***His Foundation; and, our Building
RO175-02***

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We are studying Romans 14:1-12. Our subject is "The Spirit of Toleration, and this is segment number ten.

As Mrs. Danish typed my notes up for this message today, she was doing some final typing. She said, "Are you going to preach an important message like this when there will be a potentially small attendance?" We are. The Word of God continues, and this is an enormously important subject. And those who are absent are going to be the poorer for it, for whatever problem areas they had in not being able to fight against the weather. But you will have to pass the word along. This is a tremendously important area for the individual believer, and it is odd that we hit a bad Sunday for something that every person in this congregation needs to hear repeatedly, and with great impact.

No one, as you know, becomes a spiritually born-again person by his own desire and choice. Unsaved people, by nature, do not seek God for salvation. We learned that early on in Romans 3:10-11, where Paul says, "As it is written, 'There is none righteous: no, not one. There is none that understands. There's none that seeks after God. The natural unsaved person doesn't have the foggiest notion about how to go to heaven, and he cares even less. Any ideas that he may have on the subject are totally wrong.

1 Corinthians 1:18, furthermore, says, "For the preaching of the cross is to then that perish foolishness. But unto us who are saved, it is the power of God." So, if we do meet an unbeliever, and we explain the gospel to him, his natural response is: "That's dumb." And if he does not have a strong reaction, he just plain doesn't care. You may explain to him how important it is to be related to Jesus Christ, and to be born-again, and he'll say, "That's nice." But on his own, he has no interest in it. The human wisdom of the unbeliever actually leads him away from any true path into genuine salvation. When he thinks about this on his own, he always comes up with the wrong answer.

**The Gospel Message**

Paul indicated that to us in 1 Corinthians 1:21, where he says, "For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world, by wisdom (by human viewpoint wisdom) knew not God. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." By natural thinking processes, people do not come up with the right answer about how to go to heaven. But God, by the simple practice that the world considers foolish, of witnessing and explaining the gospel, has provided a means by which people can escape eternity in the lake of fire.

However, God the Holy Spirit Himself must sovereignly reach out to a lost sinner to give him that understanding of the gospel – the gospel of the grace of God. Then the Holy Spirit has to bring this informed lost person under personal conviction of his own moral guilt before God, and of his personal need for absolute righteousness. Then the unbeliever began to think seriously about his condition before God. Once he has heard the gospel, and he understands the issue, and then God the Holy Spirit burdens him with the conviction that he's in deep trouble before a living Holy God, then he starts thinking about this seriously.

**The Conviction of the Holy Spirit**

This convicting work of the Holy Spirit was explained by Jesus in John 16:7-11, where the Lord says, "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away. For if I do not go away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when He (that is, the Holy Spirit) is come, He will reprove the world of three things. He will bring it under conviction for sin; for righteousness; and, for judgment: for sin because they have not believed in Me. You are in a lost condition. Not to believe in Jesus Christ leaves you in the consequences of your moral guilt.

Verse 10: "Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and you see Me no more." God does have absolute righteousness to deliver. The resurrection of Christ enabled Him to return to God the Father, which proved that everything He claimed as the Savior of the world was indeed true.

In verse 11: "Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. The prince of this world of Satan. He has been judged. He is now powerless. He does not control you anymore in terms of taking you into hell – only if you choose to let him take you.

John 15:19 also says, "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. But because you are not of the world, because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore, the world hates you." So, here again, we have this stress upon God the Holy Spirit, choosing a person to understand the gospel, and then moving his will to want to accept that gospel message. The Holy Spirit has to move the informed and convicted unbeliever to believe the gospel, and then to trust in Christ alone for salvation.

1 Peter 1:2 indicates this concept, when Peter says, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ unto you, and peace be multiplied." You are in salvation because you have been elected by the Trinity.

