

THE WEEK OF
August 31st, 2009



Building
1 Corinthians 3:11-15

"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..."

I Corinthians 3:12-13a

Works. A word that has been related to no small controversy throughout church history. "What saves us?", Christians debate. And the answer to this question has been boiled down to one of two answers: Faith or Works. Of course, as with any profound and eternal question, the answer isn't really that simple. In the case of salvation, the bible teaches a soteriology that is not monolithic. In other words, salvation has more than one facet. It's kind of a past, present and future trichotomy. We were saved, we are being saved and we will be saved. The first is justification, the second is sanctification and the third is glorification. We have been saved from the penalty of sin (justification), we are being saved from the power of sin (sanctification) and we will be saved from the presence of sin (glorification). In 1 Corinthians 3, the verses that we are focusing on this week, we find Paul describing the reality of these three aspects of salvation. He says, "no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." First of all, justification is only possible because of the finished work of Christ on the cross. It's the only foundation that can be laid. A person must be born again. Without new birth we remain dead in our sin and the new life cannot even begin to be built. Then Paul moves on to the second aspect, "if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear...". Once a person gives their life to Christ, thus laying the proper foundation, they then begin to build upon that with their works. But not all works are created equal; and only those that make it through the "fire" will endure to eternity. Then Paul clarifies something very important, "If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." The foundation of Christ is secure, our justification is secure. But between the time of our new birth and our physical death, there is a works-dependent phase of building. And only those works which are of eternal worth will not be lost when we enter heaven; saved as through fire and finally glorified. So take some time to consider the works of your hands and make sure they are of the type that will last unto reward.

Read the Proverb and the section of Psalm 119 that corresponds with the calendar day *example:*
If it's the 1st day of the month, read Proverbs 1 and Psalm 119:1-8 (Aleph)

This week we consider Hell and the amazing provision God has made for redemption from it.

Mon: The Foundation: "...no other foundation can anyone lay..." I Corinthians 3:11

Tue: The Building: "...if anyone builds upon this foundation with..." I Corinthians 3:12

Wed: The Fire: "...the fire will test each one's work..." I Corinthians 3:13

Thu: The Reward: "...he will receive a reward..." I Corinthians 3:14

Fri: The Security: "...he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved..." I Corinthians 3:15

Discussion Questions for Bible Café:

1. Try to find parallel passages for each day's reading that further develop what Paul is speaking of. What did Jesus have to say about our works and sanctification/justification?

2. What are examples of works that will endure and reap a reward? Back up your findings with Scripture.

Prayer Requests of your Bible Café brothers (on back):