

I'M WORKING ON A BUILDING

TEXT: EPH. 2:19-22

Introduction:

1. In the apostle Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, he uses different metaphors to describe the church.
2. He refers to the church as the body of Christ (1:23; 4:12).
3. He refers to the church as the family of God (3:15).
4. He likens the church to the bride of Christ (5:21-33).
5. Here in chapter 2, Paul describes the church as a "building," "the household of God" and "a habitation of God" (2:19-22).
6. There's an old song, "I'm Working on a Building."
7. I'm working on a building
I'm working on a building
I'm working on a building
For my Lord for my Lord

It's a Holy Ghost building
It's a Holy Ghost building
It's a Holy Ghost building
For my Lord for my Lord.
8. It's a nice song. Here is my favorite stanza:

If I was a preacher
I'll tell you what I would do
I would go on preaching
And work on a building too.
9. Tonight, we will look at this Holy Ghost building (Eph. 2:22). Study the Bible and ask yourself: "Am I working on this building?"

I. THE FOUNDATION WAS LAID BY THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

II. JESUS CHRIST IS THE CHIEF CORNER STONE

III. IT IS BEING BUILT “THROUGH THE SPIRIT”

I. THE FOUNDATION WAS LAID BY THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS (2:19, 20).

1. Some people assume that Paul is referring to the OT prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, et al. He is not.
 - A. Apostles are mentioned before prophets. If Paul had meant the OT prophets, he would have said, “prophets and apostles.”
 - B. There are no OT saints in the NT church.
 - C. There were prophets in the apostolic church (cf. Acts 13:1).
2. The Jews considered the Gentiles “dogs.” Paul vividly describes their condition before they were saved in Eph. 2:1-3, 11-13.
3. Now Paul says they “are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God (2:19).
4. In the OT economy, Jews had a tremendous advantage over the Gentiles. They had the law and the prophets. The temple was in Jerusalem, and they had the proper priesthood. The Messiah was to be a Jewish Messiah. Our Lord said to the Samaritan woman, “Salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22).
5. “What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God” (Romans 3:1, 2; cf. 9:1-5).
6. But the Jews no longer have an advantage over the Gentiles. All Christians, whether we be Jew or Gentile, are “fellow-citizens” of heaven (Eph. 2:19; cf. Phil. 3:20, 21).
7. Those of us that have received the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour are all part of “the household of God” (Eph. 2:19).
8. Paul explains that this house is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (2:20). This means they laid the foundation.
9. Elsewhere Paul says that the Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation (I Cor. 3:11). The idea here is that they preached Christ (cf. Eph. 4:11-13).
10. The foundation of a building needs to be laid only one time. The apostles and prophets laid the foundation and we are no longer working on the foundation. In fact,

I think we are putting on a few more shingles on the roof and then the building will be complete.

11. Therefore, any so-called apostles or prophets around today, whether they be Pentecostal or Mormon or whatever, are mixed up and deceived. God is not raising up apostles and prophets today, just evangelists, pastors and teachers (cf. 4:11-13).

II. JESUS CHRIST IS THE CHIEF CORNER STONE (2:20b).

1. The RCC teaches that the church of Jesus Christ is built upon Peter, not Christ (cf. Matt. 16:18; Scofield's notes, p. 1021).
2. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Rock, not Peter (I Cor. 10:1-4; I Peter 2:4-8).
3. Since Jesus Christ Himself is the chief corner stone, the building is "fitly framed together" (Eph. 2:21). The corner stone was set in the foundation at the corner of the building to bind all the stones together and to give the walls a straight line. Some professed Christians are not very "straight." They are very "out of line" because they are not built upon the proper foundation (cf. Matt. 7:24-29).
4. The building is growing "unto an holy temple in the Lord" (2:21b). This is important:
 - A. The building is "in the Lord," a phrase emphasized throughout this epistle (cf. 1:1, 3, 4, etc.).
 - B. Because of our position "in Christ" (or "in the Lord"), we are holy positionally, and ought to be practically. It is incongruous for a "holy temple in the Lord" to have shabby, unholy, defiled, and worldly people in it.
 - C. This "holy temple" must be set apart from the world and dedicated to God for sacred purposes (cf. I Cor. 3:16, 17).
5. We do not worship today in a temple. Paul says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God...for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (I Cor. 3:16, 17).
6. Today we do not worship in a temple, but today the church is "an holy temple" (Eph. 2:21).
7. Today, God's plan is the local church. Yet many people who claim to be Christian are minimizing the local church.
 - A. Christian radio and television (much of which is heretical) has replaced the local church for many people.

- B. Oftentimes, parachurch groups compete with the local church and drain funds from local churches.
- C. Many so-called Christians have a flippant and unscriptural attitude toward the local church.
- D. A woman once told me, “I do not need to go to church because I am part of the invisible church!” What a bunch of baloney!

III. THE CHURCH IS BEING BUILT “THROUGH THE SPIRIT” (2:22b).

1. In the OT God instructed Moses and the children of Israel to build the tabernacle. This was to be the place where God would dwell (cf. Ex. 25:21, 22).
2. Today, God does not dwell in a building, but in people who meet in a building. God indwells people, not buildings. And the local church is the place where God meets man – not in a tabernacle in the wilderness, nor in a temple in Jerusalem, but in local NT churches all over the world.
3. How are these churches organized? How are they established? What brings people together from all walks of life into a local church? Black and white, rich and poor, old and young – who unites us all into a local church? It is “through the Spirit” (2:22).
4. And if a work is being built apart from the Holy Spirit, it is not of God, no matter how successful it may appear to be.
5. The Holy Spirit indwells all true believers (I Cor. 3:16). If one is not indwelt by the Holy Spirit, then he or she has never been genuinely born again (cf. Rom. 8:9).
6. Therefore, a true church must be built upon the Son of God (He is the corner stone – 2:20b), put together through the Spirit of God, based upon the Word of God, and all the members must be children of God (cf. Gal. 3:26).
7. The true church of God must be “an holy temple in the Lord” (2:21). This means each member must be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, filled with the Holy Spirit, and led by the Holy Spirit.
8. Peter expressed this in a similar way when he wrote that we are stones fitted in and built into a “spiritual house” (I Peter 2:5).

CONCLUSION:

1. Ephesians 2 is an interesting chapter. It begins with Gentiles who were “dead in trespasses and sins” (2:1ff.).
2. And it ends with these Gentiles forming a “habitation of God through the Spirit” (2:22).
This is the grace of God!

www.biblebaptistmont.org