

Day 1 - Vacant Lots

Theme - salvation

Big idea - a builder must first buy the land

Intro - building quiz - what are these famous buildings?

1. Vacant Lots - There are many different types of building, they can take a few weeks or many years to build, but they all have one step in common. It's a step that takes practically no time at all, but the most important step of all - the builder must buy the lot. When they sign the contract all is changed - the land is under new ownership and building can begin.

2. Temple Building - We're going to look at the temple in the Bible, and our lives as God builds us to be temples for him. The temple was intended to be a place of worship, communion and sacrifice.

Gen 22 v 2 - Abraham is told to go to Moriah and sacrifice his son. God provides a substitute: a ram caught in a thicket. It was sacrificed there.

2 Sam 24 v 18, 21 - David has caused a plague on the nation of Israel and seeks to restore them. He wants to reserve a place to build an altar and buys the threshing floor on Mount Moriah.

1 Kings 8 v 20-21 - Solomon starts to build the temple, in the pattern God has given him, in the place where David worshipped and where Abraham took his son.

John 2 v 19 - Jesus stands outside the very same site. He talks about the temple being destroyed and him rebuilding it in 3 days - but he's talking about himself.

1 Cor 6 v 19 - Christians are told that we are to be a temple for God.

3. Signed Deeds - "Ye are not your own" - that first step of ownership is essential.

The price - in all these cases a price had to be paid.

This is the gospel message:

- We are vacant lots. God wants to make us temples
- There is a price we cannot pay but Jesus paid it on the cross, he was our substitute
- Our part is to accept, believe and confess. When we do this we are brought into the family of god and our name is written in the Lamb's book of life
- This change of ownership is immediate, complete and forever
- Building the temple takes time and effort

4. Song - He signed my deeds

5. Question - What are you? Vacant lots, or under new management. Do you belong to the Lord, and are you ready to be a temple for him?

- Vacant Lots - ignore next 5 lessons, God wants to make a temple of you but he must own you first
- Belong to the Lord - we're going to learn how he plans to build us into temples for him

Memory Verse - 1 Corinthians 6 v 20

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Quiet time - John 2 v 19, 1 Cor 6 v 19

- in what ways was Jesus a place of worship, of communion, of sacrifice?
- In what ways can you be a place of worship, of communion, of sacrifice?
- Are you owned by the Lord?

Day 2 - The Big Clear-out

Theme - sin

Big idea - cleansing is a continuous work

Intro - what was there before the Eiffel Tower, the Taj Mahal, the Sydney Opera House? What was there before the Houses of Parliament? The Palace of Westminster was burned down, so they had to clear it away and start from scratch.

1. A Messy Life - Whatever was there before, it had to be cleared away, demolished and removed. Even after building on a new structure has started there is still a need to keep clearing away the rubbish that accumulates, mistakes that need to be wiped away.

2. Space to Start Building - once the rubbish is cleared we can see the shape of the ground, the potential for something good.

Mistake - people think that they need to clear the rubbish before they can approach God. It's the other way round. Salvation must come first and cleansing follows.

3. Clearing out the Temple - The temple was completed and consecrated in Solomon's day. But later sin came in and a clearout was required.

2 Kings 23 v 4 - Josiah read the newly discovered word of God and realised they had fallen into idolatry. He ordered the idols removed from the temple.

Ezekiel 8 v 3 - Ezekiel is shown a vision of Jerusalem and the temple, and sees that idols are being worshipped in the temple.

Matthew 21 v 12-13 - Jesus clears out the temple of the people who have polluted it.

4. Filtering out the Flaws - Look at this woman. She's applied a filter to her face to remove blemishes, smooth out her skin, narrow her nose and chin, whiten her teeth and brighten her eyes. At salvation, God puts a filter over us, that is Christ. When he looks at us he sees us through Christ, as righteous. He doesn't see our flaws, our mistakes, our ugly minds; he sees a purity that comes from Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5 v 21 - in him we might become the righteousness of God

But beneath that filter we are still sinners and he wants to clear away those sinful parts of our lives. This is a joint work - we must do it under the power given to us by God.

5. Beware of Sin in Disguise - During the 2005 election, the Tories took a picture of Tony Blair, and covered his eyes with scary ones. The message was that under the smile he was dangerous. Sometimes sin pretends to be goodness and we have to look under the surface to see its real nature. See Philippians 3 v 4-7 where Paul lists the things that other Jews would value highly but he recognises as rubbish that needs to be wiped out and not relied on at all.

6. Question - *What do you need to clear out in your life?*

Memory Verse - Psalm 51 v 10

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Quiet time - Philippians 3 v 4-7

- why does Paul count these things as bad?
- What things in our lives might cause pride and self reliance?
- What idols do we have in our lives that need to be removed?

