

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

Ephesians 2:19–22

Ephesians 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

It is ultimately through Christ's blood, and the Spirit He sends that provides the right to become part of God's household, and a member of His heavenly family. It is here that the great grace bestowed upon the sinner is most evident; when the wrath of God has been so reversed, that those previously deserving His anger, are now by divine grace made His sons; where an enemy of God, has by inestimable favor, been made a child of God. This is the ultimate reality of what being saved by God truly entails. To be

counted as one of His house, and a member of His household, is to be reckoned as one of His own. To be made a son, is to be made to share in the Lord's own eternal life,¹ and be reckoned as a part of His heavenly coming kingdom.² It is also spiritual sonship, which produces becoming an heir of God,³ that receiving the Holy Spirit confirms. (Gal. 4:6) *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* God is Spirit,⁴ and they that have been made to become the sons of God, are imparted the very same spiritual nature as Him. This transformation, which is described in Scripture as regeneration,⁵ occurs once a man has been born again,⁶ born from above, and through di-

1 I John 5:16 *If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.*

John 10:28 *And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

John 6:40 *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

2 Col. 1:13 *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

3 Rom. 8:13–14 *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. ¹⁴For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

Eph. 1:13–14 *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

1 Pet. 1:4 *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*

Tit. 3:7 *That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

Col. 1:12 *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:*

4 John 4:24 *God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

5 Tit. 3:5 *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*

6 John 3:3–7 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ⁴Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? ⁵Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

vine grace⁷ has been made a child of God. Through faith in the Son, and reception of Him as Lord, is the power, authority, and right given to become sons of God ourselves. It is reception of the Son of God, which provides the privilege to be accounted as a member of God's house, and regarded as a member of His very intimate and cherished family. (John 1:12) *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.*

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, John 1:12) *Sons of God* — Children of God by adoption. See the notes at Matthew 1:1.⁸ Christians are called sons of God:

1. Because they are "adopted" by Him, 1 John 3:1.⁹
2. Because they are "like Him;" they resemble Him and have His spirit.
3. They are united to the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, are regarded by Him as his brethren Matthew 25:40,¹⁰ and are therefore regarded as the children of the Most High. (END QUOTE)

Ephesians 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

To place anything under one's faith, other than He, Whom God reveals is the Author

I Pet. 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

I John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

7 Eph. 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

8 Matt. 1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

9 I John 3:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

10 Matt. 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

11 Heb. 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

12 Jer. 17:5 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

13 Eph. 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

of all true faith,¹¹ is to guarantee personal unsteadiness and persistent spiritual wandering. *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man,*¹² and nowhere more so, than in the formation of his religion.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Eph. 2:20) that the traditions of people have no authority in the church, and constitute no part of the foundation. (END QUOTE)

In the church of Jesus Christ, the only real and legitimate authority, is Christ. It is He, Whom God has placed as the Cornerstone of His heavenly structure, and He through Whom all new members are added. At the foundation of the church of God, is the person and ministry of God's Son; Jesus Christ being the *chief cornerstone*. Upon Jesus Christ, the apostle states, are those divinely appointed spiritual ministries, whom Christ has given as gifts to the church.¹³ (Eph. 4:11–13) *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* These ministries cannot be entered into through mere religious training, and/or acquired theological degrees. To do so would negate what the scriptures clearly reveal—that it is the Lord Who both

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sets and places all members in His body as it as pleased Him,¹⁴ therefore not the members choosing their offices, as it has pleased them.¹⁵ One of the great evidences of true, divinely-appointed ministries in Christ's church, is that they will manifest varying degrees of spiritual power.¹⁶ Since it is Jesus Christ Who both sends and inspires the ministries of *apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers*, then varying degrees of the power of the Spirit shall be evidenced in their lives. (I Cor. 12:7–11) *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.* It is this spiritual power, seen both in Christ's ministries and members of His church, that gives credibility to both spiritual sonship, and heavenly ordination. False ministries though, who lack the powerful influences of the Spirit, have no other option than leaning upon *good words and fair speeches* in an attempt to deceive the elect. These counterfeit ministries do not serve the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies. (Rom. 16:18) *For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own*

belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. It is only those who lack the power of the Spirit in their ministries, who must rely on smooth talk, good words, and flattering speeches, to maintain their religious influence. Ultimately, all who claim to come in Christ's name and are led by His Spirit, should be tried, to determine if they really are Christ's, and have been divinely sent to speak for Him. If there is not spiritual power in their ministries, then you can be certain that they have no true relationship with the very One to Whom all power and authority in heaven and on earth has been given.¹⁷ (I John 4:1) *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*

(Benson Commentary, I John 4:1) *Believe not every spirit* — By which any teacher is, or professes to be, actuated: or, believe not every teacher who pretends to be inspired by the Spirit of God; *but try the spirits* — Namely, whether they are of God — By the rule which God hath given. We are to try all spirits by the written word: *To the law and to the testimony!* If any man speak not according to these, the spirit which actuates him is not of God. *Because many false prophets* — Or false teachers; *are gone forth into the world* — With an intention to draw disciples after them. (END QUOTE)

If Jesus Christ is not the Head¹⁸ of His body, nor the Cornerstone of the temple of the Lord, then whatever else is carnally

14 I Cor. 12:18 *But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.*

15 Heb. 5:4 *And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.*

16 Acts 1:8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

17 Matt. 28:18 *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

18 Col. 1:18 *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

Eph. 1:22–23 *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, ²³Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*

Eph. 4:15–16 *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: ¹⁶From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

constructed cannot be reckoned as of the Lord. (I Cor. 3:11) *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* Consequently, if the Son of God is not the foundation of a man's faith, then his faith is inevitably vain. If his foundation is wrong, so also is everything else that is constructed upon it. To place as a cornerstone, or the foundation of faith, anything other than Jesus Christ, is to guarantee that what is being erected, does not have its legitimate source in God, and shall inescapably be judged by Him. (I Cor. 3:13–15) *Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

(Pulpit Commentary, I Cor. 3:13) *Each man's work shall be made manifest.* The real nature—the worth or worthlessness—of each man's work, will be made clear sooner or later. *The day shall declare it.* “The day” can only mean “the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:8),¹⁹ which would specially “make manifest the counsels of the hearts”

(1 Corinthians 4:5),²⁰ and “judge the secrets of men” (Romans 2:16),²¹ and make all men manifest “before the judgment seat of Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:10).²² It shall be revealed by fire; rather, because it is being revealed in fire. (END QUOTE)

The Greek word for *cornerstone* in Ephesians 2:20 is #204 *akrogóniaios*. Strong's defines the word as “at the extreme angle or corner.” *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* states of the word, “For as the cornerstone holds together two walls, so Christ joins together as Christians, into one body dedicated to God, those who were formerly Jews and Gentiles.”

There are many Scripture references detailing the *head of the corner* or *corner stone* of true religion.²³ But there are also many who have deemed the Son of God, unfit as their Lord, and remain unwilling to place themselves under His government.²⁴ It is this that the Scripture refers to when it states, *The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner.* What this reveals is that not only out of religion, but also in it, there shall be multitudes who attempt to build institutions, and/or religious movements,

Eph. 5:23 *For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*

19 I Cor. 1:8 *Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

20 I Cor. 4:5 *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.*

21 Rom. 2:16 *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.*

22 II Cor. 4:10 *Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.*

23 Ps. 118:22 *The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.*

Mark 12:10 *And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:*

Luke 20:17 *And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?*

Acts 4:11 *This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. I Pet. 2:6–7 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. ⁷Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,*

24 Rev. 11:15 *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

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who have themselves rejected He, Whom God has revealed all true faith must rest upon. Instead of following God's plan for Christian ministry, they invent their own. Instead of placing Jesus Christ as the foundation of their faith, they substitute things far inferior to Him.

