

## SPECIAL DEVOTIONAL

### THE OTHER SIDE OF PAUL'S THEOLOGY; JUSTIFICATION BY WORKS

*"...as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it.*

*But let each one take heed how he builds on it.*

*For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

*Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,  
each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it,*

*because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.*

*If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.*

*If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

**(1 Corinthians 3:10-17, NKJV)**

From the above Scriptures, Apostle Paul teaches us that a test will come upon the "house" (the life) we build. He took the example of an engineer (a master builder) that had laid the foundation that couldn't be replaced by any other foundation. In **Matthew 7:24-27**, Jesus explains that there are two kinds of test that a person must face in life.

#### TEST UPON THE FOUNDATION

The test also applies to those who listen and do what God teaches, namely those who build their houses on the rock. Rock and sand are actually made of the same thing. Sand comes from divided rock. Sand no longer has weight, mass, and cohesion.

In human, it is the "integrity" that will give weight, mass, and "*cohering*" what we say and what we do. If we only listened to the words of the Lord Jesus and didn't put the words into practice, our lives would be like sand; which has no cohesion. On the other hand, if we listened to the words of the Lord Jesus and put them into practice, we would be like a rock, we would have mass, weight and cohesion.

#### TEST UPON THE BUILDING

There are 6 basic materials that we must take heed in building our life, namely:

##### 1. Gold, silver and precious stones

These items are located underground, hidden and must be dug for their scarcity. Like the parables of the hidden treasure and the precious pearls in **Matthew 13**; in order to get it, we have to search for it. The gold and silver will increase in value as they go through refining process. A gold expert will say that the last thing to be lifted in the process of smelting gold to be 24 carat gold is silver. So in order to be something very valuable, we must go through processes. Precious stones are refined with certain

pressures; and as result, they are used to adorn the ephod of the high priest who ministers in the tabernacle. The precious stones speak of the spiritual leadership qualities that make a person worthy to serve in the house of the Lord.

## **2. Wood, Hay and Straw**

These three items are far easier to get since they are located above the ground. These three items have values; there are some very expensive woods out there. But no matter how expensive the wood is, it will vanish when it goes through fire, same as hay and straw. It speaks of the deeds of a person that seem valuable and useful, and yet they are not enough to produce characters that endure within that person.

## **THREE THINGS THAT ARE TESTED ON THE LIFE WE BUILD**

### **1. Motivation**

God will test our motivation. Sometimes, the Lord allows us to experience rejection or to not receive the due appreciation or gratitude. We may go through a long period of waiting that we do not see the immediate result or outcome of the works we have done. Our first love to God alone will enable us to overcome any difficulties and cause our works to be gold in the sight of God.

### **2. Quality**

Quality speaks of the degree of excellence of something. If a person has his first love for God and his heart is burning with desire to serve the Lord, it will be easier for him to do something that is high in quality, because he is doing everything as his devotion to the Lord. The quality of his work will be proven by his careful attention to the commandments of God.

### **3. Methods**

If a person desires to have the best quality in his work, he will surely strive to pay attention to the process of the work, not to the end result alone. In **2 Samuel 6:8**, King David was trying to return the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, but the way they carried the Ark of the Covenant was displeasing to the Lord, so the Lord punished a man named Uzzah that put out his hand to the Ark of the Covenant.

The apostle Paul also taught the doctrine of justification by faith and continued it by teaching the doctrine of justification by works because our deeds are the clear evidence of our faith. Works and deeds reveal the quality of faith of every believer. May our faith produce works that will endure so that we will receive commendations on the day that Christ reveals Himself. **(1 Peter 1:7)**. Amen. (AL)