

## Living Without Regret (1 Cor 3:9-15)

This letter was written to Christians, who were already God's building!

1. The foundation is Jesus Christ, and no other. There is no other way to become God's children, but through Jesus Christ.
2. Every truly born again believer builds on that foundation their own building, which is their own lives. The foundation of salvation in Jesus Christ is the gift of God and purely the grace of God. We did not earn our salvation, but received it freely by faith. But how we build our lives upon that foundation is up to us.
3. There are different types of materials people use to build their lives on that foundation:
  - a. [Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and straw] – i.e. 6 different kinds of materials are described, divided into 2 different categories, 3 in each category.
  - b. One category is found easily and in abundance. The other is not. To find the 2<sup>nd</sup> category of material, usually you have to dig deep to excavate them from earth and in small quantity. In essence, it takes hard work to get to them. It is not even going to be very visible if you put them together – i.e. Not easily visible among the pile of straws.
  - c. What separates them is the test of fire. The fire represents God's judgement = God's evaluation of our life on earth.
4. At the end of our lives when we stand before the presence of God, the fire of God will go through your entire life and look through and evaluate every choice you've made, every priorities of your heart and the course of life you took under the times of pressure, and what motivated you to live the way you did.
  - a. John's preview of resurrected Jesus in Rev 1:17 (Jesus' eyes like a flame of fire; and when I saw Him I fell at His feet as a dead man.)
  - b. All of your life in totality will be stripped bare before the fiery eyes of Jesus and everything will come to light for what it truly is (= underlying nature).
  - c. Manifest = made to appear as to what they truly are on the inside. A lot of lives are covered up or painted over, and the outside does not look like what is on the inside. On that day there will be no such masks. All of the false pretence and glitters will instantly go up in smoke the second Jesus' eyes are laid upon you. He will not just look at you, but He will look through you completely. Nobody and nothing can fool the fiery eyes of the Son of God.
  - d. On that day, a lot of superstars with fake gold covers will be exposed and ashamed (gold plated tungsten?). At the same time, there will be many hidden true lovers of Jesus who will shine brightly in the presence of God on that day.
  - e. As the fire goes through you, all of your 'words', 'works' and 'hidden motives' will be separated into 2 categories: 'good' or 'bad' (2 Cor 5:9-11). There is no 3<sup>rd</sup> category. The same fire that burns up wood, hay, and straw, will purify gold, silver and precious stones. It will be glorious!
5. Not a judgement of condemnation to hell, but of a reward unto eternity – if you truly

are a child of God who has repented from sin and received salvation by faith in Jesus.

- a. There will be those who rejoice as their life and works prove to be eternally valuable in the sight of God. 'To the praise of the glory of His grace!'
  - b. There will be those who are saved by the skin of their teeth, but the vast majority of their life's efforts and achievement go up in a smoke in one second. Nothing left & nothing to show for. Their souls are saved by grace, but nothing to salvage from how they lived their lives before God. God can say you have obtained mercy, but God cannot say: *"Well done good and faithful servant. You have lived your life wisely. You have done the will of God and your life has glorified Me."*
  - c. We need to remember that "Well done" from the Lord will not be said to every Christian on the last day. Whether it can be said of us or not depends on the way we live our lives today.
  - d. Prayer is to live a life worthy of God's calling upon my life (Eph 4:1).
6. 'Suffer' & 'Loss' (to some who are saved) - There will be a profound sense of 'regret' on that day. *'...but only as escaping through the fire.'* (NIV)
- a. We will stand before the glorious Jesus, the altogether beautiful & wonderful Lord who laid down His precious life and shed His blood for you & me, and everything within us would want to say, "Jesus, I have loved you with all my heart", but many will not be able to say it, because they didn't live their lives that way. (Our life of love is the highest gift we can give to Him on that day).
  - b. Some Christians, all the precious time they have been given in this life have been wasted and squandered by following their own petty desires and ambitions. [talents, resources and time lost eternally] – blood of Jesus Christ can erase the past, but it will not rewrite our future or the past.
  - c. Matthew 25 – This life is like a dream from which you awake in eternity. *"As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness."* (Ps 17:15)  
In comparison to eternity, this life is so short & fleeting. We all get one shot at life to get it right. To live our lives wisely before God without regret. C.f. (Ps. 90:12).
  - d. There is nothing more tragic than Christians living their life in aimlessness. One of the greatest blessings – clear objective in life → main action plans.
7. On that day when we stand before Jesus, *nobody will have regrets over how relatively ungifted we were, or how little we were given in this life.* Furthermore *nobody will be boasting before the Lord on how much we achieved in this life.*
- a. It will be over an issue of 'faithfulness' to the Lord over what I have been given.
  - b. Have I loved you Jesus with all my heart, all the days of my life? – Will I be able to say, "Jesus, you have been the magnificent obsession of my life, the single focus of longing and desire of my heart, all the days of my life."
  - c. I want to be true to my Jesus and His precious word, because I know I am coming home to be with Jesus – 'man of peace' = He knows his life is *'accepted by God'*.