Matthew 21:42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Matt. 21:42) Which the builders rejected — On account of its want of beauty or size it was laid aside, or deemed unfit to be a cornerstone. This represents the Lord Jesus, proposed to the Jews as the foundation or cornerstone on which to build the church, but rejected by them—the builders—on account of his lack of comeliness or beauty; that is, of what they esteemed to be comely or desirable, Isaiah 53:2–3.²⁵

The same is become ... — Though rejected by them, yet God chose him, and made him the foundation of the church. Christ is often compared to a stone, a cornerstone, a tried, that is, a sure, firm foundation—all in allusion to the custom of building, Acts 4:11; Romans 9:33; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:7.²⁶

Lord's doing — The appointment of Jesus of Nazareth to be the foundation of the church is proved by miracle and prophecy to be the work of God. (END QUOTE)

Isaiah 28:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious

25 Isa. 53:2–3 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. ³He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

26 Rom. 9:33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

27 "Building on the Cornerstone." *Back to the Bible*, 23 Jan. 2019, www.backtothebible.org/post/building-on-the-cornerstone.

28 Acts 16:5 And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

History confirms the significance of a cornerstone in respect to ancient buildings' structures.

(*Back to the Bible*, "Building on the Cornerstone") Historically, the cornerstone was the most important part of any building. The total weight of an edifice rested on this particular stone, which, if removed, would collapse the whole structure. The cornerstone was also the key to keeping the walls straight. The builders would take sightings along the edges of this part of the building. If the cornerstone was set properly, the stonemasons could be assured that all the other corners of the building would be at the appropriate angles as well. Thus, the cornerstone became a symbol for that which held life together. ... The New Testament writers recognized that this stone was Jesus Christ. ...

When the pressures of life bear down on you, there's only one cornerstone capable of handling the weight. When your need for guidance is urgent, there's only one cornerstone you can trust to keep your life straight. That cornerstone is Jesus. Trust Him with every aspect of your lives, and you will find that He never fails. He's not just a Rock; He's the Cornerstone.²⁷ (END QUOTE)

Just as those who have not Jesus Christ as the *cornerstone* of their faith are continually unstable, equally true are those who actually hold Jesus Christ in His rightful position in their hearts and lives, established in the faith,²⁸ and made to increase, and grow even stronger in it. If a man's foundation is truly Jesus Christ, then all

that is built upon Him has the spiritual promise of also remaining.²⁹

The last part of Isaiah 28:16 reads, *He that believeth shall not make haste*. Other translations contribute to a more understandable translation of these words.

(NIV) *So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic.*

(NLT) *Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “Look! I am placing a foundation stone in Jerusalem, a firm and tested stone. It is a precious cornerstone that is safe to build on. Whoever believes need never be shaken.*

(Berean Standard Bible) *So this is what the Lord GOD says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; the one who believes will never be shaken.*

(New American Standard Bible) *Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: “Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion, a tested stone, A precious cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. The one who believes in it will not be disturbed.*

(Holman Christian Standard Bible) *Therefore the Lord GOD said: “Look, I have laid a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; the one who believes will be unshakable.*

(Barnes’ Notes on the Bible, Isa. 28:16) A sure Foundation, upon whom you may securely

rest; one who will not fail nor deceive you, as your lying refugees will. . . .

shall not make haste; shall not make more haste than he ought, or, as we say, more haste than good speed; shall not hastily and greedily catch at any way of escaping his danger, whether it be right or wrong, but shall patiently wait upon God in his way till he deliver him. (END QUOTE)

The essence of this verse is, that those who place their faith and trust in Whom God has made the Cornerstone of all true religion, the Son of God, shall neither be shaken, troubled, nor stricken with fear, and/or disappointed in their spiritual expectations. Because it is God Who has laid the stone, then he who places his full faith and trust in Him, should never be panicked that the Lord will disavow him, nor that the religion he practices will crumble under his feet. The Lord’s foundation stone is secure; it has been tested; it is of the best material, and as such, it is able to bear whatever weight is placed upon it. This undoubtedly includes not only the trials of this life, but also the Lord’s judgment of all faith and works in the next.³⁰ To properly believe upon the Son of God, is to never fear, nor doubt that the religion practiced shall be both accepted and upheld by God. If our foundation be right, we can be certain that the Lord will assist us in all other future spiritual needs, as well as advancing the gospel itself.

