

Simply Christ
Gospel Newsletter
Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

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God's Revealing Fire

The Apostle Paul was not only chosen to carry the gospel to the gentiles, but God also chose to reveal Christ *in* him through divine revelation. Paul wrote, *"I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."*

Galatians 1:11-12. So absolute was the gospel Paul preached that he said, *"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."* Galatians 1:8. Paul described himself as a *"wise masterbuilder"* who laid the only foundation which could be laid for the church of Jesus Christ. I Corinthians 3:10-11.

Paul gave a sobering warning to every minister who would build upon the gospel foundation which had been laid. He said, *"Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; **Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he***

himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." I Corinthians 3:12-13.

Just two years ago, a renowned Christian apologist was laid to rest with words of praise and adoration from Christians around the world. This minister was so highly regarded that Vice-President Mike Pence spoke at the memorial service and added this comment on Twitter, saying, "God gave us the greatest Christian Apologist of this century."

Almost immediately following this minister's death, allegations arose that for almost a decade he had repeatedly manipulated, abused, and even raped women for his perverse sexual gratification. The global ministry he built commissioned an investigation which confirmed many, if not all, the allegations were true. God's day of revealing fire had come, and everything this man built was burned to ashes. What is even more sobering than the burning of all this man's work is Paul's warning that the state of his eternal soul would also be revealed by the same fire. Few would dare say it, but this fire revealed that this minister lost his soul also.

Paul told us that *"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid."* I Timothy 5:24-25. Sometimes the fire which will *"try every man's work"* comes in this life. Sometimes it comes after our death. Yet, it is certain that all will be revealed in the day of God's righteous judgement. Even our

soul must face the day of God's revealing fire. It may be saved, but Paul says, "*yet so as by fire.*"

Paul's warned that the fire would burn every worthless thing which was built. He called these things "*wood, hay, and stubble.*" These are doctrines and traditions which are not founded in the truth of the gospel of Christ. These are also the things built by the ambitions and schemes of men, and not by the working of God's Spirit. Many "great" churches and ministries have been built which are nothing more than "*wood, hay, and stubble.*"

I knew a Pastor who was successful in everything he touched. He had a great ability to move people and could gather a crowd to anything he was doing. Yet this man seemed more interested in doing something "big" than doing what was true and of God. He contracted a disease which took his life in a short period of time. Almost immediately after his death his lifelong work of ministry was devoured and destroyed by those whom he had entrusted it to. I trust his soul was saved, but if so, it was "*yet so as by fire.*"

The Apostle Paul also gave promise to those who "*build upon this foundation gold, silver, and precious stones...*" I Corinthians 3:12. These are things founded in the truth of Christ and built by the working of God's Spirit. This work is also tried by fire, but it will not be burnt and those who build such will receive a reward. Some men's godly works are manifest in this life. Some are revealed after they die. Yet I say again, every man's work

will be revealed in the fire of God's judgment and only that which is of God will endure.

I have seen great ministries and churches built by men who then had to watch helplessly as their life's work was burned to ashes in the day of God's revealing fire. If they build again they should remember: "Only that which is built by God will remain."

It is not important that any of us do something "big." It is important that what you do *"is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* Philippians 2:13. There are worldwide ministries which will be completely burnt to ashes when the fire of God tries them. There are also ministries which can count their membership on one hand which will receive abundant reward because what they have built in the Lord will endure God's revealing fire.

"All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Isaiah 40:7-8