Now, having come into the Christian life as the result of God deciding to take you as an individual out of the mass of humanity that is marching off into the lake of fire, God then has a divine purpose, and that's what Paul is talking about. God has a divine purpose for those elected for salvation, and that is what Paul is talking about in Romans 14. That divine purpose is that those who have been brought by this supernatural selection into eternal life should now bear the fruit of specific, divine good works in serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 15:16 says, "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. And whatever you shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may give it to you." God the Father is prepared to supply you with everything that you ask of Him, so that you may produce the divine good works that He has laid out for your life. He has not called you to produce divine good works in the spiritual, angelic conflict without providing you with the means to do it.

Notice John 15:8. Jesus says, "I am the vine. You are the branches. He that abides in me (that means remains in temporal fellowship), and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit. For without Me you can do nothing.

John 15:8 says, "In this is My Father glorified: that you bear much fruit. So shall you be My disciples." So, the Lord Jesus Christ made it very clear that God's purpose in saving you was not so that you would become a fat cat, enjoying life, and luxury, and prosperity, and all the things that interest you, but that He has a purpose of divine good works service.

Titus 2:14 puts it this way: "Who gave Himself for us (referring to Jesus Christ), that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people of his own, zealous of good works." Where are those Christians today – zealous (fanatics) for good works.

Titus 3:8: "This is a faithful saying. And these things I will, that you affirm constantly – that they who have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."

Then we have that dramatic statement in Ephesians 2:10, which says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained, that we should walk in them." Not only are we called to a life of divine good works, but to specific divine good works that you, and you alone, are equipped and qualified to do in the body of Christ.

Here in Romans 14:12, the Holy Spirit declares through the apostle Paul that every one of us shall give an account of ourselves to God for the life that we have lived. And someday, we will do this when we appear in heaven before the Lord Jesus Christ, to have our life and our works evaluated, whether they be beneficial or worthless in God's view. The Christian who lived by the principles of Bible doctrine, and produced divine good works through the Holy Spirit will be rewarded. The Christian, who lived by human viewpoint ideals, and pursued human good works, will suffer the loss of the rewards which he could have earned.

**Works vs. Salvation**

The judgment of the Christian' life and works by Jesus Christ, of course, does not deal with the issue of salvation. That issue is based on faith in Jesus Christ. It is not based upon our works. When we are talking about producing good works, this has to do with what you do after you have been chosen by God for eternal life. You may consult Ephesians 2:8-9, which tell you that salvation is by grace. You may consult John 3:36, which tells you that those who have trusted in Christ are born-again. Those who have not are under the wrath of God. You may consult Romans 8:1, which tells you that once a person is in the body of Christ, through trust in Christ as Savior, there is no condemnation for him whatsoever.

Now the details of the information about the Christian's examination for the life that he has lived, and the works that he has performed, is to be found in 1 Corinthians 3:10-11, which speak about the foundation of the Christian's life. I hope you have brought your Bibles with you so that you may follow these verses. This is indeed a supremely important part of the Word of God to every believer.

**The Wise Master Builder**

In 1 Corinthians 3:10, the apostle Paul says, "According to the grace of God, which is given unto me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds upon it. But let every man take heed how he builds upon it." Paul here indicates that he is in the ministry of the Living God on the basis of the grace of God which was given to him. This was specifically the grace which was given to the apostle Paul at the point when he was called to missionary service to proclaim the gospel of salvation. This was placed upon the apostle Paul by God Himself. It was not something which Paul chose to do.

The word "given" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's the Greek word "didomi." This is in the passive voice. The apostle Paul himself was not the one who decided to go to perform the particular unique ministry to the gentiles. I want you to understand very clearly today, that when we talk about serving God with divine good works, we are not talking about you sitting around, and looking around, and saying, "I wonder what needs to be done where I could be helpful, and useful, and so on." What you are interested in is what God has ordained for you to be helpful and useful in. There are many things that need to be done in God's work that you're not equipped by spiritual gifts to do. And if you do have the spiritual gifts, you may not be called to do that particular work. The apostle Paul was given a grace from God in the form of a Christian ministry – a missionary service. Paul did not just choose it on his own.

