

LUCKY LEMONS ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

"Servants, Fields, and Fire"

A Servant's Heart | 1 Corinthians 3:5-8, 9-11, 12-15

Complete Teaching Script | 30-Minute Core Bowdon Baptist Church | Dr. Bobby Gaines |
Sunday, August 2, 2026

THE BIG IDEA (on the board before anybody walks in)

A servant's heart is not thinking less of yourself. It is knowing whose field you are standing in.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Whiteboard or easel pad
 - Bibles open the whole hour (three readers, assigned before class, never volunteered from the front)
 - Scripture readings in Appendix B. Paste your ESV in before Sunday
 - The handout card, Appendix D, one per person
 - Video: see Appendix C. Honest recommendation this week is to skip it
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WHY THIS ONE IS BUILT AT 30 AND NOT 35

You reported it plainly: last week ran long and Section 3 never got taught. The diagnosis is right. History was eating the clock. So three changes, and none of them touch the covenant.

1. **The core is built at 30 minutes**, not 35. At your delivery pace that lands you around 40 to 45, which is your real window.
2. **The history is smaller and it is fenced.** Section 1 gets ninety seconds of world-building

and no more. The rest of the Luke Lens material is in Dig Deeper where it belongs. You are not abandoning history. You are rationing it.

3. **Two hard clock checkpoints are written into the script**, with the exact cut named at each one. No improvising at the podium.

The rule this week: Section 3 is not optional. The fire verses are where the whole lesson lands. If something has to go, it goes from Section 1.

TIMING AT A GLANCE - 30-MINUTE CORE

Minutes	Segment
0:00-0:03	Opening: The question about the seed
0:03-0:10	Section 1: Verses 5-8. What is Apollos?
0:10-0:17	Section 2: Verses 9-11. Three times God's, and the carpenter's word
0:17-0:26	Section 3: Verses 12-15. The Day declares it (includes the one discussion question)
0:26-0:30	The Landing: quiet moment, one act of obedience, prayer

CHECKPOINT ONE

[These two checkpoints exist so you can stop watching the clock, not so you can start. Hit them and you are exactly where you should be, and you can teach at whatever pace the room wants. Brisk is fine. Hurried is not, and those two do not feel the same from a chair.]

You must have Reader Two reading verse 9 by the 10-minute mark. If you are behind: cut Point 4 in Section 1 (the wage). Read verse 8, say "same crew, same payroll," and move to Section 2. You lose nothing, because *misthos* gets taught properly in Section 3 at verse 14 anyway.

CHECKPOINT TWO

You must have Reader Three reading verse 12 by the 17-minute mark. If you are behind: cut Point 1 in Section 2 (the three possessives) and open the section at the carpenter's word. That saves you two full minutes and costs you nothing structural.

THE ROUTING MAP

CORE, always taught: the goat question, “what” not “who,” the servant word, gave and gives, “neither one is anything,” the three God’s, architekton, the foundation you cannot pour twice, the six materials, the finance illustration, the assay word, the myth-busting minute, the man who runs out with nothing but himself, the one discussion question, the landing.

DIG DEEPER, only if discussion runs short or the room is thin: Apollos and the friendship nobody expects, the judgment seat you can stand on, the temple materials in First Chronicles, the extra Greek, and the reserve question bank. All marked in place below.

Word-for-word lines are in blockquotes. Everything else is outline, in your own voice.

0:00-0:03 THE OPENING: THE QUESTION NOBODY CAN ANSWER YES TO

Do not announce the passage. Do not open a Bible yet. Do not say the title.

[TEACHING NOTE: Question opener, not a parable. Ask it and then actually wait. Do not rescue the silence. Everything here is true to your place: pigs, goats, ducks, and the one chicken. Nothing here is livestock and nothing here is a crop. Say the numbers however they actually are that morning.]

Let me start this morning with a question, and I want a real answer, not a Sunday school answer.

How many of you have ever grown something?

(Wait. Several hands. Let them have it.)

Alright. Now let me ask it a different way.

How many of you have ever grown a goat?

(Let that be funny. It is funny. Then let it get quiet.)

