover.

<p>v14 - Work that survives v15 - Work that is useless v17 - Work that destroys</p>

In **verse 14**, he's going to talk about, **Work that survives**. In **verse 15**, **Work that is useless**. And in **verse 17**, he's going to talk about, **Work that destroys**, and we'll get into that.

But if you look with me in verse 10, there's something first that he wants to say that is very important. He says, *"According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation,..."*

You might think Paul's bragging a little bit there, but notice he begins by saying, *"According to the grace God of God given me."* And that means, you know what grace is? It's a free gift that has been given that we didn't earn so Paul's not bragging. He's saying, God did this. But according to that grace, he says, *"I laid*

a foundation.” “*I laid a foundation.*” In other words, Paul came to Corinth and he laid a foundation. And he goes on to say, but somebody “...*else (now) is building upon it.*” Because Paul had to go away. He went down the road to start the next church, go to the next area, tell the next group about the Lord, and he's gone. And somebody else now is building on that foundation.

And then he says in verse 11, and this is a very important statement, listen to this. “*For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*” Now, remember, Paul's talking about the church. He's saying that the church, and he's talking about the true church, not the fake church, because there are fake ones. He says the true church only has one foundation. It can only have one foundation, and that is Jesus Christ.

You might say, well, what is it if it doesn't have the foundation of Jesus? I don't know. It's not the church though. It's something else. And there are those kinds of things that, that exist. There are organizations out there that look very much like Christian churches, and they even sound a little bit like Christian churches. And they may have some of the trappings of what we might have here in Christian churches, but they're not. And the reason we know they're not is because they don't have the foundation.

The foundation, which is Jesus Christ. Pastor Paul, what do you mean by a foundation of Jesus? I'm talking about where the church believes everything that the Bible says about Jesus. Who He is, what He came to do, without playing games.

I'm talking about a church that exists for the purpose of exalting Jesus and I'm talking about a church that lives to obey Jesus. That's a church where the foundation is Christ centered. It's all on Him.

Now, I'm no builder and I have great respect for those who are, but I do know this much, that if the foundation is bad, your building is bad. If the foundation is good, your building is good. And that's why it's important for you to know what a foundation that any particular church has.

Because Paul says if the foundation isn't Christ centric, or centered on Jesus, then it's not the real church, because you can't lay any foundation other than Christ. If you do, it's not the church.

So how do you find out if the church has a foundation? Well, you start by reading the Statement of Faith. Probably a good thing. I don't know how many of you have ever requested a Statement of Faith when you've gone to a new

church, or sought out the Statement of Faith. And then you look to see that the Statement of Faith is lived out, that it was really, truly believed. Because it's possible for a church to have a Statement of Faith that they don't really believe.

I was raised in that a situation. I was raised in a church that had a beautiful Statement of Faith. We read it every Sunday. It was printed on the back cover of the hymnal. Remember hymnals? And we got up every week and we opened it up and we read it. And most of us who had been there for a while, and I was in my grade school years during that time, I had it memorized. I'd stand up, 10, 11, 12 years old. Let's stand now and read the Statement of Faith. And we'd all get up and start doing it. And I just was like, we believe, we believe. And it was, we believe in God the Father. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son. And it was grand.

I didn't know what I was saying until much, much later on when I started really getting serious about the Bible. And then I went back and I thought about that Statement of Faith and I thought, that was really good. I mean, it was really orthodox from the standpoint that it was biblically sound. That's what the word, orthodox means. It doesn't mean I was raised in an orthodox, like, Greek orthodox church or something. The word, orthodox is simply sound, biblically sound.

I took great pride in the fact that, wow, I was raised in a church that had a very sound Statement of Faith, but then I thought back, and I thought, I don't think any of those people believed it. I'm serious, I don't think it..., might have been a few, but I did not see it in practice and, I did not learn, really, in those early years of my life, I was not challenged to receive Christ as my Savior. It wasn't until, it was much later on that I heard the Gospel. And then I was in my 20s before I started really embracing and walking it out.

Just because you see a Statement of Faith, you see a good foundation, at least in the Statement of Faith, doesn't mean that it's being walked out in a practical sort of a way. But those are some important elements to say, okay, is the foundation here Jesus? Because if it isn't, it's not the church. We know how the real church is defined. Now let's look at these 3 different kinds of things again. Can we put it back up on the screen here?