Notice Galatians 9:15-16: "But the Lord said unto him, 'Go your way.'" He is speaking now to Ananias. Paul, who has now been brought down on the Damascus road, and Ananias is to go to minister to him, and Ananias fears him because he knows what a terrible opponent of Christians this Paul is. But the Lord says unto him: "Go your way, for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before the gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for My Namesake." The apostle Paul was clearly chosen for a distinct ministry to the gentile world.

In Galatians 1:15-16, the apostle Paul says, "But when it pleased God, Who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the gentiles. Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Paul had the unique experience of being called by God (by the grace of God), and being given a specific ministry, as all of us do. And then Paul had the even greater privilege of not having to be taught by the other apostles. But he had a private class of instruction with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself out in the Arabian Desert for three whole years. That's when he was inculcated with all the depths of the distinction between Israel and the church, and the great truths that have to deal with the church age.

The apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 3:10, is expressing his great gratitude to God for his gracious call to that distinctive ministry. Paul says, "According to the grace of God, which is given unto me as a wise master builder." The word "master builder" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's the Greek word "architekton." "Architekton" is where we get our English word "architect," and it refers to a person who is supervising the construction of a building. It is indeed the work of an architect. And Paul is an architect on something here, and he is now referring to the foundation upon which he is an architect. He is erecting some kind of a structure. And what he is talking about here is that he, as a wise, divine viewpoint architect, has laid a foundation.

**He has Laid a Foundation**

The word "foundation" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's the Greek word "themelios." "Themelios" is what Paul, as a spiritual architect, is laying down, first of all, in the lives of people. And that foundation, he indicates, is the grace of God bringing salvation through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ Himself is the foundation which is placed in the life of a human being. A good building always has to be built upon a suitable foundation. Paul did the work of an evangelist in proclaiming the gospel of the grace of God as the source of this spiritual foundation in a person's life. Until a human being has Jesus Christ indwelling him as the basis for his life, that person is zilch – nothing. Once you have the foundation of Jesus Christ, you now can become a significant human being. Without having Jesus Christ as the foundation of your life, you are not a significant human being. You may be famous; you may be rich; and, you may be powerful, but you are not a significant human being. You are a shallow, sorry, cheap, pathetic creature. You see them; and, I see them. We see them in operation all around us in this world. There is no foundation without Jesus Christ upon which to build a significant life.

So, Paul says, "As the result of the grace of God, which called me into the missionary ministry, particularly to the gentile world, I, as a divine viewpoint architect, have been laying foundations in the lives of people for their spiritual development, and that foundation is Jesus Christ Himself. And it is true that another builds upon this foundation. I put the foundation down, but that's all I do. I don't put up the building. I give some guidelines for that, but I don't put up the superstructure."

He says, "Another builds upon it." The word "builds" is this Greek word "epoikodomeo." The first part of this word, "ep," comes from the preposition "epi" ("upon"). The rest of the word, "oikodomeo," means "to build." So, the word means "to build upon," indicating some kind of a structure being put on this foundation. Paul, by the grace of God, has been given the divine viewpoint wisdom on how to build a spiritual foundation in a person's life. He can tell you the gospel. He can tell you how to be saved. And at the moment of your salvation, Christ comes to dwell in you. So, the Lord says, "You in Me; and, I in you." God the Holy Spirit baptizes you. You're in Christ. He places you into Christ permanently for your salvation. Christ Himself comes and dwells in you. So, the Lord, in John 14:20, says, "You in Me; and, I in you." He is the foundation.