I want to tell you something about my place, and I want to be honest about it, because Beth will correct me if I am not.

I am a lazy farmer. I do not have a crop. I have pigs and goats and ducks and one chicken, and not one of them is ever going in a freezer. They are pets. Every one of them.

And here is what I do for them. Every day, twice a day. I feed them. I water them. I keep

the fence up. I doctor them when they are sick, and I stand out there in the rain worrying about them when they are not.

And in all these years, folks, I have never grown a single one of them. Not one inch. Not one pound.

(Pause. Longer than is comfortable.)

The growing happens somewhere I cannot get to. All I have ever done is carry the bucket.

(Shift your tone. You are done at the barn and you are about to open a Bible.)

Now, I did not come up with that this week. A man wrote it down about two thousand years ago, to a church that was fighting over which preacher was better. And he said it better than I just did.

Turn with me to First Corinthians, chapter three.

0:03-0:10 SECTION 1: 1 CORINTHIANS 3:5-8

"What Is Apollos?"

Reader One reads verses 5-8. Then teach.

Point 1. Paul asks "what," not "who"

Verse five. The Corinthians had split into fan clubs. Team Paul. Team Apollos. Team Peter. And Paul opens his answer with a question about his own name.

Look at how your ESV has it: **"What then is Apollos? What is Paul?"**

Not who. What.

Did you catch that? He did not ask **who** is Apollos. He asked **what** is Apollos.

That is the question you ask about a thing. What is a hammer. What is a bucket.

Paul looks at the two most argued-over names in that whole church, and one of them is his own, and he asks the question you ask about equipment.

And then he answers his own question with the smallest word he can find.

"Servants, through whom you believed."

Not leaders. Not founders. Not even ministers, the way we hear that word. The word Paul

reaches for is the one you would use for the fellow who carries the dish to the table.

And then five more words that take out the last of the air. **"As the Lord assigned to each."** Even the job was handed to them. Nobody in that verse picked his own role.

[TEXT. The Greek behind "what" is the neuter ti, not the masculine tis, and nearly every commentary flags it. The ESV preserves it, the KJV does too, and some translations soften it to "who," which loses the point. The servant word is diakonoi, source of "deacon," ordinary Greek for a table servant. Do not say the Greek out loud here. The English carries it fine. Standing rule: no Greek unless the English fails. This lesson says exactly one Greek word out loud, and it is in Section 2.]

Point 2. Gave, and gives

Verse six and verse seven, back to back. And there is something in your English Bible that is easy to walk right past.

Verse six: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth."

Verse seven: "but only God who gives the growth."

Look at those two words. **Gave.** Then **gives.**

Paul's part is finished. It has a date on it. Apollos's part is finished, and it has a date on it too. You could look them up on a calendar.

And God's part is still going on. Right now. This morning, while we sit here.

Paul had a day. Apollos had a day. God had every day in between.

[TEXT, and it is right there in the ESV. The tense shift is real in the Greek too, aorist to present participle, and Fee and Garland both develop it. You do not need to say a word of that out loud. The English carries the whole point by itself.]

(Pause here. Let it sit.)

Which means the whole argument in Corinth was two men taking credit for a workday inside a growing season neither one of them could start, stop, or slow down.

The growth was never theirs to give.

Point 3. "Neither one is anything"

Verse seven. And this one is blunt.

"So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."

Paul does not say the workers are less important. He does not say they are secondary. He says they are not anything.

And notice who he says it about first. Himself. He is standing there holding the founder's papers on that church, and he puts his own name at the front of the sentence that says "not anything."

Folks, that is not low self-esteem. Paul was one of the most confident men who ever lived. That is a man who knows exactly where he is standing and exactly whose field it is.

Point 4. Verse 8 and the wage

Verse eight closes the section with two things held together.

First: the planter and the waterer **are one**. Same crew. Same side. There is no Team Paul and Team Apollos on the payroll sheet, because there is only one payroll.

Second: **"each will receive his wages according to his labor."** Wages. Not a prize, not a trophy. The pay a working man is handed at the end of the day.

