

Help to Build , Build to Help

'Jesus didn't come to make us Christian. Jesus came to make us fully human.'

When I was visioning for the first time in second year for art's ministry, I came across the above quote by Hans Rookmaaker. It's beautiful. Jesus came to bring us to realize who we are and why we exist: because of the love of God and to BE with God. I took the idea of becoming fully human to heart and I have been slowly working at myself to understand what that meant within myself and what it meant for the fellowship.

We are who we are. We are loved for who we are. We should love who we are, because we are loved so much by God that he sacrificed his own son for us (John 3:16). This is where it all begins. So many times I have looked down on myself, hated myself and just wished that I was not who I was. I wanted to become something that I wasn't. But in this disdain for myself and my abilities I wasn't able to do anything that I loved, or really be happy with anything that I did. I reserved all my talents, my emotions and my joy because I either felt they were not sufficient or I felt like they didn't matter. That's no good, no good at all.

Over the past three years in CCF, every week brothers and sisters have built me up through encouragement, rebuke, love and appreciation for who I was. That's over 80 weeks of 'construction'. CCF has given me opportunities to lead small groups, lead ministries, lead worship and be in a real community. This community has also fostered my love and ability for art and design and gave me a reason to love my gift again. The people I have met, the friends I have made and the leaders I have followed have done so much to build me up and reaffirm my identity and worth in Christ.

I love myself now. I am able to love myself now because I was loved first. It used to be a non-possibility and now it is fact. It's great, but it doesn't stop there. We are all loved first and we are all worth something! This recognition of worth enables us to love others stronger, lead in more confidence, and most importantly be able to use our gifts to glorify God and expand His kingdom.

"And Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whose mind the Lord had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work. And they received from Moses all the contribution that the people of Israel had brought for doing the work on the sanctuary. They still kept bringing him freewill offerings every morning,"

- Exodus 36: 2-3

When they were building the temple not only were the craftsman building the house of the Lord but all the people of Israel brought their freewill offerings every morning. Everyone, every single person has something to offer to the kingdom of God and everyone can help to build. We as community should understand that what we have to offer is beautiful and to love what we can offer. What we give will be builds a community that helps other people personally, emotionally and spiritually. When we build each other up

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and reinforce the idea that there is worth in every single one of us and what we do. The community that is built becomes a place that glows with serving hearts. Everyone shares a place and the purpose to serve God and serve people with all they have.

In CCF's extensive network of ministries and investment groups is where we see this vision really taking hold. I feel very strongly about ministries because they are where we are able to bring what we receive from scripture and God in investment groups and take it into the real world. It is where we use our skills and passions to connect to God. In this process of building ministries everything we do has the purpose of God, and when we do it in the identity of Christ that is when we see that we are really living out our full humanity.

As a ministry leader for the past two years I have experienced many struggles and situations that I have felt doubt and stress. I understand the feeling of loneliness and to crave a community. But I was not alone, in CCF we are never alone, we have our brothers and sisters going through the same things, be they struggles or joyful times. I vision that in CCF we will be able to create a space where those struggles and joys are not experienced alone but together. It will be a community where we can build each other up through our presence and love for each other.

This means making times where the leaders can share with each other and to be available for each other. On my part it is collaborating with leaders for both ministries and IG's to implement their visions into their ministries and the community. It is to be present for the leaders, to support them when times are hard and to rejoice with them when times are good.

I see a CCF where people who are confident of their worth in Christ experience and live the Gospel in ways that they have never imagined before, through ministries that they find passion in. A place where ministries can share their fruits with the fellowship and use their skills throughout the larger CCF community.

Let CCF be a place where we help to build, and build to help.