**Take Heed**

However, Paul says, "Another builds upon it." Then he says, "That being the case, let every man (which means 'everyone') take heed." The word "take heed" is the Greek word "blepo," which is the word meaning "to see." So, what Paul is saying is: "You better pay attention. Watch out what you build upon the foundation of Jesus Christ in your life." This is in the present tense: "Watch out all the time." It is active voice. You yourself have to watch out. Don't expect your preacher, or your Sunday school teacher, or someone else to watch out that you keep straight in what you do in your spiritual life. And it's imperative. It's a command: "Take heed (be conscious) of what in the world you're doing with your life every moment, with every breath you're taking. You have a foundation, and that foundation is Jesus Christ, and you are building something in your life. Take heed. Let every Christian person watch out how (in what way) he builds upon it."

Most Christians, I'm sorry to say, are really not too concerned about what they are doing with their lives. They are constantly distracted from the real values in life. They are constantly exhausted from the real values of life. They are often enormous hearers of the Word, with very little application in practice. But here is something that the apostle Paul says that you should be very conscious of. You have heard the gospel. You have built the foundation, which is Jesus Christ. Now what are you going to build on that foundation?

This is a very serious warning from God the Holy Spirit, to each of us – to be concerned with what we are building upon our Christian lives that are to be built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. And Paul is going to go on to explain why that is so important.

To be sure you understand, in verse 11, he identifies the foundation. And he says, "For other foundation can no one." No one is able to build any other foundation than that which is laid, which Paul himself, by his ministry, has laid in the Christian's life, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

So, there he makes it very clear that the foundation on which a Christian builds his life is Jesus Christ. Now that right away he should tell you, obviously, that there are certain things that you do in your life because they would be approved by Jesus Christ, and they would be suitable for you to be building that upon Him as a foundation. Obviously, it is clear that there are certain ways of talking that are suitable for a person who is building a life on Jesus Christ. There is suitable conduct. There are places you don't go if you're building a life upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. There are certain emotions you don't have. There are certain conducts you don't engage in. There are certain things you don't pursue. There are certain ideals you hang on to, because they're right and proper, as one who is building on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

**No Other Foundation**

Paul points out that if you don't have Christ as your foundation, you've got nothing to build upon. Did you notice that? "For no other foundation can any man lay." There's nothing else upon which you can build a life. Do you remember the analogy of the Christian who builds his life on the sand, and the Christian who builds his life on the rock? Yes, this is what he's talking about. The Christian who builds his life on the sand of his own human interest, capacities, and pursuits is going to find that, in time, there is going to come a crisis of life, and the greatest crisis of all is going to be standing before God to account for that life, and the whole thing is going to be blown away. The Christian who has built on the solid rock of doctrine is the Christian whose house will stand when God's judgment comes to evaluate it. This is a very simple principle. And a lot of Christian people who will hear what I have just said are going to close their ears to it. There's no other foundation for a life except Jesus Christ. He is the only foundation on which a lifestyle may be built which is acceptable to God. This spiritual foundation of Christ is laid at the point when you trusted in Him as your personal Savior. All other foundations for securing the eternal life in heaven are false foundation. Anybody who rejects Jesus Christ, the God-Man, as the foundation for salvation (his personal salvation) is building on a false ground.

John 14:6: "Jesus said unto him, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man comes unto the Father but by Me.'" If you reject Jesus Christ as the foundation upon which to build a life, and from which to approach God, you have no way to that God.

So, this dooms the Jews. This dooms the Muslims. This dooms the Hindus. This dooms the Buddhists. All of them are rejecting the only foundation upon which a life can be built, which is Jesus Christ, through personal salvation. Therefore, most of mankind is going to end up in the lake of fire. There is no genuine spiritual life with God that can be built on any foundation except Jesus Christ, no matter how sincere you are, or how sure you are, that reason has led you to the truth. The life of the non-Christian cannot stand before God, because it's erected on a faulty foundation. The Holy Spirit can build a spiritual maturity structure, and a life of divine good service only upon Jesus Christ.