<p>v14 - Work that survives v15 - Work that is useless v17 - Work that destroys</p>
--

The Work that survives, the Work that is useless, and the Work that destroys.

All right, these are those 3 things. First and the second work begins in verse 12, where Paul says, “...*if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—*” Let's start with the gold, silver, precious stones. Those are obviously good things.

He goes on to verse 13 to say, “*each one's work will become manifest, (or will be made known) for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.*” All right now, so stay with me here.

Paul says to the Corinthians, I came to Corinth and, like a skilled builder, I laid the foundation, which is Jesus. Remember what he came and told them? Nothing except Christ and Him crucified. He just, he laid that foundation. It's all about Jesus.

He said, now, but other people are building on it. Some of them are using good materials, like this gold, silver, and precious stones. But he says, it doesn't matter what they use to build with, it'll all get tested one day. What day? He says, “*the Day.*” The word, Day, is capitalized in the ESV and they the translators did that to try to show you that the emphasis on, it means, the Day of the Lord.

It means when Christ, the whole Day of the Lord encompasses the coming of the Lord, the judgment seats, the recompense, the battle. It's all caught up in the same phrase, the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord will reveal it. How? By fire. Why by fire? Hey, that's just God's presence.

Do you ever, do you know that? God's presence is fire. The Bible says, our God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 12:29) That's why Moses wasn't allowed to see the face of the Lord. He's a consuming fire. He wanted to, he desperately said, Lord, I, let me see your face. He said, you can't. You can't, you can't see my face and live. (Exodus 33:20) What did He mean by that?

I'm a consuming fire, Mo, and I'd torch you as soon as I allowed you to see into My face. All you can live to see is the trailing edge of My glory. Regardless our God is a consuming fire, and His fire races through and tests the work of men to see what they're really made of.

And some will stick around as it says in verse 14, look with me there. “*If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, (and that means it survives the fire, then) he (He's talking about the builder there) will receive a reward.*” There is a reward for those who build on the foundation with good

stuff that lasts. This is talking about the things that aren't going to pass away, right.

Now Paul doesn't mention what they are. Did you notice that? I mean, I don't see anybody building with silver, gold, and precious stones around here again, symbolic. It's symbolic of things that last or can stand the flame. Now gold, gold can last, so can silver. It will melt. Okay. But fire only serves to purify it further. These things will remain. They are not perishable, right? They're imperishable.

What's he talking about? Well, he doesn't specify. Yeah, but we have a pretty good guess. We can speculate. He's talking about the things that I'm sure that are mentioned in like the Great Commission which, which is given to us in Matthew chapter 28.

Matthew 28:19-20a (ESV)

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to (do what? to) observe all that I have commanded you.

These are things that are going to last. The evangelism, and teaching, and the making of disciples. These are things that we're supposed to be doing as we build upon the foundation of Jesus as the church.

And then there's that lovely passage in Acts which speaks of how the early church,

Acts 2:42 (ESV)

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching (which is what you and I have codified in the New Testament, in other words, they were devoted to the Word of God, they were devoted to) *and the fellowship*, (which is the koinonia, the connectedness of the body of Christ. They were devoted) *to the breaking of bread* (which could speak of communion, but in a more of an eastern sort of a way, breaking of bread spoke of intimacy. Bringing somebody into your home

and sharing a common meal was a very intimate thing, and breaking of bread speaks of people coming together and sharing in a very intimate fashion. It is an extension of, koinonia, and then also) *and the prayers*.

They devoted, when the church is a praying church, when they're a connected church, when they are devoted to the Word of God as a church, those are building on the foundation with things that are going to remain, right? They're going to last, alright. That's what Paul's talking about here when he speaks of these beneficial materials: imperishable, lasting. And then those who build with them, he says, will get a reward. All right.

Now we have the next type of building material, look at verse 15 in your Bible. says, *"If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire."*

Well, what's going to burn up? Well, the wood, hay and stubble, the wood, hay and straw. That's the stuff that's going to burn. What is it? Well, he doesn't specify. He's basically just saying, that which is consumable, that which is not lasting, it's just, it's temporal. He's not necessarily talking about bad things. He's just talking about useless things.

And there are a lot of things that we'll take the beautiful foundation of Christ, and we'll build useless things on them. We've done it. Believe me, and we've spent a lot of time and effort building useless things, and they're just going to burn.

