

# The Story of the Carpenter

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the home building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife enjoying his extended family. He would miss the paycheck, but he needed to retire. They could get by.

The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. The carpenter said yes, but in time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career.

When the carpenter finished his work, the employer came to inspect the house. He handed the front door key to the carpenter. "This is your house," he said, "my gift to you." The carpenter was shocked! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently.

So it is with us. We build our lives, a day at a time, often putting less than our best into the building. Then, with a shock, we realize we have to live in the house we have built. If we could do it over we'd do it much differently. But we cannot go back.

You are the carpenter. Each day you hammer a nail, place a board or erect a wall. 'Life is a do-it-yourself project,' someone has said. Your attitudes and the choices you make today build the 'house' you live in tomorrow. Build wisely!