1 Corinthians Chapter 3 Verses 12 – 15

* Can wood, hay and straw make it through fire! **Of course it can!** Ever seen *petrified wood?* Wood that is so old…been around so long, that it literally turns into rock (somehow)! Even small seemingly insignificant things given or done for God…***in consistency over time***…man that’s faith. *Long obedience in the same direction.* Well what about hay and straw? **Combine them!** Put them together, work with them a bit…I believe Paul is talking about *strategic teaming* in the Lord!! Because when you put these together and put in the sun, they will **brick up!** And then they will pass the fire’s test.
* So what fire is Paul talking about? Well on the practical level, **life!** ***Criticism, seemingly failing…hard ministry…hard obedience…temptation***….all of those things **burn.** But interestingly, *spiritual level*, Revelation Chapter 1 Verses 12 – 14…the eyes of the Lord man…when the Lord looks into the heart of your life, the heart of ***why*** you are ministering…will you pass? What’s step 1? Build on nothing but the Person and gospel of Jesus Christ! Do nothing but simply serve Jesus Christ…!

1 Corinthians Chapter 3 Verse 16

* ***Did you hear that!*** That’s almost **absurd!** Christianity is absolutely *alone* in this! This promise is completely unique to the followers of Jesus Christ! This is incredible what is said! To a church that is ***carnal, living in the flesh***…Paul says to them that, *“You are the temple of God! The Spirit of God dwells in you!!”* **That’s radical grace!** Over the top **absurd** to the religious of this world! If we are able to get this then there is no way to measure, limit or define what is ***your worth and your potential, no matter the level of bone heard you are, you were or you are being!***
* He says this with an air of sarcasm…we would say, *“Come on, man!”* Or, *“Have you forgotten the obvious!?”* And the obvious is simply this which is easily forgotten by the Christian…***that as a Christian, your life, your very existence is God’s home.*** The home of Jesus Christ! That makes some of us snicker and some of us go *“Wow!”* Let me ask you, is your home completely perfect today? No repairs to be made at all? Nothing at all that needs a good DEEP clean! Right? None of us, right!? But where do you ***want*** to go? Work or home? Home is home man…and although it’s constantly a work in process…its home isn’t it!? You think you’re not worthy, you’re not! That’s grace, man! That’s love! And the fact that your heart is now home for God on this earth is a beautiful truth and promise given to us through the cross of Christ!!
* We focus so much on the outward and what are the *conditions, situations, optics* and so on of what is going on on the outside but you can’t get a more radical or greater truth in all the world, that although the storm rages out here, **God is working peace**…***in here!*** ***Under the New Covenant, you are the temple, the holy dwelling place of the Spirit of God!*** I was thinking about this. It’s like the most *powerfully possible perfect* engine in an old beater…me…with really nice rims! HA!! And slowly that engine in some ***mysterious way*** is perfecting that old beater. That is exactly what God is doing in your life and in your heart…working His way from the inside out!
* Think about this! The Spirit of God is within you! Can you imagine!! This is why I cannot understand Christians that aren’t active in their faith. Blows me away!! It’s like the **kid in class that always knows the answer.** The teacher asking any question and that hand is always up…sometimes waving!!! *“Call on me!!”* Always has the answer but what do we do…we beat him up! HA!! Even the teacher gets tired of him! But the answers are ALWAYS RIGHT!! That’s the Spirit of God in us!! Wanting to be picked! Always has the right answer but for some reason we call on someone else! *Anger, what’s your answer today? Emotional rationale, what’s your answer today!? Lust, what’s your answer today?* All the while God is showing you the sometimes hard and narrow path, but the path to righteousness! At church? NO! In your own heart of hearts where God through Jesus has **taken a seat!**
* The thought of this 2,000 years ago must have been **SO** strange!! The people would go to the temple to meet with God. To find God. To speak to God. To give to God. ***The exact opposite is our condition with God.*** You don’t come to church to be a saint, you are a saint! You don’t come here to be in church, you **are** the church! ***The Bible says the heavens cannot contain Him and yet He has decided to allow the individual believer to receive and become the temple of the living God!*** The Bible says that God does not dwell in buildings made with hands…that means ***you must be so much more than an object.*** If we really believed that…boy how would we treat each other! The cruelty expressed to one another…you’re coming against Christ Himself!
* Now here is some stark reality. ***God does not dwell in every human being.*** God dwells in those that have received Jesus and that’s it. But that is why your spiritual family, you can have a closer relationship with your spiritual family then you can with your biological family. Why? The Spirit of God is within you.

1 Corinthians Chapter 3 Verse 17

* Pretty stark words from Paul but they are *entirely practical*. The word used for ***temple*** here is ***naos*** which refers to the Inner Sanctuary of the Temple. This was where the *divine activity* took place. Our lives, even our bodies, if we are submitted to God should become **centers of divine activity!** ***Styles, habits and attitudes that glorify and point to the One true God!*** The Spirit of God dwells in you, right? Isn’t that just *reasonable* then? Or have you said *“sit down”* so many times that you’re heart is hard? Or have you bought the lie that your wood, hay and stubble are no good? Reject that lie and serve Jesus with what you’ve got…see what He will do with it!!
* Give your body to the world, or to some man that isn’t your husband or to some woman that isn’t your wife…give your styles and habits to serving money or the world and not God, give your attitude to the influence of the demons who are constantly trying to make you ineffective and dull so that you ***reach no one and harm everyone***…and the **weight of the Word of God** ***will be upon your life.*** The word for *destroy* is most often translated *corrupt.* *Defiled.* What God has made pure and intends to be sound, through your free will you indeed ***can*** corrupt…and then you chug along on reduced power and sometimes, **none at all.** *(How did the conductor get so good at his job? Training! HA! How do you find a missing train? Follow the tracks! YES!!!)*
* Acts 7:49…this is an **entire picture** of salvation. We cannot build God a house. We can’t do it, we can’t earn it…***God Himself will have to build and just give it to me!*** Which He did in the *person and death and resurrection and salvation* that comes *through and by and from* **alone, Jesus Christ!** This is the return to innocence. The undoing of all that has been done. Where did Adam and Eve go to meet with God? There was no temple at the dawn of time. Wherever they went, they met with God…they interfaced with God one-on-one.

1 Corinthians Chapter 3 Verses 18 – 23

* **Of course the Corinthians thought themselves wise!** This is what they were known for…Paul is saying, *“Is there any among you that will peel away from this world to seek the Lord?”* That is most certainly a question for you and for me as well. Are we ready to renounce all humanism…the *clockwork* of this human reality…and search for God? When you do, you will find that the human rationality of this world and even how the human brain naturally reasons things out is **foolish and futile** compared to the ways of God.
* So no need to exalt men or woman or a man or a woman…no need…because the measure of the Spirit of God that we give them credit for is available to **every single** human being on earth. ***Can you dig it!?*** They’re not the temple of God…YOU’RE the temple of God…All are yours? Whose? Yours! Where? **In Christ**…waiting for you. All are yours…this is the promise of God…***the gift of God through the cross of Christ***…and yet, you are Christ’s…***this is the responsibility of man***…of you and me…***to become His and in that step in to all that God has for us!***