So here is the shape of it. Nobody in the field is anything. And everybody in the field gets paid.

Hold on to that second half, because in about ten minutes it is going to get very interesting.

[Plant it and leave it. Do not explain the wage any further here. It gets harvested in Section 3, verse 14.]

THE MONDAY TEST

(Same question at the end of every section. The repetition is the point. Ten seconds each, then move.)

So what does that change on Monday morning?

If the growing was never yours, then Monday morning you can quit keeping score. You do your part and you go to bed.

0:10-0:17 SECTION 2: 1 CORINTHIANS 3:9-11

"Three Times God's, and the Carpenter's Word"

Reader Two reads verses 9-11. Then teach.

Point 1. Verse 9 says one word three times

[CUT THIS POINT IF YOU ARE BEHIND AT CHECKPOINT ONE. Open the section at Point 3 instead.]

Verse nine is short and it says the same word three times.

God's fellow workers. **God's** field. **God's** building.

Three possessives in one verse. Paul is not being repetitive. He is putting up fence posts.

And here is a place to be careful, because the English can trip you. "God's fellow workers" does not mean workers alongside God, like partners on equal footing. It means workers who **belong to** God. The crew is His. The field is His. The building is His. There is nothing in the verse that is yours.

[TEXT for the three genitives. The reading "fellow workers belonging to God" rather than "co-workers with God" is the majority view, Fee and Garland and Thiselton all take it. INFERENCE, but a strong one. Say "most scholars read it this way" and you are honest.]

And notice he says field, not woods. A field is not wild. Somebody owns a field.
Somebody gets up early for it.

Point 2. THE CARPENTER'S WORD

*(This is the hook, and it is the only foreign word in the lesson. Before class, write **ARCHITEKTON** on the board and under it write **ARCHITECT** and **CARPENTER**. Do not say the word out loud more than once. Let the board do the work while you talk in English.)*

Verse ten. And before the word, catch the first six words of the verse, because they set the table: **"According to the grace of God given to me."**

Even the skill was issued to him. Paul did not bring it to the job. It was already in the toolbox when they handed him the toolbox.

Now the word. Paul describes himself: **"like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation."**

Here is something I never noticed until I studied this passage this week.

Paul's word there sounds like our word **architect**. But in his day that was not a man behind a drafting table. That was the fellow on the job site with dirt on his boots.

And here is what grabbed me.

It is the same word they used about Jesus. Mark chapter six. **"Is not this the carpenter?"**

(Pause.)

Paul went looking for the best thing he could honestly say about his own ministry. And what he came up with was that he worked the same trade as Jesus.

(STOP. This is the emotional peak of the middle of the lesson. Do not add a sentence. Do not explain it. Count to five, look at the board, and then go to verse eleven.)

[TEXT for both words. Architekton in 1 Cor 3:10, tekton in Mark 6:3, and Matthew 13:55 has Jesus as the tekton's son. The resonance between them is INFERENCE and you should label it out loud exactly the way it is written above. Do not preach it as Paul's intention. It is better honest than it is big.]

Point 3. The one thing on the site nobody gets to touch

Verse eleven.

"For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Every foundation gets poured exactly once. You can remodel a house forever. You can move every wall in it. You cannot pour the foundation twice.

And notice the tense. The foundation **is laid**. Past. Finished. Before you got to the site.

(Pause.)

Which means here is what was actually going on in Corinth. Nobody in that church was arguing about the foundation. Not one of them. They all had Jesus. They were arguing about the decorators.

[Sticky. Let it land. Do not chase it with a second line.]

And verse ten ends with the command that runs the rest of the passage: **"Let each one take care how he builds upon it."**

Not how much. **How.**

The growth was never yours to give. But the building is yours to watch.

THE MONDAY TEST

So what does that change on Monday morning?

Nobody is asking you to lay the foundation. That is done. Monday morning you just pick up your material and pay attention to what you are handling.

0:17-0:26 SECTION 3: 1 CORINTHIANS 3:12-15

"The Day Declares It"

Reader Three reads verses 12-15. This is the freight section. Protect it.