Day 3 - A Rocky Start

Theme - foundations

Big idea - build your life on Christ

Intro - the worlds tallest building, the Burj Khalifa - how deep are the foundations? They're 50m deep, about as deep as a 15 story building is high. You don't see them but they're there, holding the building up, giving it stability, protecting it from storms and even earthquakes. Foundations need to be solid, strong and stable.

1. **Matthew 7 v 24-27** - the wise man and foolish man.

The wise man built on a strong foundation. His house was just the same as the foolish man's, and while the weather stayed good it seemed as solid. But when the storm came the sand holding up the foolish man's house shifted and moved, so his house came down.

What is your building? Your life, works, religion, relationships, family, career, assets. All these can be built up over years but wiped away in seconds. Some people look as if they're living a strong Christian life, but if their foundations aren't strong then when the storm comes it will all fall around them.

2. The Temple Foundation - When the temple was built they didn't dig deep but they used strong foundation stones. The weight of the building would concentrate on one corner where they would place one extra large, strong stone, the corner stone.

1 Kings 5 v 17 - note how much care was taken over the foundations - it all rested on them

Ephesians 2 v 19-22 - foundation is the apostles and prophets, corner stone is Christ

3. **The Corner Stone** - So the teachings of the prophets and disciples are important.

But everything rests on Christ. If he isn't there, nothing will stand.

4. **Foundation Truths** - What does the foundation of Christ look like? Strong, sure, unchanging truths.

- God is creator
- Man is sinful
- Jesus is God in flesh
- Jesus died and rose again
- Jesus is the only way to salvation
- We are saved through faith in him and are safe in him

1 John 2 v 22 - beware those who deny the foundational truths about Jesus. John says these folk do not have Christ. Some things we can disagree on and it's not too important, but the foundational truths are vital to the resilience of our Christian stand.

5. Weather Tight - As we build on these foundations we can still be vulnerable as young Christians, until our buildings are weather tight. Not complete, but mature. But most important are the foundations - the truths, promises and person of Christ.

Question - Do we know who we believe and are we standing on him?

Memory Verse - Ephesians 2 v 20

[you] are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

Quiet time - 1 Peter 3 v 15

- what is the hope that is in you?
- How would you explain that to someone?
- How would you defend your foundation beliefs?
- How would you approach a discussion with an unbeliever?

Day 4 - Blueprint for Beauty

Theme - plan

Big idea - god has a plan for each of us

Intro - What do you think these drawings are? They're taken from unusual angles so you have to think the right way to see them. House plans are like that too. They can be side on or top down but we need to visualise them. What do you think this is a plan of?

1. Plan for Notre Dame - before a brick is laid, even before the ground has been bought, there's a plan. It's a picture of the completed work, and every step needed to make it in detail. Drawn up by the architect, the plan is set out to make the building as beautiful as possible.

2. Design of the temple - 1 kings 6 v 2-6 - God had a design laid out for his temple, in its construction and in its use. It was designed for beauty, to glorify god and to picture Christ. We can see each of these aspects in the contents of the temple - the brazen altar, the laver, the lamp stand, the table of shewbread, the altar of incense and the ark of the covenant, as well as the curtains, poles, implements and so on.

Plan for God's man - Jeremiah 1 v 4-10 - God had a plan for Jeremiah's life, before he was even conceived. It was a plan for a life that was beautiful, which would glorify God, and which was to point the way to Jesus.

3. God's Plans for his Temples - from the very beginning God had a plan for you to be beautiful. Not bright eyes and shiny hair, but a life that is beautiful, that attracts people. Have you ever been with someone who lights up a room with their personality. But not for their own sake. He has designed us to glorify him. The things that he builds in us don't reflect on how great we are, but how great God is. And they point the way to Christ. His plan is that we show the way to Jesus. How?

4. Shape of the Building - If we look at a building, the shape of the visible parts match the shape of the foundations. Even though we can't see the foundations it is evident where they are. So it should be for our lives. John 14 v 8-9 - Jesus says if we have seen him we have seen the father. He tells us in Mathew 5 v 13-14 that we are to be salt and light in this world. We should make a difference, make things better, shine out Jesus, who lives within us.

Question - Do we see God working out his plan in us? Are we being salt and light?

Memory Verse - Ephesians 2 v 21

In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord

Quiet time - Matthew 5 v 13-14

- what qualities to salt and light have?
- How can we be salt?
- How can we be light?

Day 5 - Built for a purpose

Theme - gifts

Big idea - we all have a part to play

Intro - there are many different types of building - palace, stadium, office, swimming pool, library, toilet. They will have different designs, different values, but all are needed.

