

God is the Builder of Everything

**Hebrews 3:1-6 Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. <sup>2</sup> He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. <sup>3</sup> Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. <sup>4</sup> For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. <sup>5</sup> Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. <sup>6</sup> But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.**

Holy Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Let's do what the writer to the Hebrews tells us to do. Let us fix our thoughts on Jesus. And as we do, I want us to concentrate specifically on the verse in bold in your bulletins, the verse that served as our theme verse for our Construction I.N.C. (In the Name of Christ) Vacation Bible School this week. The kids should have it memorized. You want to try it kids? "Every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything." God is the builder of everything.

You know, it's hard to look at a text like this about a building and not have your mind jump to that structure that is going up on Hwy. 212, isn't it? Maybe it's because I drive by it on that driveway a few times every day, maybe it's because it took us so long to get to this point, maybe it is because I like to get down there and pray for God's blessings on how we use it, maybe it's because it is just so pretty. I don't know, but lately, when I hear about a building being built – that's the one I think of.

Now here's a question for you: Who is building it? Who is responsible for it? Is it Massana, or Gruber or who? Most of the players have already asked permission to take some credit for it. Within a few months, I can almost guarantee you that Morton Gruber will have a picture of our church up in his lobby; our church's picture will be in Ken Hardemann's book of samples of his stained glass work; it will be used by Daco Stone for advertising. It will be on Massmann Studio's website. I'm sure we'll see it on the Church Extension Fund's materials, and I have a hunch Builder's for Christ might use it too. And, oh yeah, I'm guessing that group called Abiding Grace might use it in some of their materials too, right?

So who is right to claim it? Who gets credit? Is it the architect, who designed all this? Or Massana, the construction company who's making it happen? Some of the suppliers could argue that without their supplies, it wouldn't be happening. Or do we, with years invested into this thing - time, offerings, sweat, even a little blood, and then the future commitments to give even more to pay for it? Or does CEF get the credit, the generous organization that allowed us to get the money and even gave a grant to help with some of it? Or what about the Antioch Foundation, or Builders for Christ – they all had a big part, right?

But wait, what was the verse again? "**Every house is built by someone, but... God is the builder of everything.**" You'd think that would be an obvious truth, right? You'd think the writer to the Hebrews shouldn't even have to say it. You look at the world we live in and the intricacies of the human body and the miracle of nature and the universe that stays bigger than even the most advanced scientists can fathom. Like we sang earlier – "I see the stars, I hear the

mighty thunder, your power throughout the universe displayed – then sings my soul...How Great Thou Art!” Right?! There is no way this happened by accident. There is no way that that baby is just a result of some globs left alone for enough years. Of course, there has to be something bigger, better, smarter, stronger than us. There has to be a God, who is the builder of everything. Common sense tells us that.

But lately here it seems that common sense is not really all that common, even in us. Think of the last time you tried to take credit for something God did. You know you’ve done it. I know you’ve done it. I can tell because you are human. You are living in this world. That sin stupidity has its way with you from time to time, really so much of the time. **All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**, the Bible says. And you forget the truth the kids memorized. How does it go again? “Every house is built by someone, but **God is the builder of everything.**”

Why can’t we remember that? With the building project, it’s easy to try to think credit on ourselves because we see the things we’re doing – “Look at how much time I’ve put in on this.” “I got all itchy in insulation.” “I got polyurethane in my hair.” “I took a staple to the palm for the project.” “I was out there yesterday in the heat.” And the list goes on. Yes the contractor, and the architect, and the bank, and the donors, and all the others we’ve talked about have been important for the building. You have been important and still are, but God is the builder of everything.

I think it is so hard to remember that because it is something we can’t see – and God uses *people* and *things* to make it happen, things we can see. That was the problem the writer to the Hebrews was addressing in this section of his letter. He had to show how the things they were looking to were not the answer. To them, it looked like Moses was “the man” – the one who made all the difference for them. But the point is – Moses was just a servant, Jesus is God – the perfectly faithful Son. Jesus did what Moses never could. He did what we never could.

I know, our hearts that are self-centered by nature try to take credit. Whether it is trying to convince ourselves that we somehow chose God, or that God knew we’d be so great so he chose us... whether it is looking at our actions as reason for God’s love or as cause of his blessings... our hearts want to take credit. They want to take credit that is only God’s. If that weren’t so, you’d never be envious of someone else’s blessings. If we were giving credit to God, you’d never feel slighted if you don’t hear enough appreciation. If we truly remembered that God is the builder of everything – and like we talked about in VBS – he made us according to divine design, he repaired and remodeled us, he builds with us – if we remembered all that – you would each get along perfectly with everyone else. But we forget. Yes, every house, every heart, every good thing is built by someone – but it is not you. Sometimes you’ve got to remind yourselves of that. It’s not me. It’s him. God is the builder of everything

So what to do about that? When we realize we’ve tried to take credit for God’s grace – which really destroys grace and makes it some kind of payment which we could actually never deserve. When we realize what our hearts naturally want to do with God’s full and free salvation, what can we do? Nothing. *We* don’t fix that.

But God has. All we can do is look to the Grace of God that is truly abiding, lasting through all our failures, abiding through all our weakness. We come back to the Spirit-wrought realization that God is the builder of everything.

And he built our salvation through His Son, the one greater than Moses, the one we are to “Fix our thoughts on”. We are to fix our thoughts on him because, seeing what he did, we have to realize that our efforts can’t accomplish any of that – because he already has. He built our

salvation with the wood and nails of the cross, paying the price for our sins. He built our salvation with his blood, sweat and tears as he lived perfection in our place. He builds our salvation by attaching us to that house of faith and forgiveness with some things we might not think of as building materials: the water of baptism, with the bread and wine - his body and blood in communion. And as we heard in our gospel lesson, because of all that, he's building our eternal home.

Yes, God is the builder of everything.

So now as our physical building goes up – God is building it and will continue to build it – and look at what he uses to do it. Look around – to your right and left, and to the person sitting in your seat even. God is building His Church using you – you, now reminded by God's Word today that it's not your time you're giving but the time God has graced you with. It's not your money you're giving – the resources God has graced you with; it's not your talent either – it's God's and he wants to use it for what he is building – which, by the way is far more than a physical building – it is faith in the hearts of these kids that joined us for Vacation Bible School; faith in your hearts – as you hear and study his word here and at Bible study, like the Bible Information Class we're starting next month. God is building his Church through the fruits of that faith in your lives and the lives of all you touch. Yes, it's cool to see all these things being built. Praise God that we can say it. "Every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything."

He is building ... In Christ, Amen.