Point 1. Six materials, two lists

Write the two lists on the board as you say them:

GOLD. SILVER. COSTLY STONES. WOOD. HAY. STRAW.

Paul names six building materials, and he splits them three and three.

Look at the first three. Gold, silver, precious stones. That is not a list of expensive things in general. In the Old Testament that exact combination is what you gather when you are building **the temple**. First Chronicles twenty-nine, David standing up in front of Israel listing what he has laid aside for the house of God. Gold. Silver. Precious stones.

The second three, wood and hay and straw, are what you build a shed with. Or a roof. Or a barn.

Now hear me, because this is the part that catches people. **Both lists are real building materials.** Both of them get used. Both of them cost you something. Nobody in the ancient world was hauling hay to a job site as a joke.

The difference is not that one is work and one is not. The difference is what happens when the fire comes.

[PROBABLE for the temple echo, 1 Chron 29:2. It is widely noted by commentators and it is a fair reading. Do not oversell it as certain.]

Point 2. The finance illustration

[This is your section. Keep it to ninety seconds. Do not run the audit illustration again, you used the examiner last week.]

Y'all know what I taught for a living. So let me put this in a language I have spent a career in.

In accounting there are two ways to spend a dollar. You can expense it, or you can capitalize it.

An expense is real money. Real work. It shows up on this year's books and then it is gone. December comes and it has been consumed.

An asset is also real money and real work. But it is still there in January. And the January after that.

Same dollar. Same effort. Same sweat. One of them is standing next year and one of them is not.

(Pause.)

Paul is not asking whether you are working. He knows you are working. He is asking a colder question than that.

Real work and lasting work are not the same thing.

Point 3. The fire is an assayer

Verse thirteen. Three things happen, and they happen in order.

"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."

That word "test" is what a jeweler does. You do not find out if it is real gold by talking about it. You put it in the heat, and the heat tells you.

And look at the last four words of the verse. **"What sort of work."** What kind. What it is made of.

Not how much you built. **What it was made of.**

Folks, the fire is not the enemy in this passage. The fire is the inspector. It is not there to destroy the building. It is there to tell the truth about it.

[TEXT. The word behind "test" is assaying language, what you do to metal to find out what is in it. Keep it in English. "What a jeweler does" gets you all of it and costs them nothing.]

Point 4. THE MYTH-BUSTING MINUTE

(Cheerful. Quick. Then move.)

Two corrections, because this passage has been used for some things it does not say.

One. This is not purgatory. Verse fifteen has been read that way for a long stretch of church history, and I understand why, because there is a fire and there is a believer standing in it. But read what actually burns. The **work** burns. The man does not. There is not one syllable in this passage about a person being purified by suffering after death. The fire is an inspection of a building, not a treatment for a person.

Two. This is not about losing your salvation. And I want to say that as plainly as I can say anything this morning, because somebody in here is already nervous. Verse fifteen: **"he**

himself will be saved." Paul could not have been clearer if he had underlined it.

The fire is not there to find out if you belong to Him. That was settled at a cross. The fire is there to find out what you built.

Point 5. The man who runs out with nothing but himself

Now verse fifteen, all the way.

"If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire."

Picture it, because Paul means for you to. A man wakes up in the night and his house is burning. And he gets out. He makes it to the yard. He is alive, and he is standing there in the grass watching it go, and there is not one thing in his hands.

Saved. And empty-handed. Both of those are true in the same verse.

(Pause. Do not soften it. Let it be heavy for a second.)

You can be saved and still walk out of the fire with nothing in your hands.

That is not a threat. It is not even a warning, exactly. It is an invitation to go back and look at what you are building this week while there is still time to change the material.

Point 6. And then the grace in verse 14

But do not leave verse fourteen out, because it is the sweeter half and we skip it every time.

"If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward."

Remember the wages back in verse eight? Here they are again, same word.

Now think about what that actually means, and think about it the way a finance man thinks about it.

God supplies the field. God supplies the foundation. God supplies the tools, the grace, the assignment, and the growth.

And then, at the end of the day, He pays you.