So, the foundation is Christ – received in personal salvation. Now the issue is: what are you going to build on that foundation? You're going to build something. You have Jesus Christ. You have a ground now, indeed, for building a superstructure on that foundation in your life.

1 Corinthians 3:12-15 deal with the subject of the Christian's judgment day. In verse 12, we're told that there are two kinds of things that you may build upon that foundation. "Now" – introducing an application of what he has just said in verse 10-11, about Jesus Christ being the foundation of a life. "Now if any man (if anyone) builds upon this foundation." The word "if" is the Greek particle "ei." Here it is a first-class "if" – a first-class condition. Therefore, it may be translated by the word "since," because it is referring to something that is true: "Since every person builds upon this foundation." Did you get it?

**Two Categories of Buildings**

All of you are building something upon the Lord Jesus Christ that you have committed yourself to. He is the foundation of your life once you are in the family of God. And you are building, every moment of the day, something upon it: "If anyone builds upon it." And then he lists two categories of things that may be built upon this foundation. One category is gold, silver, and precious stones. The second category is wood, hay, and stubble (or straw). Those words don't need to be translated for you. They're clear. You understand what they're telling you. What he is telling you is that there are basically two kinds of works that you may build on the foundation of Jesus Christ: two kinds of lifestyles; two kinds of daily activities; two kinds of conduct; and, two kinds of works.

**Nonflammable Works**

The first is called the nonflammable. And don't say "inflammable." Some people think that "inflammable" means it won't burn. When you say "inflammable," that means it does burn. That's kind of confusing in English. In English, usually "in" means opposite: active vs. inactive – you're not active; or, sane vs insane. But "inflammable" means it'll burn. Anyhow, "nonflammable" is the correct word. This is represented by gold (in the analogy), silver, and gems. If you put fire to those things, they won't burn. They will be more purified. They're not be affected. These represent the divine good works of Christians. These are words produced in your life by God the Holy Spirit. This is Christian service that God deems worthy of a reward: gold; silver; and, gems.

**Flammable Works**

The second category are the flammable type. This stuff is going to burn up when it is subjected to fire. This is wood, hay, and stubble. This represents human good works. This is stuff that comes from the old sin nature. The nonflammable works come from God the Holy Spirit. The non-flammable are divine good works represented by gold, silver, and gems. The flammable, produced by the old sin nature, are human good works produced by the old sin nature, represented by the analogy of wood, hay, and stubble. So, this is a very forceful presentation.

In verse 13, Paul refers to the divine evaluation of the non-flammable and the flammable types of works. He says that: "Every man's," and here he's talking about every Christian person's, referring to every Christian of the saint age. In the Greek Bible, this word is at the beginning of the sentence. You know what that means. He says, "Every man," and in your Greek Bible, you'll see this word right there at the beginning: "hekastos." It's an adjective, referring to every person (referring here to every Christian person). If it's at the beginning of the sentence, that's for emphasis. That's how the Greek language works. This is an emphatic point. None of you are going to escape. There are no exceptions. None of you are going to be deferred for any reason whatsoever.

When a nation goes to war, it immediately sets out certain classifications (usually, I guess there are about four classifications), in which the men of the nation fall: by age; whether they are married; whether they have children; and, their physical condition. And if you have a problem in some area, then you are deferred. If you have a qualification in some area, you are an exception. You are deferred from service.

**Manifest**

This word is put at the beginning of this Greek sentence to make it clear to you that no Christian soldier is going to be deferred from this examination. Every Christian soldier is going to have "his work." This is the Greek word "ergon." And that refers to human works – good or bad. Every Christian person (every church-age believer) is going to have his lifestyle and works "made manifest." They are going to become evident. The word "manifest" is the Greek word "phaneros." This means that the true value of something is made evident. The Christian's life works are going to be revealed as nonflammable or flammable. Every Christian's work is going to be revealed in this way.