Now, it's interesting here, he speaks of the man who does these things, and he says that this person is, himself is going to be saved, but only as someone who is escaping the flames. Isn't that an interesting picture? Why is he saved? Well, because we're not saved according to our works. We're saved according to grace, right?

We're saved according to Jesus Christ. I can be a born again Christian building upon the foundation of Jesus with things that are useless. That doesn't affect my salvation. It probably isn't going to affect your salvation at all either. It's just that it's just not eternal. It's not lasting.

You might say, well, what are some of the things you're talking about? Well, all I can talk about, I suppose, are some of the things I've experienced in my lifetime. I got to tell you, I think the health and prosperity doctrine is going to burn, and I'll tell you why. Because it's just for today. It's all about today. It's all about what you can get today. I mean, the God wants you healthy doctrine, it's

basically all about health for the body that God told you ahead of time was a tent.

And the whole getting you rich doctrine is all about gaining wealth that you can't take with you anyway. It's all about today, it's all about, it's just the big bless me club. I don't doubt that it attracts a crowd, but it's temporal.

Nobody's probably going to lose their salvation over it, they're not, certainly not going to grow. They're not going to learn to be intimate with Jesus. And so that that's one of them.

Another, and please don't send me hate mail, but I think an overemphasis from the pulpit on politics is something else that's going to burn. Not because I don't think politics is important, I do. And I believe that every Christian should vote. I believe we should be involved. But I've had people ask me from time to time, pastor Paul, why don't you spend more time talking about politics, and how we should vote, and lead us, and direct us, and in that sort of a way?

Well, it's not eternal. It's not the eternal Word of God. It's not the stuff that you're going to be able to take with you. It's just it's temporary. It's for today.

Now, I believe we should pray for our leaders. I believe we should pray for our government according to the Word of God. I believe we should be on our knees. But spending time here talking about it, is that really going to build you up in the Lord? I mean, are you going to walk out of a place that spent the whole time talking to you about politics, just going, oh Jesus, I love You so much. It's not about Jesus.

And again, you may disagree, and that's fine. When you pastor your own church, forget it. I shouldn't say that, but I'm going to stick to the Word, because it's eternal. And it's what will build you up in the faith and that sort of thing.

Finally, we come to the third work that can come our way. Look at verse 16. *"Do you not know that you are God's temple (again) and that God's Spirit dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple."* Stop there.

This last aspect that we look at about the things that can come and be placed upon the foundation of Christ, these are placed there with an eye toward destroying the church. I want you to notice very carefully here in these verses the difference of how God deals with the perpetrator of the last 2 works.

The useless work, how does God deal with him? Well, he himself is saved but he has nothing to show for his work because it all burned up. And he's literally escaping through the flames of what he built because it's on fire, and it can't last, it's perishable.

But notice this, the perpetrator of this work, the one who comes to build upon the foundation of Christ with things that ultimately destroy the body. Look what it says here. *"If anyone (verse 17) destroys God's temple, God will destroy him."* This person who sets out to destroy the church is them self-destroyed.

I have no doubt that Paul is talking here about false teachers. They were huge back in his day. Paul would come into a church, he'd established the foundation of Jesus Christ in the church, and then these yo yos would come along and start telling people other things. But it wasn't just useless stuff that Paul was all that concerned about. I mean, he was concerned about that too, but it was the destructive stuff.

You can't read the Book of Galatians without seeing Paul's passion for building upon the foundation with things that are good and are going to build up and strengthen people rather than destroy. And Paul says to the Galatians, do you remember how harsh he is when he speaks of those who came after him that were building on the foundation with another gospel?

He says, listen, if somebody comes to you and preaches another gospel, even if it's me, he says, even if it's an angel from heaven, let him be eternally condemned, accursed. If he speaks any word of a gospel that is other than the Gospel I brought to you originally, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:8) That's destroyed, you guys. Let him be destroyed.

That's what Paul is saying here now in 1 Corinthians 3. That the one who comes to perpetrate a destructive heresy and teaching that is false, let him be destroyed. I shudder. I got to be honest with you. I shudder for these groups that today are referred to as cults but who started off from a Christian foundation. Who took a foundation of that was very Christ centric and built destructive elements on top of it, literally denying who Jesus really is.

Calling God the Father something other than who He is or always has been from eternity. I shudder for the men who perpetrated those heresies those teachings because God says that He will destroy them because they sought to destroy the church. Look what Peter says. 2 Peter chapter 2.

