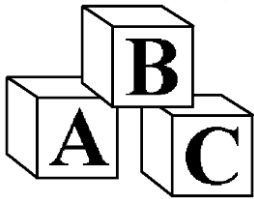


## Being a Builder

There are three Kinds of people in the world: Those who build, those who destroy, and those who don't do either very much.

Being destructive is a sign of immaturity. Kids are destructive, for many reasons. Often it's because being destructive is much easier than being productive. Did you ever watch a little child and an adult playing with blocks? Children love to knock down towers made of blocks before they can walk, before they can even say "Do it again, Daddy."



It's normal, it's fun, and it's harmless at that age. But at any age, it's easier to tear down than to build.

As they grow up, kids must be taught to build their own towers, rather than just knocking down someone else's. They must learn, sometimes the hard way, not to destroy things that are not meant to be destroyed. It starts with learning to take care of their own toys. If they don't get that education—if they can carelessly or intentionally break their toys and always get more, watch out! They may grow up to have no respect for anything.

In teenagers, destructive behavior is often one of the ways they rebel against authority. Usually there is some element of showing off—proving to their peers how cool or tough or smart they are. Most teenagers are not destructive, but too many are. They really need to be caught and appropriately punished, so they can learn that such behavior is not something they want to continue.

All too many young people do not learn that important lesson, and they grow up to be destructive adults. Some men channel their destructive impulses into socially acceptable activities, such as smashing up old cars on weekends. Others channel it into anger that gets violent, so they fight or beat their wives. Often

they continue to smash things that they shouldn't. Very often they wind up in jail.

Destructive girls often turn into women who destroy with words, using abusive language or gossip to tear other people down. They too get violent sometimes, and often their children suffer for it. And, of course, men, too, can be just as cruel and destructive with their words as with their actions.

I believe most violent or destructive people do not feel good about themselves. I think they would like to be loved and admired for the good they do, rather than feared and hated for their destructive actions. But they are as they are, and don't know how to change, or are afraid to try to change, because they might be ridiculed by others who are as destructive as they are. The good news for them is that Jesus can help them to change as they should, and in belonging to Him they can find joy that is beyond anything they could imagine.



A very large number of people do outgrow the destructiveness of early childhood, but never go on to become builders. They receive the Lord's blessings and they go along, neither hot nor cold, through life. Usually they stay out of trouble, but only rarely do they do anything that will last.

I don't know how these people feel about themselves. I suspect they don't think about that very much, they just go along through life in their comfortable ruts, or reacting to circumstances. They aren't much burdened with guilt, but they also miss a lot of the joy of living that comes from being a blessing to others.

There are people, though, who grow up with a burning desire to be productive. They want to

help people—preaching the Gospel, healing the sick, siding with the underdog, defending freedom, fighting crime, and so on. These people become pastors, policemen, firefighters, doctors, nurses, social workers—even, perhaps, lawyers and politicians. Sometimes their zeal for others turns to greed, and that’s a shame, but many of them remain dedicated to serving. I call them “builders.”

Others want to create something that will last—a work of art, a fine building, a better mousetrap. Some of these are egotists, but some are also builders, because they do these things not for themselves, but for others—for posterity.

And there are many others who are simply willing to be a blessing—loving their family, helping a neighbor, serving on a committee, picking up trash and putting it where it belongs, visiting a sick person, greeting strangers with a smile, saying “thank you” to a waitress or store clerk, and on and on. These people are the quiet builders—those who do what they can, without fanfare or reward, to make the world, or at least their little corner of it, better than it was.

People like these are what Jesus had in mind when He said, “You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world.”



What about you? Are you a builder? Are you one who wants to be a blessing to yourself and those around you, a kind and considerate person, a giver, a helper? Are you instead a taker, “looking out for number one,” always competing and always needing to win, interested only in what you can get from others, and serving only yourself? Or are you satisfied to be neither of those, neither helping nor hurting anyone else, for the rest of your days?

Remember, Jesus is the Creator. All things were created by Him and for Him (Colossians 1:16), and His whole purpose in coming to earth was to give life—abundant life—to all who will believe in Him (John 10:10, John 3:16). Satan is the destroyer. He comes to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10). Which of the two would you rather be like?

You can be a builder, right where you are. You can be used by God to be a blessing to your family, your neighbors, and the world. It doesn’t matter what you were in the past. You can put the past behind you, and go on with Jesus.

