



Living by GIVING STUDY GUIDE



Week 5: “Let’s Build”

1. READ

Pastor Watley's Selected Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3 : 9 – 16 New Revised Standard Version

⁹ For we are God’s servants, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building.

¹⁰ According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— ¹³ the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. ¹⁴ If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If the work is burned up, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire.

¹⁶ Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?

Further Reading: Psalm 118 : 22 – 28 New King James Version (NIV)

²² The stone *which* the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.

²³ This was the Lord’s doing;
It *is* marvelous in our eyes.

²⁴ This *is* the day the Lord has made;
We will rejoice and be glad in it.

²⁵ Save now, I pray, O Lord;
O Lord, I pray, send now prosperity.

²⁶ Blessed *is* he who comes in the name of the Lord!
We have blessed you from the house of the Lord.

²⁷ God *is* the Lord,
And He has given us light;
Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.

²⁸ You *are* my God, and I will praise You;
You *are* my God, I will exalt You.

Ephesians 2 : 19 – 22 New King James Version (NIV)

¹⁹ Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being





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fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

2. REFLECT

[Click the image to go to our YouTube page for more content!]



As we enter our last week of Pastor Watley's sermon series entitled "Living by Giving," we have explored many of the biblical principles that teach us how to be good stewards of our resources. On our journey, we've discovered the way God calls us to invest our time, talent, and resources into the Kingdom of God. This is particularly important for us as a church family during this season of *Kingdom Building*. During this exciting time of planning, preparing, and production, it is truly a blessing to commemorate our Kingdom Builders Halftime Celebration Sunday!

Today we celebrate the "Half-way" milestone on our journey towards our new church building. Although we have faced some unprecedented challenges along the way, God has proven to be faithful and has continued to exceed our expectations! However, this is not the first time that God has shown his faithfulness and favor in this area. As Pastor Watley mentioned, another prolific church in history faced similar challenges. New Hope Baptist Church in Newark, New Jersey found themselves in a difficult position as they were completing construction on their



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church building in 1918. During that time, the world was also facing a devastating pandemic – the Spanish Flu. And yet, God covered them, blessed them, and allowed them to finish their building even in those trying times. New Hope Baptist Church went on to become a staple in the community, and the home church of Whitney Houston!

Family this reminds us that nothing can stand in the way of God's purpose and plan. As Pastor Watley mentioned, "God doesn't start what he won't finish." Our halftime celebration is a testament to the fact that God is allowing us to move toward the completion of the work He started in our church. However, in our lesson for this week entitled "Let's Build," Pastor Watley also declares that God isn't the only one on the construction team. God has called us to co-create and build *with* Him. In fact, one of the most consistent themes of scripture is that the Kingdom of God entails God co-creating with God's people.

This theme is clearly outlined in our scripture for this week (1 Corinthians 3:9-16). In this passage, we find Paul using both an agricultural and architectural analogy to describe our call to collaborate with God. Verse nine states, "For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building." Paul's words provide us with a few important points to remember. For one, when Paul says, "we are God's servants," he is underscoring the fact that we are not equal to God. Instead of trying to follow our own blueprint, we must acknowledge the hierarchy and superiority of God. The **hierarchy** of God recognizes that God is functionally in charge, while the **superiority** of God recognizes God's existential transcendence. Both of these concepts suggest that God is not only in charge, but God is in control!

Once we acknowledge the hierarchy and superiority of God, then we can better understand the idea of co-creating with God. The verse continues, "For we are God's servants, **working together...**" Although we may not be on God's level, God calls us to participate alongside Him in the building of the Kingdom. In addition, this principle teaches us how we are called to work with each other. Regardless of our varying levels of power, influence, or wealth, we are all called to *work together* and participate alongside one another to fulfill God's plans. As we build, we must be mindful to keep Christ as our foundation. Verse 11 declares, "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ."

As we learned in the lesson for this week, at the time of Paul's writing, the stones used in constructing an edifice usually fell into one of three categories. There was the Capstone, Keystone and the Cornerstone. **The Capstone** was the covering for the building. It provided the protection and shelter from the elements. **The Keystone** held the building together and provided it with structural integrity. And **the Cornerstone** was the vital piece that everything else in the building was built off of. It served as the foundational piece, that provided the necessary support for the rest of the building. In the same way, Jesus is our *capstone* that covers us and our *keystone* that holds it all together. However, as we continue to embark on our building journey, we must rely on Jesus as our *cornerstone* that provides us with the foundation we need!





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3. RESPOND

Introspective Questions

- What are you co-creating with God?
- Is Christ your cornerstone? How have you aligned your life with Christ?

Discussion Questions

- How effective is Paul's analogy of the building to describe us co-creating with God?
- Why do you think Paul asks the following question in verse 16: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" How would you answer it?

