

THE CHURCH - GOD'S DOINGS, NOT MAN'S

Ephesians 2:10-22 1 Peter 2:5-10

Introduction: Once there was a king who boasted that the walls surrounding his city were made up of his bodyguards, soldiers. "These soldiers are the walls, every man is a brick" he said.

This is the same thought that Peter spoke of when he spoke of the Church. A great building with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone and every believer being added into its walls. The Church is not a physical, material building, although IT meets in one. It is not made of wood, mortar, bricks BUT of flesh and blood. Every time someone becomes a believer in Jesus Christ, another "stone" is added to God's Church.

I. GOD'S CHURCH IS FOUNDED ON JESUS CHRIST

1. Jesus stated that the confession of Peter was indeed what His Church would be built on.
"...thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God..." (Matthew 16:16)
 - It is NOT built on men, past or present or on some tradition of the past.
 - It is built on the DIVINITY of Jesus Christ.
 - Through the centuries many have built on that foundation by their preaching the gospel.
2. The cornerstone is the main supporting area of a building and all was added only after the cornerstone was in place. Take away the cornerstone and the building would collapse.
 - Jesus, therefore, holds the church together. He is the heart, life and soul of the Church.
 - Without Jesus, the "church" would be nothing more than any other man made organization.
 - Consider how buildings are built in earthquake areas, the foundation is laid on bed rock, then all else is added on top of that.

II. GOD'S CHURCH IS UNITED IN JESUS CHRIST

1. No building is built of just one single material as everybody knows. It takes many different kinds of materials.
2. God's Church is made up of believers from various professions, backgrounds, walks in life who are united by a common belief in Jesus Christ.
 - A brick is useless until it is built into a building with other bricks.
 - It is the same with believers. They must be joined with other believers to be in the right relationship with Jesus Christ.
3. Our nation nor any other nation cannot be defended by a single, well meaning person. No matter how determined and loyal that person may be. It takes other like minded people to be successful.
4. Likewise, God has a place for every believer and he/she must fill that particular place.
 - No believer can successfully support God's Church from the outside.
 - Nor can any believer go for what he/she can get out of it and be right with Jesus Christ.
 - Occasional attendance is not what it takes to be in right relationship with Jesus Christ either.

5. Believers are to go to church to:
 - Add what they have been given by God into it, to add their prayers with those of other believers through the ages.
 - To add their praise to the mighty chorus of others and to add their testimony to the witness of others, also to add their influence to the influence of millions of other believers.
6. Each single believer is a "brick" and added to the other "bricks" in God's Church.
7. Believers are to do all they can to prevent dissention within the Church. Where there is unrest, there is division. How then can God's Word be proclaimed to the world?
 - Take note of Churches with names such as "Harmony, Fellowship or Friendship" for down the road they may have to add "New Harmony, New Fellowship, etc.."
 - What brings problems to God's Church is not from the outside, but from the inside.

III. GOD'S CHURCH IS INDWELT BY JESUS CHRIST

1. God's Church is built on Jesus Christ and bound together in love, becoming a spiritual temple in which God dwells. (*Ephesians 2:20-22*)
 - One can lay bricks for so much pay an hour or one can lay bricks to build a building.
 - God's Church is built by every member doing his/her part in helping build God's House.
2. The Holy Spirit does not "haunt" houses, but He indwells believers.
 - In the Old Testament, the temple building was believed to be the dwelling place of God on earth.
 - Since Jesus Christ, the dwelling place of God on earth is in His people, the Church.
 - Then God had a temple for His people, now God has a people for His temple.
 - Then God was above His people, in the days of Jesus, God was beside His people, but now God is within His people.
 - Single and together, believers are the temple of God on earth today, therefore all Churches should be "spirit filled" fellowships.
 - The mark of a "spirit filled" Church is not tongues and miracles, but love and joy and holiness.
 - Since the believer's body is the temple of God, that should be a tremendous incentive for pure living.
 - Sadly, some Churches are full of empty people. Does God have the "key" to your "house?"

CONCLUSION:

1. For believers in Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is the cornerstone, the foundation of God's Church.
2. Each believer in Jesus Christ has been given something special, a gift, by God to be used within His Church and each believer has also been indwelt by God's presence, the Holy Spirit.
3. Man's church IS NOT God's Church!