1. What was the temple for? - There were three main purposes for the temple. Firstly it was a place of worship, where the Jews came to worship God, often bringing him offerings. Secondly it was a place of communion: it was where people came to meet with God. In a special way God was present in the holiest place, right in the centre of the temple. Thirdly it was a place of sacrifice. It was where the Jews brought an animal to be sacrificed to show repentance and seek forgiveness for their sins.

As temples ourselves, we also have these common purposes. We should be a place of worship - our lives should glorify and honour God as an act of worship. We are also a place of communion, as after Jesus ascended the Spirit of God came down to reside in all Christians, so he lives in us just as God was present in the temple. So our days should be full of times of communion with God. And we are also a place for sacrifice. Not for our sins - Jesus paid that price once and for all on the cross. But the Bible says we should present our bodies a living sacrifice (Romans 12 v 1).

These are our common purposes. But God made us all different and has a special purpose for us.

2. What was in the temple? - The temple contained 6 specific items of furniture and each had a purpose: the laver for cleansing, the altar for sacrifice, the lamp stand for light, the table for offering bread, the incense altar for sending a sweet smell up and the ark of the covenant, where the lamb's blood was poured for the sins of the people.

3. Parts of the body - as well as each of us being a temple, the church is a temple of God, made of parts.

1 Cor 12 - Body Parts

We all have different abilities and different gifts, and that is by design. God has a place and a purpose for each of us in his church. And that role isn't for us all to go to church to sit and listen to the sermon once a week and do nothing else.

We need to learn what areas of service are given to us.

We need to be happy with where God puts us.

We need to not be envious of others' positions.

Look at the gifts Paul uses as examples: teachers, helpers, healing, languages. All different but all useful.

Ephesians 2 v 19-22 - each local church is also like a building, carefully and cleverly built together with Christ as the cornerstone.

Question - How has God gifted you? What are you doing to serve him and exercise your gift?

Memory Verse - Ephesians 2 v 10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Quiet time - Romans 12 v 3-8

- list the spiritual gifts in this passage and describe each
- What do you think your gift is?
- What are some areas of service in the church you could get involved with?

Day 6 - Finishing Touch

Theme - destination

Big idea - God will keep working on us until the end

Intro - think of the great pyramid at Giza. What's wrong with it? No? It's not complete. There was a layer of bright white stone on top which made it smooth and brilliant. It took about 20 years to build, and imagine the capping off ceremony when it was done.

This other building is the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, designed by Gaudi. He started building it in 1882 and it still isn't finished. It does serve as a working church building where service are held, but it won't be finished until 2026.

1. Finishing the Temple - 1 Kings 7 v 51, 8 v 6, 10-11 - Solomon finished off the temple and brought in the ark of the covenant. When he did so the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. God showed his approval and his blessing for the work they had done. Note that this is different from how he works in our temples. We don't have to wait until we're finished to receive his approval or his blessing. As soon as we're saved the Spirit of God enters into us, blessing us and fitting us for service.

2. Our Finished Temples - But there is a time that we will be finished, complete, perfect. Philippians 1 v 6 - God is working on us. If we're saved he has started a work in us and he will keep at it. As much as we let him he will build us and shape us into beautiful images of his son. But he will need to keep working as we won't be finished in this life. God will complete his work on the day Jesus returns. Until then our job is to let him transform us so that when that day comes there is little left to do.

Genesis 5 v 24 - Enoch seems to have got really close to God, so that when God took him away there was hardly any transition. He didn't even die, God just took him

2 Corinthians 5 v 1-5 - When God takes us he will transform our bodies and we will live in eternal, heavenly bodies, new and beautiful. That will all happen at once, but he wants to start transforming our minds now.

Romans 12 v 2 - We need to let him transform our minds first. Then when the day comes to leave these earthly bodies he will finish the work - if we've let him transform us throughout our lives there won't be much more to do.

3. Summary:

1. Vacant Lots - we need to be owned by God before he can do any work in us
2. Clearing Out - we need to clear out the sin in our lives to make space for God to build
3. Laying Foundations - our lives need to be built on Christ and foundational truths
4. Blueprint for Beauty - God has a plan for our lives made before we were born
5. Built for a Purpose - we are made to serve God in different ways using our gifts
6. Finishing Touch - we won't be perfect this side of eternity but we can get closer

Question - How much work does God still have to do in you?

Finishing Thought - remember that this is all God's work. If we try to build ourselves we'll get nowhere. Our job is to spend time getting to know the God who has saved us and let him work in our lives to build us.

Memory Verse - Philippians 1 v 6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ

Quiet time - John 6 v 40

- how do you picture heaven?
- What will the perfect you be like?
- What parts of your life will you let God build up after camp?