That is not a settlement. Nobody is owed anything. That is a landowner who does all the work and then hands out wages anyway because it pleases Him to do it.

THE MONDAY TEST

So what does that change on Monday morning?

It changes what you are willing to do when nobody is watching. Because on that Day, the hidden stuff is the only stuff still standing.

[ASK - THE ONE DISCUSSION QUESTION OF THE DAY]

Give it 4 to 5 minutes. Hand out the card here. Go first, and be specific about something real.

Think about your last month. Not your whole life, just the last month, and where the hours actually went.

Some of that was gold. Some of it was hay. And here is the thing, you already know which is which. Nobody has to tell you.

So: what is one thing you have been building lately that you believe will still be standing on that Day? And what is one thing you already suspect is hay, that you keep doing anyway?

[TEACHING NOTE: Answer first and name a real one of your own. If you will not name your hay, nobody will name theirs. Keep it off other people entirely. This question goes bad fast if anybody starts diagnosing somebody else's materials. If it starts drifting there, say out loud: "Paul gave every one of us our own building. Stay on yours." Then move on.]

0:26-0:30 THE LANDING

(Slow down. Nothing after this but prayer.)

Let me take you back to the barn.

Feed them. Water them. Keep the fence up. That is my whole job out there, and it turns out it is pretty close to Paul's whole chapter. Somebody plants. Somebody waters. And God does the only part that matters.

But here is what I left out this morning when I told you about my place.

It is not my field.

(Pause.)

That is the whole lesson. That is a servant's heart, and it is not what most of us were taught it was.

We were taught that a servant's heart means thinking poorly of yourself. Talking yourself down. Getting uncomfortable when somebody says thank you.

That is not what Paul does anywhere in this chapter. Paul is not insecure. Paul is not fishing. Paul just knows exactly one thing that the whole church at Corinth had forgotten.

He knows whose field he is standing in.

The seed was not his. The ground was not his. The foundation was poured before he got there, by somebody with holes in His hands. Every tool in his bag was issued to him by grace. And **the growth was never his to give.**

Which means he had nothing left to compete about. You cannot have a fan club fight when nobody in the fight owns anything.

Now. There is a fire coming, and it is not a fire to be scared of. If you are His, you are His, and verse fifteen settles that. But there is going to be a morning when the smoke clears and we all find out what we actually built with.

And I would like some of us to be standing there with our hands full.

THE QUIET MOMENT

(Ask them to close their eyes. Do not fill the silence. Thirty full seconds. It will feel like four minutes. Let it run anyway.)

I want you to do something before we pray, and nobody has to say a word out loud.

Ask Him one question. Just one. **Lord, what am I building this week that is going to burn?**

He will tell you. He is not shy about it, and He is not cruel about it either.

(Silence. Thirty full seconds. Do not shorten this.)

THE ONE THING THIS WEEK

Here is your one thing, and it is small enough that every single one of us can do it before next Sunday.

Do one piece of work this week that nobody will ever know you did. And then do not tell anybody.

Not your husband. Not your wife. Not this class next Sunday. Not a soul.

Because the minute you tell it, you have collected your wages, and they were small ones. Leave it uncollected. Let it stay in His hands until the Day.

That is a servant’s heart. That is gold instead of hay. And it costs you nothing but your credit.

(Pray. Do not preach after the prayer.)

THE INVITATION (while they gather their things)

One more thing before you go.

Next week Paul takes what we just learned and turns it on us harder. He says stop deceiving yourselves. He says stop boasting in men. And then he says something I have never gotten all the way over: it is a very small thing to him to be judged by you, or by any human court. Even his own opinion of himself does not get a vote.

Next Sunday: A Humble Attitude. Why the man who cares least what the room thinks of him is the freest man in it.

Somebody you know is exhausted from managing what people think of them. That lesson is for them.

There’s a chair. Bring them to it.

