

# Building

## 5 Chapters of Your Life

April 28, 2013

When you were a kid life looked *simple*. When you became a teen, you began to realize that life was *painful*. But when you became an adult you should have realized that life was *hard*. It is. It's supposed to be. This week we'll look at why that's true and why that's a good thing! God is **building** something in you through a tough life.

### DAY 1

After Adam and Eve rebelled against God, deciding to take life into their own hands, all of life changed. This is what theologians call "the Fall." Instead of the Garden of Eden, an idyllic paradise where they could enjoy each other's and God's company, as well as tend the garden, they found the following seismic shift...

*Genesis 3:17 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. <sup>18</sup> It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. <sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."*

1. What happened to "the ground?" (v. 17)
2. Back in Genesis 2:15, prior to the Fall, God "put Adam in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." What phrase in v. 3:17 describes the kind of effort it's now going to take?
3. What specifics does God give to Adam in 3:18?
4. Have you ever weeded a garden or flower plot? What is that like?
5. How often does a garden patch have to be weeded?
6. Is this story just bad news for farmers or gardeners, or is God describing a new reality across every facet of life? How does this strike you?
7. What are some current "weeds, thorns, or thistles" in your life? Do you have some "gardening" to do, today?

## DAY 2

The important things in life do not come easily. Marriages are not made; they are built. Children are not made; they are built. Careers are not made; they are built. Your ministry is not made; it is something you build. Building wealth is not made; it is built. Growing into Christ-likeness is not something that is made; it is something that is built. In all these endeavors you and God are co-laborers!

1. Rather than make the effort to "build" we are tempted to take "short-cuts," in hoping to build something with the least amount of effort and cost. In the following list of short cuts, check the ones you have tried...

- "Thrown something together"
- "That's good enough."
- "That'll do."
- "No one will notice."
- "No one will care."
- "It can't be *that* hard."
- "Why do we have to make this so complex?"

2. In the following verses, underline the key character components...

*Proverbs 12:11 He who works his land will have abundant food, but he who chases fantasies lacks judgment.*

*Proverbs 12:14 From the fruit of his lips a man is filled with good things as surely as the work of his hands rewards him.*

*Proverbs 12:24 Diligent hands will rule, but laziness ends in slave labor.*

*Proverbs 12:27 The lazy man does not roast his game, but the diligent man prizes his possessions.*

*Proverbs 13:2 From the fruit of his lips a man enjoys good things, but the unfaithful have a craving for violence.*

*Proverbs 13:4 The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied.*

*Proverbs 13:6 Righteousness guards the man of integrity, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.*

*Proverbs 13:11 Dishonest money dwindles away, but he who gathers money little by little makes it grow.*

*Proverbs 13:13 He who scorns instruction will pay for it, but he who respects a command is rewarded.*

3. Pick your favorite two or three verses. Underline the references.

4. What struck you about your favorite verses?

5. Are there some action items for you, from those verses?

6. Do you sense a change of attitude in you, as you read those verses? What was it?

### DAY 3

One of the "paths" of our native foolishness is what is called, "the simpleton." The "simple" person underestimates the complexities and difficulties of life.

1. In the verses below, underline the important points of how the simpleton acts and thinks:

*Proverbs 1:22 "How long will you simple ones love your simple ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge?"*

*Proverbs 1:32 For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them;*

*Proverbs 8:5 You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding.*

*Proverbs 9:6 Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of understanding.*

*Proverbs 9:16 "Let all who are simple come in here!" she says to those who lack judgment (from the adulteress!)*

*Proverbs 14:15 A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.*

*Proverbs 14:18 The simple inherit folly, but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.*

*Proverbs 27:12 The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.*

2. What consequences struck you from thinking and acting like a "simpleton?"

3. How does the simpleton need to:

a. Think differently?

b. Act differently?

4. Can you think of an example where you made a rash decision, assuming things were "simpler" than they really were? What happened?

5. If you had it to do over, what would you have *done* differently? *Thought* differently?

## Day 4

What are we **building**? What is God building? God is in the **people-building** business. He's building you.

*Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, as you are going **make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; ...*

1. What is a "disciple?"

2. In the following verses, underline the traits of a disciple.

*John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*

*John 15:8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples.*

*Luke 6:40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully taught will be like his teacher.*

*Luke 14:26 If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple.*

*Luke 14:27 And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.*

*Luke 14:33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.*

*John 8:31 Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my*

3. Is there one of these to which you need to give attention? How?

4. One kind of building is building **who we are** into the image of Jesus Christ.

Another kind of building we do, is building the big **arenas** of our life:

\_\_\_ Marriage

\_\_\_ Family; children

\_\_\_ Work

\_\_\_ Ministry

\_\_\_ Finances

\_\_\_ Relationships with people

\_\_\_ Relationships with God

\_\_\_ Health

5. None of the items in question #4 just "happens." It takes intentionality and purpose. We bear a stewardship, a responsibility for how we use the resources God entrusts to us. Is there an arena in question #4 to which you need to do more "building?"

6. Do you need to solicit some help in building?

## DAY 5

*Ephesians 4:11 And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; <sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. <sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.*

1. How does Paul describe the "finished product" that God is trying to build in us...

a. In 4:13?

b. In 4:15?

2. God's building plan is not an individual endeavor. It involves other people. How is this seen...

a. In 4:11-12?

b. 4:15?

c. 4:16?

2. In the following verses, underline Paul's **attitude** toward building, in his own life and building others?

*Philippians 3:11-14 "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."*

3. Which of the following words would you use to describe Paul's attitude?

\_\_\_ Perseverance

\_\_\_ Endurance

\_\_\_ Intentionality

\_\_\_ Commitment

\_\_\_ Purpose

\_\_\_ Diligence

4. What words would you use to describe your attitude toward building?