



# STRAIGHT TALK.

LEADER'S GUIDE

*Bold Letters to the Corinthians*

**Week #6 Leader's Guide – May 15, 2016**

Straight Talk: Bold Letters to the Corinthians  
SDBC Community Groups

## **“Our Identity in the Spirit vs. the Flesh: What Are We Building?”**

**Key Passage:**

### **1 Corinthians 3:10-17**

<sup>10</sup> According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. <sup>11</sup> For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— <sup>13</sup> each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. <sup>14</sup> If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

<sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? <sup>17</sup> If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

1. **Read the key passage, 1 Corinthians 3:10-17.**

2. In this passage, the apostle Paul uses the imagery of a building project to convey the current state of the church at Corinth. Verses 10 and 11 highlight the foundation of the building, verses 12 to 15 highlight the structure of the building, and verses 16 to 17 highlight the type and purpose of the building.

Imagine you are trying to explain to someone unchurched what the church is and you use a similar analogy. What type of a building would you use and why? What type of a building do you envision our church needing to be in order to reach our surrounding community and why?

3. In verses 16 and 17 Paul's basic answer to the same question for the church of Corinth is that this must be a building for worship, a temple, and he points out that the people themselves "are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells" within them. We are the church (people; community).

Would you use the same building you described as "the church" for you personally and/or for your community group? Why or why not?

4. The answer to the above question can be revealing. Take any building and it will have a purpose. How we define the type of building we are points to what we orient our lives around and what we feel our purpose is in life. Here in lies the tension between the Flesh and the Spirit. We are pulled between being spirit focused and flesh focused.

What do you think your purpose and mission is as the "church"? How can you on a personal level and on a community group level help each other to remain fixed to that mission and purpose?

5. In verses 12 to 15, the apostle Paul talks about the importance of using the right building materials and for the church at Corinth, this is a direct challenge to the current state of the church riddled with division. In verse 13, Paul talks about the "Day" of judgment, in which God will judge the works of those who profess to follow Him. While he makes it clear in verse 15 that despite this judgment and the potential of having everything burned up, believers will still be saved, he doesn't shy away from the reality we all face: we will be judged by God. Moreover, use the right materials!

When you read this, what is your reaction? (*guilt, a burden, scared, encouraged, filled with awe, filled with a desire to do everything you can to be on mission, reminded of the life of a Christian involving an eternal perspective, "I need to do more!"*)

6. **Read John 13:31-35.** What a powerful command by Jesus for how we are to properly "build" our "temple" in order to reflect the Gospel and expand the kingdom. This is why division in the church is destructive and why the apostle Paul is so aggressive in this passage in calling it out as basically poor building materials.

How can you personally and as a community group champion this command to love one another?

7. Being on mission as the temple of God (being a reflector of the nature, character, and glory of God) is a truly amazing reality for us because it's not us alone, we are a community of believers that can support each other AND we have the Holy Spirit dwelling within us. God has our back!

This week, how can you be on mission in the various spheres of your life, being a temple that reflects God to the world?