APPENDIX A: LEADER’S CHEAT SHEET

Claim	Status
1 Cor 3:5 uses the neuter <i>ti</i> ("what"), not <i>tis</i> ("who"), of Paul and Apollos	TEXT. Preserved in ESV and KJV.
<i>Diakonoi</i> (v. 5) is the ordinary word for a table servant or waiter; source of "deacon"	TEXT / ESTABLISHED
"As the Lord assigned to each" (v. 5) makes the ministry an assignment, not an achievement	TEXT
V. 6 shifts from aorist (planted, watered) to imperfect (kept giving the growth)	TEXT. Standard in Fee, Garland, Thiselton.
V. 7 "neither is anything," with Paul naming himself first	TEXT

<i>Misthos</i> (vv. 8, 14) = a day laborer's wage	TEXT / ESTABLISHED
V. 9 "God's fellow workers" means workers belonging to God, not co-equal partners with God	PROBABLE, majority reading. Say "most scholars."
<i>Georgion</i> (v. 9) = cultivated, worked, owned ground	TEXT
<i>Architekton</i> (v. 10) = chief builder on site, source of English "architect"	TEXT / ESTABLISHED
<i>Tekton</i> is the word used of Jesus in Mark 6:3 and of Joseph in Matt 13:55	TEXT
Paul intended a deliberate echo of Jesus' trade	INFERENCE, and a weak one. Label it. Present it as resonance, not intention.
V. 11 the foundation is already laid, perfect passive	TEXT
Gold, silver, precious stones echo the temple materials of 1 Chron 29:2	PROBABLE, widely noted, not certain
<i>Dokimazo</i> (v. 13) is assaying language for testing metal	TEXT / ESTABLISHED
<i>Hopoion</i> (v. 13) = "what sort," quality not quantity	TEXT
V. 15 is not about purgatory; the work burns, the person is saved	TEXT. The purgatorial reading is a later interpretive TRADITION, not what the verse says.
V. 15 is not about losing salvation	TEXT, explicit
Paul urged Apollos to visit Corinth (1 Cor 16:12)	TEXT
Corinth destroyed 146 BC, refounded 44 BC, boomtown status culture	ESTABLISHED (taught last week; callback only this week)

Commentaries behind this lesson: Gordon Fee, *1 Corinthians* (NICNT, rev. 2014); David Garland, *1 Corinthians* (BECNT, 2003); Ciampa and Rosner (PNTC, 2010); Anthony Thiselton (NIGTC, 2000); Bruce Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth* (2001).

APPENDIX B: THE THREE SCRIPTURE READINGS

Translation note, per our standing rule. The text below is the World English Bible, public domain, printed as a placeholder so you have something in front of you. **Paste your ESV over each block before Sunday.** I will check your paste for accuracy if you send it to me. The meaningful differences between WEB and ESV are flagged after each reading, and two of them matter this week.

READING ONE: 1 Corinthians 3:5-8 (WEB placeholder)

Who then is Apollos, and who is Paul, but servants through whom you believed, and each as the Lord gave to him? I planted. Apollos watered. But God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are the same, but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

Listen for: servants ... as the Lord assigned ... I planted ... God gave the growth ... neither is anything ... his own wages

WEB vs ESV, and this one matters. WEB opens with "Who then is Apollos." The ESV has "**What then is Apollos? What is Paul?**" The ESV is closer to the Greek here, and Point 1 of Section 1 depends on it. Make sure your paste says "What." Also: WEB "gave the increase," ESV "gave the growth." Same thing. ESV "wages" for WEB "reward" in v. 8, and ESV is the better fit for *misthos*.

READING TWO: 1 Corinthians 3:9-11 (WEB placeholder)

For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's farming, God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another builds on it. But let each man be careful how he builds on it. For no one can lay any other foundation than that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Listen for: God's ... God's ... God's ... according to the grace given to me ... master builder ... take care how he builds ... already laid

WEB vs ESV. WEB "God's farming," ESV "**God's field.**" ESV is better English and it is the word you want on the board. WEB "wise master builder," ESV "**skilled master builder.**" Either is fine. Do not comment on the difference from the front. It is a leader's detail, not a class detail.

READING THREE: 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 (WEB placeholder)

But if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, or stubble, each man's work will be revealed. For the Day will declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself will test what sort of work each man's work is. If any man's work remains which he built on it, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, but as through fire.