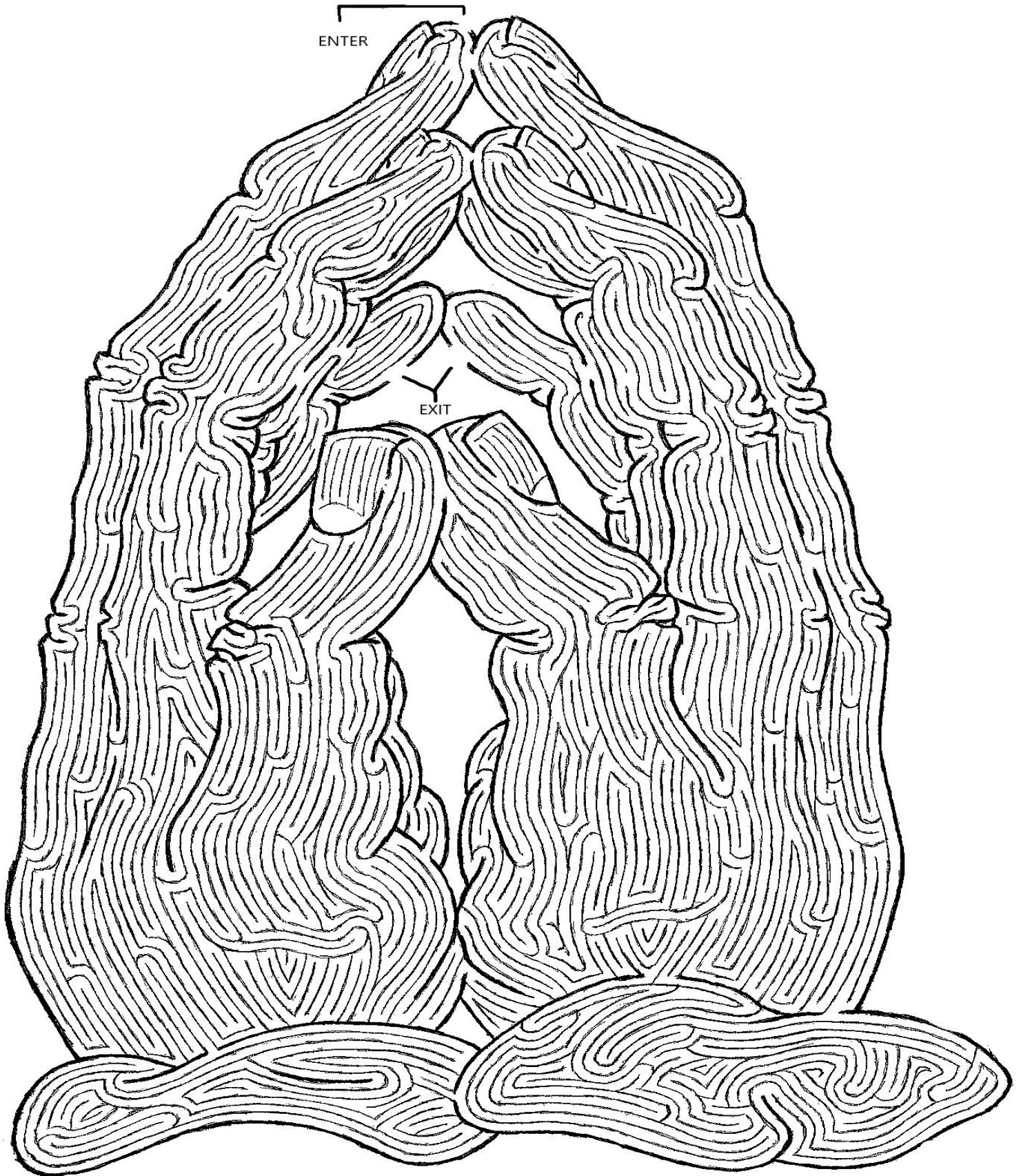
Look at St. Paul. He was a man who only wanted to kill Christians or put them in prison, until he met Jesus. Then he changed and became a builder of God’s church, rather than a destroyer of it. In Philippians 4:13-14 he says, “Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” He adds, “All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.”

In other words, get on board the Jesus train, and He will make sure you get to your destination. And along the way, if you will be guided by the Holy Spirit, you will become a builder, instead of a destroyer or a bystander. “He will guide you into all the truth,” Jesus promises (John 16:13). By the power of the Holy Spirit, using the gifts He gives, you will help to build up the body of Christ. And the fruit of the Spirit, changing your character into that of Jesus Christ, will cause you to become an example for others that will help them on the way to becoming builders in Christ.

