

## Sermon for the Building Dedication — Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN – 5/17/2009

Title: “Built to Last”

Text: 1 Corinthians 3: 10-16

Intro.: *Illus.: How long will this building be around? And “Gothic Churches Required Everybody”*

Theme: At the beginning of the use of a new building, God’s people must always reflect on how Jesus is the true foundation of the of their church and faith and although everything will pass away, Jesus will never change.

### Whose house is it?

- Selfish, possessive attitudes can ruin a beautiful work of God in this building
- 1. Paul speaks metaphorically of the church he founded in Corinth and how others are building upon it
  - a. In light of the turmoil in Corinth he could have said, “Wow, they really messed it all up!”
  - b. Paul knew that it wasn’t his church—it belong to the one and only founder, Jesus Christ, he was just a worker
  - c. *After all, every house has a builder, but the builder of everything is God. Hebrews 3:4*
- 2. It is hard when we have sweat blood and tears on this building to keep it all in eternal perspective
  - a. *But each one should be careful how he builds. Vs. 10*
  - b. **Illus.: “We Built This City” lyrics – Jefferson Starship**
  - c. We want to protect the building — sometimes at the exclusion of outsiders who might not own it specialness
  - d. We want to brag about the building forgetting, *“What do you have that you did not receive?”*  
*1 Corinthians 4:7*
- Built by grace and built under grace!
- 1. Everything about our relationship with the Father is about his gracious action in our life
  - a. *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:8-10*
  - b. The Father has taken pleasure in giving us this building project, fund raising, planning, moving, and reaching to our new neighbors so that his glorious plan at work would *become evident vs. 13*
  - c. *In that hour the Holy Spirit filled Jesus with joy. Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for hiding these things from wise and intelligent people and revealing them to little children. Yes, Father, this is what pleased you. "My Father has turned everything over to me. Only the Father knows who the Son is. And no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son is willing to reveal him."*  
*Luke 10:21-22*
- 2. When we remember that this building is “just a thing,” then our hopes do not rise and fall based upon is.
  - a. **Illus.: the first scratch on the new car – it is no longer a new car/ “aint nothin’ but a thing”**
  - b. **vss. 12-15**
  - c. When God’s plans of grace play out among us in this building, our fallenness and its consequence won’t rule.

### Whose house are we? (verse 16)

- We are God’s house and so he chooses to reside in this house we have built for him
- 1. *“But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! 1 Kings 8:27*
- 2. God chose to live among us when he sent His Son Jesus to live and die and rise among us (**Lo I am with you**)
- 3. God chose to live in each of you when he came into your life at your baptism
  - a. *Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? 1 Corinthians 6:19*
- Therefore, we intentionally dedicate our bodies and this church building to his ownership and his glory
- 1. *You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. 1 Corinthians 6:20*
- Therefore, we intentionally dedicate our bodies and this church to proclaim the good news of His Son, Jesus
- 1. *You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. . . you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:5-9*
- This building may not last because of wind/fire/decay, but we, his Church, will last and have his promise to back it up
- 1. *“Then I will make you to this people A fortified wall of bronze; And though they fight against you, They will not prevail over you; For I am with you to save you and deliver you,” declares the LORD. Jeremiah 15:20*
- 2. **Illus.: The Door That Stands Forever**

### **Gothic Churches Required Everybody**

"Many Gothic churches of the Middle Ages were built in the following way: a quarry site was established, often as much as 50 miles from the place where the church was to be erected. When the rocks were mined, volunteers from all over the countryside would form a living chain from the quarry to the building site. The rocks would then be passed from hand to hand all the way to the construction grounds." **David Louis, 2201 Fascinating Facts, p.32 (Ridge Press, 1983)**

### **"We Built This City" lyrics – Jefferson Starship**

Say you don't know me, or recognize my face  
Say you don't care who goes to that kind of place  
Knee deep in the hoopla, sinking in your fight  
Too many runaways eating up the night

Don't you remember?

We built this city

We built this city on rock and roll!

We built this city, we built this city on rock and roll

Built this city, we built this city on rock and roll

Someone always playing corporation games  
Who cares they're always changing corporation names  
We just want to dance here, someone stole the stage  
They call us irresponsible, write us off the page

### **The Door that stands forever**

In 1958, a U.S. soldier wandered the streets of Berlin to see the sights. Despite the bustling new life in parts of the city, reminders remained of the destruction of World War II. Walking through a residential area one evening, across the cobblestone street he saw an open space edged with flowers. In the center stood the stone front of what had been a church. The building was no longer there, but the rubble had been cleared away in an attempt to fill the empty space with a little park. The former church's main door was shaped in a Gothic arch, and over it was carved into the stone in German: HEAVEN AND EARTH WILL PASS AWAY BUT MY WORDS WILL NOT PASS AWAY. As he stepped through the arch where the doors had once been, of course he wasn't inside anything. What was once a place of worship had been reduced to a patch of stone pavement and open sky. Not so with the Door--Jesus Christ! As we step into Christ, we enter into his unshakable, eternal presence. It cannot be reduced; it can only be experienced--forever. **Coleman L. Coates, Cadmus, Michigan. Leadership, Vol. 9, no. 4.**

### **1 Corinthians 3:10-16**

<sup>10</sup>By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an *architect*, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. <sup>11</sup>For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

<sup>12</sup>If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, <sup>13</sup>his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. <sup>14</sup>If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. <sup>15</sup>If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

<sup>16</sup>Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? [NIV]