Listen for: gold, silver, precious stones ... wood, hay, straw ... the Day will disclose it ... what sort of work ... he will receive a reward ... he himself will be saved

WEB vs ESV. WEB "stubble," ESV "**straw.**" Use straw, it is the plainer word and it is on your handout card. Everything else lines up closely.

APPENDIX C: VERIFIED VIDEO AND STANLEY SOURCES

(Searched and confirmed August 1, 2026.)

VIDEO: honest recommendation is to skip it this week

There is no Chosen scene for an epistle, and BibleProject's 1 Corinthians overview was already offered last week, so using it again would be a repeat.

The closest verified option is BibleProject's "**Temple**" theme video at bibleproject.com/videos/temple. It is real, it is well made, and it does connect: the biblical story runs from a garden-temple to God taking up residence in His people, which is exactly where Paul goes three verses past our passage in 3:16.

But it is off-center for verses 5 through 15, and this is the week you told me the clock is beating you. **My recommendation: no video.** Spend those four minutes on the discussion question instead. Bank the Temple video for a Sunday when the passage is actually about the temple.

CHARLES STANLEY: confirmed, and this one lands dead center

Unlike last week, there is no hedging needed here. Dr. Stanley taught this passage directly and repeatedly.

Confirmed sermon on In Touch's own site: "Your Convictions About the Judgment of the Believer," at intouch.org/watch/sermons/your-convictions-about-the-judgment-of-the-believer. <cite index="7-1">It quotes 1 Corinthians 3:14-15 directly and makes the point that

because Christ has forgiven all our sins, this is not a judgment about whether we enter heaven, since believers will already be there when they stand before Him. The purpose, Stanley says, is to reward believers for what they have done.</cite>

Also confirmed, In Touch devotional material on the judgment seat: <cite index="2-1">Stanley taught that the Greek word behind "judgment seat" is *bema*, a place of accountability, and that believers will be judged on the quality of their work rather than condemned. He connected the selfish works God likens to wood, hay, and stubble in 1 Corinthians 3:13 to items fit only for the fire, while the thoughts, words, and deeds that serve the Lord are exchanged for rewards.</cite> <cite index="2-1">He described standing before Christ's judgment seat as something to look forward to rather than fear.</cite>

A Stanley-flavored line for the Landing, sourced honestly:

Charles Stanley preached this passage more than once, and he said something about it I want you to carry out the door. He said standing in front of Jesus on that day is not something a believer should dread. It is something to look forward to. Because the question that morning is not "am I His." The question is "what did I build." And He has been eager the whole time to hand out wages.

APPENDIX D: THE HANDOUT CARD

(Half sheet. One per person.)

1 CORINTHIANS 3:5-15 | A SERVANT'S HEART

A servant's heart is not thinking less of yourself. It is knowing whose field you are standing in.

Verse 5: Paul asks "**What** is Apollos? What is Paul?" Not who. And he answers with one word: servants.

Verses 6-7: God **gave** the growth. God **gives** the growth. Paul's part had an end date. God's part never did. Paul had a day. Apollos had a day. God had every day in between. **The growth was never yours to give.**

Verse 9: God's workers. God's field. God's building. Three times in one verse, and none of them says yours.

Verse 10: *Architekton*, "master builder." Chief + *tekton*, the same trade word used of Jesus in Mark 6:3.

Verse 11: You cannot pour the foundation twice.

Verses 12-13: Gold, silver, precious stones. Wood, hay, straw. Both lists are real work. Only one is standing after the fire. The test is **what sort**, not how much.

This is not about whether you are His. That was settled at a cross.

Verse 15: The work burns. The man is saved. You can be saved and still walk out with nothing in your hands.

This week: Do one piece of work nobody will ever know you did. Then do not tell a soul.

APPENDIX E: DIG DEEPER

Fenced. Use only if discussion runs short or the room is thin. Nothing here is ever cut on the fly, because none of it is ever promised.

1. The friendship nobody expects

Here is a thing almost nobody notices about this chapter.