Ephesians 2:21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

²⁹ John 15:16 *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*

³⁰ 1 Cor. 3:13–15 *Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. ¹⁴If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. ¹⁵If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

It is not just that Jesus Christ is the Cornerstone of a building, but that He is the Cornerstone of that building which is fitly framed, and purposed to be *an holy temple in the Lord*. This heavenly edifice is continually being added to: it is growing, and it shall be completed as the true temple of the Lord, and a habitation of God, through the Spirit (v. 22)—a temple wherein God dwells, not only in each and every member, but also in all the members of His house collectively. In the Old Testament the Lord's presence was first revealed in the tabernacle of Moses³¹ and then in the temple of Solomon. In the New Testament the spiritual presence of the Lord resides in His people. (II Cor. 6:16) *And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* The believer's greatest desire is to dwell with God.³² This desire is fulfilled when God makes His abode, and comes to abide in the believer,³³ through the impartation of receiving the Christ Spirit. The temple of the Lord, therefore is that body of saints, whom Christ has sanctified, and made to become God's heavenly sons. It is in this temple also that God shall be

properly worshiped, and His Son righteously revered.³⁴

Ephesians 2:22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

The *in whom* the church is being *builded together for an habitation of God*, is Jesus Christ. It is both in Him, and through Him, that believers are being built, and joined together to become a holy temple of the Lord. The means by which this construction is taking place, is through the impartation of the *Spirit*. Consequently through the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit that is sent through Him,³⁵ is a mighty and eternal spiritual construction project underway. This holy temple surpasses the beauty of Solomon's temple, for the stones which constitute it are *living stones*, in contrast to the building materials that Solomon used, which were mere earthly blocks made of limestone or some other natural material. The temple of Christ is therefore superior in every respect, to any earthly religious structure ever constructed before it. Since the building materials which are being used, are *living stones*, representative also of a living God.³⁶ (I Pet. 2:5) *Ye also, as lively*

31 Exod. 25:8 *And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.*

Exod. 40:34–38 *Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.* ³⁵*And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.* ³⁶*And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys:* ³⁷*But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up.* ³⁸*For the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.*

32 Ps. 27:4 *One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.*

33 John 14:23 *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

I John 4:12–13 *No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.* ¹³*Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.*

34 Rev. 5:13 *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

35 John 14:25–26 *These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.* ²⁶*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

36 Jer. 10:10 *But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.*

stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. These living stones are “Quickened and made alive to God by spiritual life derived from him.”³⁷ Ultimately the Lord’s holy temple is being constructed through life derived from Him. From His own spiritual and eternal life are members added to form His heavenly abode.

(*Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers*, I Pet. 2:5) All history is the process of building up a “spiritual palace” out of a regenerate humanity, in order that, in the end, the *Father Himself* may occupy it. (END QUOTE)

Like all competent builders, where the relevant materials are carefully selected, so is Christ adding God’s chosen³⁸ to the Lord’s house. The plans for constructing this holy temple were devised before the world began.³⁹ It was in God’s foreknowledge long before any earthly and/or, physical structures were ever imagined. These were only types of a much greater and heavenly spiritual edifice to come. It is also because of this, that Moses was divinely instructed to fashion everything in exactly the fashion shown to Him. By this it is illustrated, that both what and where the Lord has purposed He shall dwell, He must first build. This is especially true concerning the mystical and

celestial body of Christ, which constitutes the true temple of the Lord. Ultimately all temple building, and all materials used in the place where God shall dwell, must be according to divine will, without any human thought, reason, or imagination contributing to it. This was true in the Old Testament; it is equally true in the New. To build anything either of, or for the Lord, the Lord Himself must first lay out the pattern for the building. In reality, all Christianity, and all which comprises the church of Christ, is the work of God, and as such, human reason should never be elevated above divine revelation, nor should the thoughts of man, hold any preeminence in the Lord’s holy assembly. Practically speaking, the church of Jesus Christ, should never be run or governed, by anything other than the words and Spirit of Christ. It is the Lord’s temple, and not man’s, and as such, it should be respected as the work of God, and left to be governed solely by Him. *Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount* (Heb. 8:5).