2 Peter 2:1 (NIV84)

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

But there were also false prophets among the people, (back in the Old Testament but) just as there will be false teachers (he says) among you. They will secretly introduce (look at this) destructive heresies, even (to the point of) denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

You guys know what I'm talking about when I talk about groups that have risen up and denied the sovereign Lord who bought them. They exist right here in this town. And I shudder for the individuals who perpetrated that and who continue to perpetrate those unbiblical and destructive heresies, as Peter calls them. Because God takes pretty personally His church. You are His church.

Paul ends the chapter with these words. Look at verse 21. “*So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, (he says) ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all (these things) are yours,*” Stop there for just a moment.

Paul's going back now to what caused him to even say all these things. It was those divisions. Remember those popularity divisions that the Corinthians were having? I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos, I'm of Peter, which is Cephas. They were rallying around these individual leaders and saying, I belong to the Paul group, or I belong to the Peter group. Well, we're the smart group. We belong to the Apollos group. He's the brainiac of the group and we follow him.

And Paul says, you guys are rallying around these people like you belong to them. He says, you don't get it. They belong to you. Paul, Peter, Apollos, they belong to you. They're yours. As the body of Christ, they're yours, they're all yours. You don't have to take up sides and say, I belong to this or I belong to, it all belongs to you. And then he goes on to talk about some of these other things that belong to us.

Verse 22, again, “*whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas (look at this) or the world...*” The world belongs to you. Why? Because it belongs to Jesus, and you are joint heirs with Him. You might say, well, that sounds a little strange. Doesn't the Bible say that whoever loves the world, the love of God can't be in

him? Yeah, he's not telling us to love the world. He's just saying it belongs to you. Don't get weirded out or creeped out.

He's saying all these things belong to you as the bride of Christ. We do. We get, oh we get weird sometimes. And we start ascribing things as if they are evil.

I was telling in first service that a gal came up to a pastor friend of mine one time and just asked him, What do you think of owls? What do you think of owls? He's like, he didn't know what she was getting at. She's like, they're birds, I think. What? She's like, I think they're evil. And of course, somehow she'd been influenced by some group that adopted the owl, I suppose, as its own figurative sense of evil, as if owls themselves were evil.

The Bible says the earth is the Lord's and everything in it and those things don't become evil in and of themselves. Men are evil. We can take things and use them for evil but the earth is the Lord's. And let's not get weirded out about things. He says, the world is yours.

Look at the next one. He says, life is yours, life is yours. Wow. I mean, just think about what that means. And of course I know that he's talking about way more than just life on this earth. There's eternal life, which is also, it's yours. It belongs to you now. Do you get that? It belongs to you.

But the next one, if that doesn't weird you out, the next one will. Death. Death belongs to you. I'm like, you can have it back, I don't want it. No. What he's saying here is it can't hurt you anymore. It can't win a victory over your life anymore.

All death can do for you and I who are in Christ, all it can do is usher us into God's presence. It's all it can do. It can't separate you from God, not even a little. In fact, it will be used in the end to separate you from your sinful nature and then to bring you into the glorious presence of God. It belongs to you now, it's just it's a doorway. It's your doorway. Grave, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting? (1 Corinthians 15:55)

Look the next the present. He says the present is yours. Oh Man, how we muck up the present just because we're dwelling on the past. We're just, we're so good at thinking and living in the past. I love how God's Word says in Isaiah, not to dwell on the past. (Isaiah 43:18) It's a beautiful passage in Isaiah. Don't dwell upon the past.

God says to the people of Israel and to us as well, he says, I'm doing new things. And then he asks this question, do you not perceive it? (Isaiah 43:19) The fact of the matter is, if you're living in the past, you can't. You can't perceive it because you're always living back here. You're not perceiving the new things that God is doing right here, right now. The present is yours.

And not only that, but he says, the future is yours, that which is to come. God told us what the future is going to hold. We have the book right here and it tells us how everything is going to play out. We know how it's going to end. We've read the last chapter, no surprises. The future is ours, belongs to us in Christ.

And then by saying, as he does in the end here, “²³ *and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.*” He's just reminding us that we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. It's been said before that all things serve the one who serves Christ. I like that saying. All things serve the one who serves Christ.

You can hear Paul saying here in these last verses of this chapter, stop thinking like mere humans who are scrambling around like rats looking for the last crumb through Christ you already own all things They're all yours need get the right perspective. Keep your eyes on Jesus and let's work together on building his church with materials that last.