

August, 17, 2006

## **Encouragement for Today**

### **“Building the House – God Builds with Broken Lives”**

Luann Prater, Proverbs 31 Speaker

#### **Key Verse:**

Ephesians 2:20-22, “...built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.” (NIV)

#### **Devotion:**

This world is a classroom and my lessons recently have been about building. We have been acting as our own general contractors on our dream house. For years, my husband and I drove around the lake looking for the right parcel of land. Four years ago, we bought 5 acres and began the search for the right blueprints. Two years ago, we bought them.

Finding and interviewing subcontractors became the next quest to insure everything would be done on time, on budget and exactly as we had planned. Last year we broke ground and soon discovered that not everyone plays by the rules. After our survey and grading went off without a hitch we were feeling pretty confident about this whole building process. Then came my first lesson: **God builds with broken lives.**

You hire people; they do their job; and everyone is happy. Reality smacked us in the face when we hired Charles, a nice young man with a lovely wife and two small children to frame our house. He seemed like the perfect choice to build the skeleton that would hold our little dream together. However, after two months there were no walls and the only thing building was his lies. My mild-mannered husband fired this nice young man.

Why did we have to endure that little setback? On Friday of that week it became clear. My husband walked in the door that night and announced, “I understand now.” He handed me the letter. The letter was from the young man thanking us for firing him. After the confrontation with my husband he was driving down the road distraught and crying when his cell phone rang. It was his brother asking how he was doing. You see, his brother was a youth minister who had been praying for two years for his wayward brother to turn back to the Lord. That very moment Charles turned his car in the direction of the church, fell on his knees and came back to the Lord.

My husband choked back the tears and sighed, “Two months was a small price to pay.”

“And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit” (Eph 2:22). God is using you and me each day to reach his lost sheep. Our adversities may be the stepping stones that enable these sheep to cross over to the Father’s House.

#### **My Prayer for Today:**

Lord, we know that our ways are not Your ways, and yet we question Your authority. Today help us to see the bump in our road may be the stop sign for someone racing down the road to destruction. Give us compassionate hearts as we wait on You. In Jesus’ Name we pray, Amen.

**Application Steps:**

Pray for God to open your eyes so you can see the lost around you.

**Journal:**

Write your struggles in a spiral notebook and then pray over them. Date it. Record the day of deliverance beside each prayer. Discover God's timing is perfect.

**Reflection Points:**

Why do you think this struggle is only affecting you?

Who is watching your actions and reactions?

What can you do to reach out to a hurting heart?

When was the last time you recorded the details of God's deliverance?

**Power Verses:**

Ezekiel 34:4, "You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost." (NIV)

Jeremiah 10:23, "I know, O Lord, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps." (NIV)

Matthew 9:12, "Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (NIV)

**Additional Resources:**

*But Mom, I Don't Want to Move* by Susan Miller

[http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources\\_butMom.htm](http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources_butMom.htm)

*Sandpaper People* by Mary Southerland

[http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources\\_sandpaperPeople.htm](http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources_sandpaperPeople.htm)

*Neighborhood Bible Studies*, ETC Corner

<http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/etcMay04.htm>