(*Barnes’ Notes on the Bible*, Heb. 8:5) *For, see, saith he* — Exodus 25:9, Exodus 25:40; Ex-

Matt. 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

I Tim. 3:14–15 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: ¹⁵But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

John 6:57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

³⁷ (*Benson Commentary*, I Pet. 2:5)

³⁸ *Eph. 1:4–5 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: ⁵Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,*

³⁹ *Eph. 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

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odus 26:30.⁴⁰ In Exodus 11:1–10,⁴¹ it is also repeatedly said that Moses executed all the work of the tabernacle as he had been commanded. Great care was taken that an exact copy should be exhibited to him of all which he was to make, and that the work should be exactly like the pattern. The reason doubtless was, that as the Jewish service was to be typical, none but God could judge of the form in which the tabernacle should be made. It was not to be an edifice of architectural beauty, skill, or taste, but was designed to adumbrate important realities which were known only to God. Hence, it was needful that the exact model of them should be given to Moses, and that it should be scrupulously followed.

That thou make all things — Not only the tabernacle itself, but the altars, the ark, the candlestick, etc. The form and materials for each were specified, and the exact pattern shown to Moses in the mount.

According to the pattern — Greek τύπον *tupon*— “type;” that is, figure, form. The

word τύπος *typos*, “type,” means properly anything produced by the agency or means of “blows” (from τύπτω *typtō*, “to strike”); hence, a mark, stamp, print, impression — as that made by driving nails in the hands John 20:25⁴²... This is the meaning here. The allusion is to a pattern such as an architect or sculptor uses; a drawing, or figure made in wood or clay, after which the work is to be modelled. The idea is, that some such drawing or model was exhibited to Moses by God on mount Sinai, so that he might have an exact idea of the tabernacle which was to be made. A similar drawing or model of the temple was given by David to Solomon; 1 Chronicles 28:11-12.⁴³ We are not in the case to suppose that there was an exact of the pattern shown to Moses, any miniature model of wood or stone actually created and exhibited, but that the form of the tabernacle was exhibited to Moses in vision (note, Isaiah 1:1⁴⁴), or was so vividly impressed on his mind that he would have a distinct view of the edifice which was to be reared.

40 Exod. 25:9 *According to all that I shewed thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.*

Exod. 25:40 *And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.*

Exod. 26:30 *And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount.*

41 Exod. 11:1–10 *And the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether. ²Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver and jewels of gold. ³And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people. ⁴And Moses said, Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: ⁵And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. ⁶And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. ⁷But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. ⁸And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out. And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger. ⁹And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt. ¹⁰And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.*

42 John 20:25 *The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the LORD. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.*

43 1 Chr. 28:11-12 *Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasures thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, ¹²And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things:*

44 Isa. 1:1 *The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.*

In the mount — In mount Sinai; for it was while Moses was there in the presence of God, that these communications were made. (END QUOTE)

Just as Moses was divinely instructed as to how the Lord's earthly tabernacle was to be constructed, as well as all the religious articles to be used in it, so also should the same spiritual diligence be exercised in the Lord's living church today. Teaching us that all that is God's, should only be constructed and governed by God. Hence, where the Lord dwells, which includes the church of His Son, all must be performed solely according to divine will and inspiration. Nothing is left to man, nor should any room be left to human reason or thinking. If this is sinfully done, then all that which is being constructed is undoubtedly the work of man; it is no longer the work of God. To therefore assist in building anything either for the Lord, or of the Lord, the Lord must lay the plans as to how it is to be constructed. If this principal was applied to Christian ministry today, then nothing of man would ever be allowed to take precedent over the revealed Word and will of God. To do so only guarantees that the Lord is no longer in the work, though His name will commonly be used, as if He still is.