"For the day shall declare it." What day? He is referring here to the day of the Judgment Seat of Christ – that which is referred to in 2 Corinthians 5:10, which we have already looked at, where the apostle Paul says, "For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he has done, whether it be beneficial or worthless" (good or bad).

So, the day that he is referring to here is this day of the Judgment Seat of Christ. That particular day is going to declare it. The word "declare" here means that it is going to be shown for what it is. It is going to be brought into the light: "because it shall be revealed." And the word "revealed" is the Greek word "apokalupto." "Apokalupto" means "to uncover" or "to unveil." So, what he is saying is that your works are going to be exposed for what they really amount to – not what you have pretended to yourself that they amount to; and not what other people are impressed by what you have done, and conned them into thinking that there were; and, not what you have proclaimed to God that He should think what you're worth. On that day, the Judgment Seat of Christ, your works (of these two categories) are going to be shown for what they really are. They are going to be exposed.

This, in the Word of God, is in the present tense. You'd think it should be in the future. It says, "It's going to be revealed." But when the Greek language wants to make it clear that something is as good as done, it talks about a future event in the present tense. This is a grammatical device. This is so certain that all of us are going to face it, that he uses the present tense. And it's passive voice. It means it's going to be done to us by God. It's indicative mood – a statement of faith. The day of the Judgment Seat of Christ is going to be an unveiling of the true nature of the Christians works. It will reveal what was done through your spiritual gifts under the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and what was done through your own human abilities under the capacities of the sin nature. How?

It says that: "This is going to be revealed by." And the word "by" is the Greek word "en," which is "in fire" ("pur"). What this refers to is the holy discerning judgment of God.

Please notice in Hebrews 12:28-29. This fire is explained to us: "Wherefore, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire." He is speaking to Christians, and he indicates to those Christians that their Christian service to God is going to be evaluated by a God who is a consuming fire. What does that mean? What is the consuming fire about God?

**God's Holiness**

It is God's holiness. Please remember that the holiness of God is the result of His absolute righteousness, plus His perfect justice. Because God acts in absolute righteousness and perfect justice, He is holy. And that is the fire to which he is referring: "Wherefore, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved." We have a salvation which is irrevocable. We have a foundation which cannot be cracked or removed in Jesus Christ: "Now let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. How many Christians, even among us, have worried too much this week (this week which is past) about serving God acceptably with reverence and with godly fear? How many Christians, even among us, has given great concern that they're not squandering their life, and that they're not out doing something, such that if they could dial a phone to God in heaven and say, "Lord, should I be out here doing what I'm doing right now?" And they are finding that He would say, "No, you shouldn't. If you were paying attention to doctrine and the principles I've given you in these various areas, you wouldn't be doing what you're doing. You'd be someplace else. You'd be going someplace else. You'd understand: I don't have to give you a shot of lightning from heaven, or you don't have to have a vision, or a dream, or a voice. I've already spoken. You're just not paying attention."

A Christian's heart should rise up in great concern, and a real fear, because God is a consuming fire, meaning: have your fun, folks, because He's going to burn it all up. He's going to put a blowtorch on it. And what you have exhausted yourself in is going to be gone. God cannot be deceived about the quality of our work, whether it is human good or divine good, because He is omniscient. And His evaluation will be accurate.

**Test**

1 Corinthians 3:13: "Every person's work shall be revealed. It will be exposed for what it is: flammable; or, nonflammable type: "For the day shall declare it (the day of the Judgment Seat of Christ), because it shall be revealed by fire – the fire of the judgment of God's holiness, and the fire shall test." And here's a word you have to understand. The word "test" is the Greek word "dokimazo." There are different words in the Greek New Testament for "testing." This particular word, "dokimazo," means "to test a thing with the explicit purpose of finding something good to approve in it." You're not testing it to *see* what it's worth. You're testing it because you want to find something good in it.