I hope you will think carefully about your life, and how you want to live the rest of it. I hope you will allow Jesus to use you as one of His builders. And someday you will stand before Him in Heaven, and He will say to you, “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”

Blessings —

*Brother Roland*



**“Praying Hands” Maze by Will Smith, WCTC**

**Feel free to ask:** Send me your Bible questions. Maybe I will have an answer that will help you or someone else to understand God’s Word a bit better. Also let me know if your address changes. Here’s mine:

**Brother Roland, P O Box 14, Fayetteville, PA 17222**

## Being a Builder

Li'l Abner's mother, Mammy Yokum, often said, "Good is better than evil, 'cause it's nicer." For this month's GNG I want to say, Being a builder is better than being a destroyer, because it simply makes life a lot more enjoyable for all concerned. Love is better, and more pleasant, and actually a lot more fun, than selfishness. So be a blessing, and be blessed—be a builder! Enjoy the puzzle.

### Puzzle:

U G C Q X V N E D Y I W B M O O E P B Q L J V A Y H G E K Y V U  
U C I W E L G C X F C N N A E C D M C S R G K X E L V B I J S M  
M C W S C Y Z N D U M K I P E Z M R E M C U S P G K P L L M T M  
M T L A R M T A F A J I Q U P I L C M N J E D N A X C T F Y R P  
Q B N M M C R R M O X D O L M L N J F Y T I S O R E N E G U W A  
W U R C E I N E D P H Z C E E A D W F R E S A V U G D G Y S Z T  
T G I P Q Y L V V E X N S C D L I W O D A H Z C O O T V S Y S I  
K S S F K C N E B N D D K I R S S F U P F A Z P C D G E W S R E  
A E U Q M G X S M N T I U U E R M T L Q R R E C O G N I T I O N  
R F G R Z C J R O E X G C W H O I D F T O I V U K L T W U F C C  
L X F B T L V E I S W Y O A C T F S S V V N M N U P E G U J J E  
D J S I L L K P Y S T R T W T D D P E P P G A F N M T E V N F N  
N V Y Z R L X S C S D K G A Q I Y U Q L U E T D I R P R A I S E  
B L Y K Z M C V E S R X E D V O O I P K F H A T H Q E X X Y U R  
M P G Z C G A N O K Z V R W X W Z N U R G L I C Y Y L C T C O O  
E D Q M J R O T F A I R N E S S I O P U A V E F E X H L N M V T  
C R O K G H K E I T M E R I V S A S O D R Y U S Z R A W U O U K  
N E A O C N I S I O S J N J S Q G H D Y U N E K S Y O H P E C H  
E Q N N H M I S W S N B L E M S T C U O Z Z Y R O N O N F A Y R  
D Z E C T T O R S U L L N E W P X J M B M A A L Q H E O O F W A  
I R D O O P N E A Y T L E D A Y T I L A T I P S O H R S R H F W  
F T F M D U N A A C U H L U V N D D Z V Q N I F E G T I S T Z I  
N U S P V D R E V F H E C T W G D U K A K D P P I Y E K A V W J  
O D K L N G Q A P R O P T I M I S M S N J K X V J N Z P H U E Y  
C Z Z I E Z P L G H E F W T A X L T B W P E E U D N E Q E Y N H  
N L K M B V E F M E O S B A Y X G R G O U N L S X T D K K E B J  
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S S E N E L T N E G C E E G M M G T R S Z I O Z V X A H Z C D J  
O B W T U Y V J K X H P N R L A K H S O P Z X H T E L X Z S P D  
R K S S E N G H U O R O H T B X Y C H T W Z G S S U P N O T J J

### "Builder" Words

AFFIRMATION  
CARING  
COMFORT  
COMPLIMENTS  
CONCERN  
CONFIDENCE  
COURAGE  
DEDICATION  
ENCOURAGEMENT  
FAIRNESS  
FORGIVENESS  
FRIENDSHIP  
GENEROSITY

HELPFULNESS  
HONESTY  
HONOR  
HOPE  
HOSPITALITY  
HUMOR  
KINDNESS  
LOVE  
LOYALTY  
OPENNESS  
OPTIMISM  
PATIENCE  
PEACE

PERSEVERANCE  
POSITIVE ATTITUDE  
PRAISE  
PRAYER  
RECOGNITION  
RESPECT  
SELFLESSNESS  
SERVANTHOOD  
SHARING  
THOROUGHNESS  
THOUGHTFULNESS  
TIME  
TRUST