The Word of God also speaks of the dangerous and fatal consequences of any who defile the temple of God, which consists of the members of Christ's church, in whom the Lord's Spirit now dwells. (I Cor. 3:17) *If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*

The Greek word for both *defile* and *destroy*, is #5351 *phtheiró*. The word is defined by *Strong's* as "to destroy, corrupt, spoil."

HELPS Word-studies defines the word "properly, waste away, corrupt (deteriorate); (figuratively) to cause or experience *moral deterioration* — i.e. decomposition (break-down), due to the *corrupting influence of sin*." These definitions reveal that if sin is introduced in this holy temple—purposed to corrode its beauty, mar its holiness, and/or promote moral deterioration—then God shall destroy and spoil both all and any who do so. To defile the Lord's temple, where His Spirit abides, undoubtedly includes building upon any other foundation than that which has been laid which is Jesus Christ.⁴⁵ This defiling, from the context can also include introducing envying, strife, and divisions into Christ's church,⁴⁶ which God has made to be spiritually one. (Eph. 4:4–6) *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* The warning is clear and unmistakable, that to defile the temple of God, i.e. the church of God, is to invite misery, and ultimately destruction to oneself. For any who seek to mar and defile this holy sanctuary—which the Lord is constructing through His Son—by injuring its members, and/or hindering Christ's work, shall themselves be both marred and destroyed by God.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, I Cor. 3:17) *If any man defile ...* — Or, "destroy, corrupt" (φθειρεῖ *phtheirei*). The Greek word is the same in both parts of the sentence. "If any man 'destroy' the temple of God, God shall 'destroy' him." This is presented in the form of an adage or proverb. And the truth here stated is based on the fact that the temple of God was inviolable. That temple was holy; and if any man subsequently destroyed it, it might be presumed that God would destroy him. The figurative sense is, "If any man by

45 I Cor. 3:11 *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

46 I Cor. 3:3 *For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*

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his doctrines or precepts shall pursue such a course as tends to destroy the church, God shall severely punish him. (END QUOTE)

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, I Cor. 3:17) *Which temple ye are.*—Literally, *the which are ye*, “which” referring rather to holy than to the temple; the argument being that as they are “holy” by the indwelling of God’s Spirit, therefore they are the temple of God. As God commanded the punishment of death to be inflicted on whoever defiled the actual Temple (see Exodus 28:43; Leviticus 16:2),⁴⁷ because it was holy unto the Lord, and His presence dwelt there; so they, having the same Spirit in them, were a temple also holy unto the Lord, and God would not leave him unpunished who destroyed or marred this spiritual temple. (END QUOTE)

This verse should be a grim reminder to any, and all, who hold not proper respect for the work of Jesus Christ in building a habitation of God, through adding *living stones*,⁴⁸ compromising those whom Christ has saved, wherein the Lord both does and shall dwell. The Lord is jealous,⁴⁹ and nowhere more so than in protecting those in whom both His Spirit and His presence currently abides. This is why to corrupt or defile God’s house, is to invite God’s wrath upon oneself, revealing to us, the great care and love that God has for all those called to His name. For just as He is holy,⁵⁰ so also are those whom Christ has redeemed, and purposed to become the Lord’s eternal and holy dwelling place. To defile the church of Christ, the temple of God, is to ultimately defile the Lord Himself. Simply because it is His own holy nature that lives within His people.

47 Exod. 28:43 *And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die: it shall be a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him.*

Lev. 16:2 *And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.*

48 Eph. 4:24 *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

49 Exod. 34:14 *For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Exod. 20:5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; Deut. 4:24 For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.*

Deut. 6:15 *(For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.*

50 I Pet. 1:15–16 *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; ¹⁶Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

Ps. 99:9 *Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.*

Lev. 11:44 *For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

Lev. 19:2 *Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.*