

# The Church is Christ's Building

**Ephesians 2:11-22**

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## INTRODUCTION:

- A. The apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians presents a theological high watermark.
1. One of its great themes is the exalted place of the church in the will of God.
  2. A series of four lessons will challenge us to consider four images of the church provided for us by Paul.
    - a. The Church is Christ's **BODY**
    - b. The Church is Christ's **BELOVED**
    - c. The Church is Christ's **BUILDING**
    - d. The Church is Christ's **BRIDE**
- B. Lesson Text: **Ephesians 2:11-22** *Especially 19-22*
- C. How many times have you heard people refer to the church as a building?
1. One may hear such statements as . . . . .
    - a. "I am going down to the church."
    - b. "Look at that magnificent church."
    - c. "Remember when we built the church?"
    - d. "That is the biggest/largest t church in town."
  2. All too often, people live with a misconception that the church is simply bricks and mortar.
  3. Some people are in love with their building.
    - a. What is sad is that people, good people, place their loyalty and confidence in the wrong place.
    - b. Interestingly enough, the church is a building, but not exactly like we tend to imagine it.
    - c. Consider, again, what the apostle Paul teaches us about the church.
      1. Never forget that the church is people, people in relationship with Jesus Christ, first, and with each other, second.
      2. To be in the church means you are connected to a family, a community of faith.
  4. It seems that Paul loves writing about the church. He never gets tired of helping Christians grasp the connection between the church and the Lord.
- D. Today we will examine the Biblical truth that the Church is Christ's **BUILDING** . . . **But not the building in which the church gathers and meets.**

**THE CHURCH IS CHRIST'S BUILDING.** Paul counsels the Ephesians brethren to do three things . . . . .

### A. Remember where you were (vv. 11, 12).

1. Twice Paul uses the word “remember.” In essence, he is telling us . . .
  - a. “Don’t forget where you were before coming to Jesus Christ.”
  - b. You were “Gentiles.”
  - c. You were of the “uncircumcised.”
  - d. You were “separate from Christ.”
  - e. You were “excluded from the commonwealth of Israel.”
  - f. You were “strangers to the covenants of promise.”
  - g. You had “no hope because you were without God in the world”!
  - h. You were an outsider . . . Remember?
2. The truth of the matter is those without Christ are in that same condition today—**outsiders** whom God wants to make **insiders**!
  - a. Paul wants us to remember where we were, where we started before Christ! Next,
  - b. Paul wants us to be reminded of where you were.

### B. Be reminded of where you are (vv. 13–18).

1. The turning point of this text is the first two words of **verse 13**, “**BUT NOW.**” Picking up on that word “formerly” (v. 11), Paul says, “But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”
  - a. Here Paul points us clearly to the cross as God’s place of reconciliation.
2. We were brought near!
  - a. Paul further tells us that because of the cross, we are now reconciled not only to God but also Jewish to Gentile believer.
  - b. Paul speaks of Jesus being our peace . . . of Him making both groups one . . . of Him breaking down the barriers . . . of Him establishing one new man . . . of Him bringing peace!
3. Paul then reminds us that, “through Him [Jesus], we both [Jew and Gentile believer] have our access in one Spirit to the Father.”
  - a. That word, “access,” was used to describe the solemn approach one is given into the presence of deity or royalty.
  - c. It is a gift, **and it is ours.**
4. So here, Paul reminds us that we have been brought near . . . We have been reconciled and we have access . . . And, it’s all because of Jesus!
5. From this urging for us to remember where we were formerly and this reminder of where we are presently, Paul now tells us to rejoice in who you are

### C. Rejoice in who you are (vv. 19–22).

1. Paul introduces this section with the words, “**SO THEN.**”

- a. This is one word in our Greek text and points to either a **consequence** or a **conclusion**.
  - b. He tells the Gentile believers in Ephesus that they are “no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household.”
    1. You who were outsiders are now insiders! You who were lost are now saved!
    2. You who were not in God’s family are now in God’s family! . . . What an incredible truth!
2. At this point, Paul shifts his language to use building metaphors.
- a. Yes, the church is a “building,” but not bricks and mortar! He uses words like . . . “built upon,” . . . “foundation,” . . . “cornerstone,” . . . “the whole building,” . . . “fitted together,” . . . “growing,” . . . “holy temple” and . . . “the dwelling.”
  - b. Paul’s assertion is that the church, the people in relationship with the Father on the basis of Christ’s work on the cross, **are a building of God**.
    - a. It is figurative language, but it communicates God’s revelation of the church as **a spiritual building**.
    - b. Remember what
      1. **1 Corinthians 3:16** - " Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? "
      2. **1 Corinthians 6:19** - "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? "
      3. **1 Peter 2:4-8** - "Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,
        - 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
        - 6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, 'Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.'
        - 7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,'
        - 8 and 'A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense.' They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed."
      4. **1 Peter 2:5** - "You also, as **living stones**, are being built up a **spiritual house**, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

3. Consider, now the building's foundation (v. 20).
  - a. Paul tells us that this spiritual building is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ being the cornerstone.
  - b. Everything, Paul writes eventually, is built upon Jesus and his finished work at the cross!
  - c. Apostles are important, and prophets are important, but Jesus the ultimate foundation is absolutely essential.
  - d. Individually or collectively without the foundation of a relationship to Jesus Christ we are in a precarious position . . . Jesus is the foundation!
4. Next, Paul addresses not just the foundation, but also the building's fabrication (vv. 21, 22a).
  - a. Paul tells us that in Jesus (or upon Jesus) the whole building is being "fitted together"—made to fit together just right.
  - b. Every stone . . . every person . . . has their appropriate place in this building! **1 Peter 2:5** - "You also, as **living stones**, are being built up a **spiritual house**, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."
  - c. Paul continues by saying that it is growing and expanding into a holy temple in the Lord.
    1. There, he tells the Ephesian brethren, "You also are being built together."
    2. Paul tells them, this is God's work to make you part of His building.
    2. You, Paul says, are being built together!
5. Lastly, Paul declares the building's final destination (v. 22b).
  - a. "You," Paul writes, "are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit."
  - b. The purpose of a building is for it to be lived in.
  - c. And Paul tells these Ephesian believers as he tells us today, you (individually) and you (collectively), you are the place where God dwells on earth . . . He lives inside and among His people . . . You are Christ's Building! . . . You are Christ's church!

## CONCLUSION:

- A. Childhood action rhyme: "Here's the church . . . Here's the steeple . . . Open the door and see the people" should really say "Here's the building . . . Here's the steeple . . . Open the door and see the Church!"
- B. You are the church . . . Be the kind of church God would have you be!
- C. **God's Plan for Man's Salvation**