The church at Corinth had split into Team Paul and Team Apollos. Two fan clubs, at each other's throats over which man was better.

And when you get to the last chapter of this same letter, chapter sixteen, verse twelve, here is what Paul writes: he **strongly urged** Apollos to go visit them.

Paul spent three chapters dismantling the Apollos fan club, and then personally tried to talk Apollos into going back down there.

The two men the church was fighting over were not fighting. They never were. The rivalry existed entirely in the pews.

[TEXT, 1 Cor 16:12. Acts 18:24-28 fills in who Apollos was: an Alexandrian Jew, eloquent, mighty in the Scriptures, taught more accurately by Priscilla and Aquila.]

2. The judgment seat you can go stand on

Paul talks about a Day when work gets inspected. And he had stood in front of a seat like that himself, in that very city.

In Acts eighteen, the Jews of Corinth hauled Paul in front of the Roman governor Gallio at the *bema*, the judgment seat in the middle of the Corinthian marketplace. Gallio threw the case out.

Archaeologists have excavated that bema. You can walk up the steps and stand on it today.

And later, writing back to this same church in Second Corinthians five, Paul uses the same word for the judgment seat of Christ. He is describing something to a congregation that had watched him stand on the local version of it.

[The Corinth bema is ESTABLISHED and excavated. Acts 18:12-17 is TEXT. The connection to the bema of 2 Cor 5:10 as a deliberate echo for the Corinthian readers is INFERENCE, though a natural one and commonly noted.]

3. Where the first three materials come from

If you want the temple connection made explicit, read 1 Chronicles 29:2 out loud. David, at the end of his life, listing what he has laid up for the house of God: gold, silver, precious stones, and more.

Then read 1 Corinthians 3:12 again.

Paul is not just saying "expensive stuff versus cheap stuff." He is saying: are you building this church out of temple materials, or out of shed materials?

4. Extra Greek, if the room wants it

- *Diakonos* (v. 5): table servant, waiter. Source of "deacon."
- *Georgion* (v. 9): tilled, cultivated ground. Same root family as the name George, "earth worker."
- *Oikodome* (v. 9): a building, a structure. Source of the word "edify," which literally means to build somebody up.
- *Sophos* (v. 10): wise. Paul calls himself a wise master builder, and then spends the next paragraph taking apart Corinth's whole idea of wisdom. That is next Sunday.

APPENDIX F: FULL DISCUSSION QUESTION BANK

The one in the script:

1. Think about your last month and where the hours actually went. What is one thing you have been building that you believe will still be standing on that Day? And what is one thing you already suspect is hay, that you keep doing anyway?

Held in reserve:

2. Paul says the planter and the waterer are “not anything,” and he puts his own name first. What is the difference between that and low self-esteem? How would you know which one you have?
3. Verse five says their roles were assigned, not chosen. What has the Lord assigned you in this church that you did not pick?
4. The two men the church was fighting over were friends the whole time. Where do we manufacture rivalries that the people involved would not recognize?
5. Verse ten says take care **how** you build, not how much. What would change this week if you measured your work by “what sort” instead of “how much”?
6. Both lists in verse twelve are real building materials. What is something in your life that is genuinely good work, genuinely costly, and still probably straw?
7. The foundation was laid before you got to the site. What are you trying to lay again that Christ already finished?
8. Verse fifteen says a believer can be saved and still lose everything he built. Does that frighten you or free you? Why?
9. Verse fourteen says the wages are real. If you took seriously that God intends to pay you for work He supplied the tools for, what would you attempt this month that you have not attempted?
10. Charles Stanley said standing before Christ’s judgment seat is something to look forward to. Is that how you picture it? If not, what picture do you actually carry, and where did you get it?

HOOK LEDGER ENTRY

Week	Hook used	Type
1 Cor 3:5-15	<i>Architekton</i> , chief + <i>tekton</i> : Paul describes his ministry with the trade word used of Jesus in Mark 6:3	Greek word
Banked	The Corinth bema you can stand on; Paul urging Apollos to visit (1 Cor 16:12); the two accounting treatments of a dollar	History / unexpected fact / finance