A school teacher will test his class on a subject in which he has taught them in order to be able to give them a good grade on a report card. No school teacher likes to give his students tests, and find that they bomb out because they have not learned what he has taught them. That teacher gives the test ("dokimazo") in order to find, hopefully, that she can give them a good grade.

**Well Done**

The Lord Jesus Christ is speaking, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, to find the divine good works for which He may give the believer the good grade o: "Well done, you good and faithful servant," and a reward with it.

Matthew 25:21 lays out that principle for us. God is looking for what He may approve in us, and thus reward. He says in this parable: "And his lord said to him (to the servant who performed creditably while the lord was away), 'Well done, you good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things. I will now reward you, and make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." That's the thing we're talking about. There are going to be some happy Christians at the Judgment Seat of Christ in heaven; and, there are going to be some sad Christians, with tears rolling down their cheeks, at the Judgment Seat of Christ – both kind. Can we get Christians to take it seriously? No. They'll listen to this, and they'll walk out. They'll listen to these tapes, and they'll still do the same foolish, useless, trivial things that they've been doing in the past. They will not take to heart to be fearful of what they are building upon the foundation of Jesus Christ that they have in their lives.

Now are beginning to get a sense of why Mrs. Danish wondered if I should preach this sermon today, because of its enormous importance, when so many may not be here to hear it? Well, consider yourself fortunate that you made it out.

The Christians work will be tested. For what purpose? Verse 13 says, "The judgment of God's omniscient holiness will test every person's work of what sort." Every individual Christian of what sort (of what type – flammable or nonflammable) – of what sort it is. The worthless human good works of wood, hay, and straw will be burned up by the fire of God's evaluation. The worthy divine good works of gold, silver, and precious gems will survive the fiery judgment of God.

**Quality**

I remind you that this is not a test of quantity. It is a test of quality. Hay, wood, and stumble, pound-for-pound, make a much bigger pile of stuff than gold, silver, and gems. God is not interested in your pile of works. He is interested in the quality of what you do. We will go more into that next time. But just at this point, He's interested in the quality of that which is His divine good production.

What kind of human good works are we talking about? Let's summarize in closing. In Hebrews 6:1, the Bible refers to human good works (the flammable type) in a variety of ways: "Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God." Paul says, "Once you have Jesus Christ as the foundation of your life, go on from there. Don't stop with that foundation. You've turned from dead works of your human efforts to get you into heaven. You've taken God's work. Now build upon it."

So, human good works are dead works. Hebrews 9:14: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" That's what we're talking about. Our agony is that we have so many Christians whose consciences we cannot purge of the dead works that so attractive them, that they have not become sufficiently occupied with Christ, that they're pursuing the real values in life, and they're sacrificing all kinds of precious things around them.

John 8:41: "'You do the deeds of your father.' Then they said to Him, 'We are not born of fornication. We have one father, even God.'"

John 8:44: "You are of your father, the devil (Jesus says), and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it." So, here human good works are called the devil's works.

You also have this in 1 John 3:8: "He that commits sin is of the devil, for the devil sinned from the beginning. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." And yet, in the lives of most Christians, the works of the devil keep operating just as effectively as ever.

We have one more. Ephesians 5:11 speaks about human good works as unfruitful works: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. But rather reprove them." Out in our world, there are ideals, and there are appeals to unfruitful works – all of that human good, flammable nonsense. It's junk. Yet, Christians are attracted those unfruitful works of darkness. The Word of God says, "Please don't imitate the people of the world. Don't imitate the people you associate with in your business. Don't imitate the people you go to school with. Don't imitate the people where you are employed. Don't imitate these people who are on the wrong track, and who are wasting their lives, and who will have all eternity to regret it – people who have no foundation in their life to build upon. But you have a foundation in Christ Jesus. Therefore, beware of what you build upon it, for indeed, you will be called for an accounting.

There are two great results of this judgment, and the consequences of each are enormous. And we shall look at those next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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