***1 Cor 3:12-13 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is.***

Labor Day – a great time to consider the works that lead to eternity. God calls us to labor. In Genesis 2, before Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, there was the blessing of work. Genesis 2:15 *Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.* Colossians 3:23 reminds us - *And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.* May all the labor of our hands be found acceptable to the Lord and impactful for His Kingdom.

Our scripture this morning is taken from 1 Corinthians 3. In verse 9, we’re called God’s fellow workers, His field, His building. In verse 11, we see that there is no other foundation than Christ. When we surrender to Him, He is the foundation of all we build. When we were not in Jesus, we built everything with no foundation, a house on shifting sand, destined to be washed away when the storms came. Now, we build upon the Rock and, even as the storms lash and the winds howl, we stand firm on the foundation of Jesus.

In verse 12, Paul speaks of building on this Perfect Foundation. *Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw****.*** Now if anyone builds on this one foundation, Jesus Christ – some will choose to build on the shifting sands of this world, no foundation that lasts. But, others choose to build on the Rock – Psalm 18:31 says – *For who is God, except the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God?* We all choose how we will build upon this Rock. Some will dedicate their best, the imperishable, that which does not pass away – gold, silver, precious stones, investing their all into building the Kingdom of Christ. Some will invest the perishable – wood, hay, straw. Our build becomes our character and our witness. Our very integrity. We build with our actions and our words, every day investing either our most precious or our least precious, knowing that gold, silver, precious stones bring a lasting witness to those around us. I often ask myself – am I investing my best for My Precious Savior? This day, is it gold, silver, and precious stones I lay on this eternal Foundation or wood, straw, and hay? Does God see an investment of my very greatest worth? Or does He see the remnants, the leftovers, the stubble of the blessings He gave to me?

Verse 13 *each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is.*There will come a Day when the question will be answered, not by the words of our lips, but by Purity of God’s judgement. Works will either be approved or disapproved. The Day of the Lord will declare it. Proverbs 17:3 says - *The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the Lord tests the hearts.* God tests the precious and the worthless alike, removing the wood, hay, straw, but also refining the gold, silver, and precious stones. In Matthew 3:11 John the Baptist says - *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.* In Acts 2:3-4, we see the Spirit come as a fire - *Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.****4****And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.* In Hebrews 12:28-29, we learn God is a consuming fire - *Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.****29****For our God is a consuming fire.* How might we serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear? With our very best – gold, silver, precious stones – the very best of our resources, talents, time, and love – because He is High and Lifted Up, worthy to be praised with our very best, a Consuming Fire testing, knowing what sort of work it is.

I want to finish with verses 14-15 - *If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.* Let’s be sure we are investing our best in Jesus.

This week, let’s consider where we are building. If it’s not on Christ, come as we sing and make Him your foundation. Let’s consider how we are building. Is it with intention and purpose toward the Kingdom of Christ? Let’s consider what we are using to build. Is it our best because Jesus is worthy of our best? One will burn up and one will endure. God’s consuming fire will reveal – what will It find when we are purified in His Presence the Day we stand before Him?