

THE CHURCH GLORIOUS

The Joy Set Before Him

Discussion Guide
Vol. 14, No. 2
February 14, 2010

Sermon **“The Church: The Living House of God”** by Paul R. Martin

Ephesians 2: 19-22; I Peter 2: 4-10

Introduction: This morning we consider the first of seven analogies used in the Bible to describe the Church. We need to recognize that these are not seven illustrations of the same thing, but seven different facets each reflecting a different aspect of the glory of the Church. We cannot simply pick the one we personally like best, but must recognize that all seven analogies reveal something different about the Church, all of which are simultaneously true. We will look first at the Church as a Living Temple, the particular dwelling place of God on this earth.

Sermon Outline

I. How is the Church Like a Building? (It certainly is NOT a building!)

- A. It is the dwelling place of God’s Shekinah presence—the Holy Temple:
 - 1. Exodus 15: 17
 - 2. Psalm 76: 2
 - 3. Ephesians 2: 22
- B. It has a foundation and form, an Architect and a Builder:
 - 1. Matthew 16: 18
 - 2. Ephesians 2: 20-21
 - 3. Hebrews 11:10
- C. It is constructed of certain materials assembled together in an orderly fashion
 - 1. I Timothy 3: 15
 - 2. I Peter 2: 5
 - 3. Revelation 21: 9-27

II. What Part of the Building is Jesus?

- A. He is the Cornerstone: Psalm 118:2 2; Isaiah 28: 16; Matthew 21: 42; Mark 12: 10; Luke 20: 17; Acts 4: 11; I Peter 2: 6-7
- B. He is the ultimate Foundation: I Corinthians 3: 11; see also Ephesians 2: 20
- C. He is an immovable Anchor that withstands all calamity: Psalm 40:1-3; Luke 6: 48; I Corinthians 3: 11-12

III. What Part of the Building are You?

- A. Living stone(s): I Peter 2: 5
 - 1. An enduring building material
 - 2. must be quarried and hewn for use (specific functions)
- B. Laid onto, next to, and under other stones in the structure: Ephesians 2:21
- C. Built up by Another, not self-designed: Ephesians 2: 19-22, I Peter 2: 5
- D. These “stones” have LIFE and together the form a living House for the manifestation of God’s special Presence.

Conclusion: The Church is like a house, and temple. It is strong and enduring like one made of stone and built upon a rock. It is expertly fitted together by the Master Builder, and we are the living stones which make up its structure. When the Church meets it becomes the dwelling place of God in His manifest presence, a holy tabernacle that proclaims His name in the earth. Those who are part of this living and eternal building are secure and fortified, and like the Lord Who is a strong tower, they have a place of shelter from life’s storms. The Church is also a place of worship and praise and faithful intercession as we minister to the Lord in the Holy of Holies.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 2: 19-22 (NASB)

And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this is contained in Scripture: “BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.

I Peter 2: 4-6 (NASB)

Discussion Questions

1.) How have you sensed God “cutting you out” of your original place in the world and “fitting” you for a place in His living temple? (Quarried and Hewn)

2.) In what way does God manifest His presence in the church that is different from His personal and private fellowship with us individually?

3.) What impresses or encourages you about the image of Christ as Corner Stone?

4.) Who are the living stones around you, under you, over you in the Church?

This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," ⁸ and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed. ⁹ But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

I Peter 2: 7-10 (NASB)

5.) How much choice or influence do you personally have regarding your position in the structure of the living temple? Explain your answer.

6.) What does this mean for you personally? (Question 5)

7.) Thinking imaginatively about the structure and walls of the living house, what are the likely problems associated with stones being out of place or absent altogether?

... that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

Ephesians 5: 27 (NASB)

MEMORY VERSE

But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;¹⁰ for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

I Peter 2: 9-10 (NASB)

God's Vision and Mission for the Alliance Bible Church

The Alliance Bible Church is a multi-cultural church celebrating the life of Christ in us by:

- Proclaiming the full message of God's Good News to the diverse cultures of McHenry and surrounding communities,
- Discipling believers in living the deeper Christian life,
- Equipping His people for the work of ministry, and
- Demonstrating the unconditional love of Jesus to our community through meaningful acts of service.

NOTES:

Prayer Requests:



Alliance Bible Core Values **What We Believe is Important**

- Celebrating the Lordship of Jesus Christ through corporate worship in two languages.
- Boldly proclaiming the fullness of His Gospel: Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King.
- Building up one another in love through small group community, prayer, and discipleship.
- Serving our community through meaningful acts of loving service.
- Obeying the call of the Great Commission through sacrificial support of missions of every kind.



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