

## THE BIG IDEA: A lot of gifts work best with a lot of grace.

### The Take-Off

This series has been - for me - an amazing journey.

It has helped me to see my faith as a house being built by God - the different stages and understanding that it's ok to be at different places in the project.

For some, we are in the beginning stage - the time when we are deciding to trust God's plan for our lives more than our own plan for our lives.

Others have begun to lay the foundation through the love of and obedience of God's word.

Some of us are beginning to embrace the walls that make us unique. The distinctness of who we are, the passions that we carry. So many of those passions have come from such great pain, and yet now they are a part of what makes us, well, us.

Last week we talked about turning on the power - not being satisfied with just looking like a house, but actually being a house that can be inhabited and used.

Today, it's time to put the finishing touches on this house, and that means it's time to decorate!

Decoration styles are as different as night and day.

Some people would decorate a bathroom with candles and pictures of the beach, others would decorate with these...

[IMAGES Bathroom signs]

Let's at least agree that you can tell right away when a house has been decorated by someone who has an eye for it and someone who doesn't.

I mean, there's Fixer Upper and then there's this...

[IMAGES Bad home decor]

So, the really good news is our first truth about the decoration stage - our homes are...

### 1. Decorated by God

- a. Not only is God the master builder, but He's also a fantastic decorator!
- b. 1 Cor. 12:18 / He's intentional - He arranges the decor exactly like He wants them (Rev. 1:17 - the angel isn't tripping or stumbling - same word used in 1 Cor. for "arranges")
- c. What is God using to decorate the house He's building?
- d. He's decorating the house with gifts

### 2. Decorated with gifts

- a. I love the variety of gifts listed in 1 Cor. 12:27-31
- b. God uses the gifts in the body to decorate the spiritual house that He's building
- c. What I love is that He doesn't build us into new homes and then move the old beat up furniture and decorations into it
- d. The beginning of 1 Peter 2 is clear that we get the old out so that God can decorate the new space with new things
- e. WE ARE NOT HAND ME DOWNS!
- f. I knew a man who got a brand new sports car only to move all the junk from his old car into it
- g. That's not how God decorates
- h. He gives us new life and new gifts and He decorates the spiritual house He is building with those
- i. Sometimes He rearranges things, but it's ok - decorating can be fun once we accept the fact that the couch will need to be moved a few times to find the perfect spot.
- j. That's why the third truth about decorating is so important.
- k. The house is...

### 3. Decorated through grace

- a. Never forget that it is grace that gets us in the house and grace that keeps us in the house (Romans 5:1-2)
- b. You know why that is?
- c. It's because sometimes God hangs a picture for a season in the place where another picture used to hang
- d. When we start to think that any one of us is better than any others of us, we're going to run into hurt

- e. 1 Cor. 12:14ff describes what happens if we start to think our part is better than another's part
- f. It's all summed up back at our very first verse - v. 18 - that tells us again that it is God who decorates the house and arranges the pictures JUST AS HE WANTED THEM TO BE
- g. That, my friends, requires grace - a lot of grace.
- h. The Big Idea? A lot of gifts work best with a lot of grace.

### The Landing

As we begin to land the series, let's peek back at 1 Peter 2 and remind ourselves what type of house is being built

It's a SPIRITUAL house - something that only God can build

It's not a DIY house that we do through self-help

It's not a choice to be a better builder, but to be stones in the hands of the best builder

Until your heart is made new by the grace of Jesus, you'll never understand the importance of every stone

But the gospel changes that - it has always changed that

The gospel gave honor to women, children and slaves in Bible times when the culture didn't

The gospel is a underdog's story - the story of incredible odds put in the hands of an incredible God

A God who loves the variety of pieces with which He's decorating His house.

Here's the final video testimony, and it's a powerful reminder of how great God is at decorating

[VIDEO Laney's story]

Read 1 Cor. 12:21-27

Invite people to follow Jesus and allow God to use their lives to decorate the house He is building through His church

Let's pray.