

Pattern in Building

by Stephen Kaung

The church must be built according to God's pattern, and it is the bride of Christ that must be prepared for his return.

Duration: 1:18:30

Scripture: Exodus 25:9, 1 Chronicles 28:11, 1 Chronicles 28:19, Ephesians 1:11, Colossians 2:6, Hebrews 8:5

Topics: "Church Growth", "Fellowship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the pattern on which God builds the church. He explains that the New Testament provides a blueprint for the church, starting with the four Gospels which give a picture of Christ from different perspectives. The preacher emphasizes the importance of having a purpose and a pattern when building something significant. He also mentions that the church is both heavenly in nature and touches the earth, reaching out to all people. The sermon encourages believers to have fellowship with one another and to not consider anyone unclean, as Christ has received all who believe in him.

Transcript

Will you please turn to the letter to the Ephesians. Ephesians chapter one, verse eleven. Ephesians chapter one, verse eleven.

In him, that is in Christ, in whom we have also obtained an inheritance, being marked out beforehand according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his own will. Hebrews chapter eight. Hebrews chapter eight, verse five.

Who served the representation and shadow of heavenly things, according as Moses was orally told, when about to make the tabernacle, forsee, says he, that thou makest all things according to the pattern which has been shown to thee on the mountain. Exodus chapter twenty-five, verse nine. Exodus twenty-five, verse nine.

According to all that I shall show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the utensils thereof, even so shall ye make it. First Chronicles, first Chronicles chapter twenty-eight, verse eleven. And David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses, and of his treasures, and of his upper chambers, and of his inner chambers, and of the house of the mercy seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit.

Then verse nineteen. All this, said David, in writing by Jehovah's hand upon me, instructing as to all the works of the pattern. And finally Colossians, Colossians chapter two.

We begin with verse six. As therefore ye have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walking in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and assured in the faith, even as ye have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving, see that there be no one who shall lead you astray as a prey through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the teaching of man, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ. Let's have a word of prayer.

Dear Lord, we want to thank Thee for giving Thy word to us. We know that Thy word is truth, and Thy word is life and spirit. So dear Lord, we ask that Thy Holy Spirit, who alone can interpret Thy word, who alone can translate Thy word into Thy person.

Lord, we pray that Thy Spirit will breathe again upon Thy written word, and make them living and operative in our lives. Dear Lord, we want to bow before Thy word. We want to give ourselves to the working of Thy Spirit.

Thou alone can bring us into the reality of Thy word, and we just cast ourselves upon Thee, trusting, believing that Thou will do it. It is all to the praise of Thy glory. We ask in the name of our dear Lord, Jesus Christ.

Amen. We mentioned yesterday morning that the focus of our attention in the morning will be on that one word, build. Our Lord Jesus said, You are Peter.

On this rock I will build my church, and Hades' gates shall not prevail against it. The work of our Lord Jesus is to build his church. He said, My father worketh his atonement, and I work.

And what is this work that a father has been working, and the son continues to work? We believe that it is the work of building his church. So we can see that how important is this matter of the building of the church to God, the Father, and to our Lord Jesus, the Son. I think, brothers and sisters, in our days, especially during the last year, as I travel around, I discover that among God's people there is an increasing interest or concern on this matter of the building of the church.

It seems as if everywhere God's people are asking this question. How can the church be built? Is the church being built? Now I believe there is a reason behind it. I believe the Spirit of God is moving among his people, preparing for the return of our Lord Jesus.

Why is it that for so long, 20 centuries, and he still has not come? Brothers and sisters, we ask and we pray, Lord, why do you delay? God's people are crying everywhere, but it seems as if heaven still retains him. Now why? I think one of the main reasons is because the church is not yet built. The bride cannot return.

If the bridegroom cannot return, if the bride is still not ready. In a sense, we think they were waiting, we are waiting for him. But in a real sense, he is waiting for us.

Not until the bride has made himself ready, then the bridegroom will come. So I feel this matter of the building of the church is of such tremendous importance in these very last days. The church has to be built in order that Christ can return and receive the church as his own bride.

So dear brothers and sisters, do consider this matter of the building of the church as our chief concern during these remaining days of our life. We mentioned yesterday morning that when you think of this matter of build, the first mentioning of that word is found in Genesis chapter 2 verse 22. God took something out of the sight of Adam, and he built it into a woman, and then led the woman to the man.

In that first mentioning of the word built, you can discover all the principle, main principles involved in this matter of building. First of all, before you build anything, there is a purpose there. And then you find when you build, if you build something of significance, you need to have a blueprint, a pattern.

And with a pattern you begin to prepare for the materials, gather the materials together, and then the process of turning these raw materials into finished forms, into a building. And finally, after a building is finished, it serves a purpose. So there is presentation.

So during these mornings, this is what we would like to consider together before the Lord. Now yesterday morning, we considered the matter of purpose. When you think of the church, it is not a small thing.

Because even before the ages, before there was time, before there was space, before God created the heavens and the earth, already God has purpose. A purpose in Christ Jesus. And He purposed that purpose according to the good pleasure of His will.

In other words, it just pleases Him. It pleases Him to have this purpose. And He purposed this purpose in His Son and for His Son.

We mentioned yesterday morning that He loved His Son so much. He wanted to express His love towards His Son. And of all the gifts that He could give to His Son, the best of all, the one that really answers the very heart of His Son is the church.

So brothers and sisters, actually you find the origin of the church is far back in eternity past. And it is very in the very heart of God. Now if this is the case, immediately we understand how significant, how important, how glorious is the building of the church.

Now this morning we would like to share on the second point, which is pattern. Now if you want to build anything of any significance, you just cannot say, have an idea and then you start to do it. You need to lay down a plan.

You need to plan for it. And if you do not have the technical knowledge, where you engage an architect. You will tell the architect what you have in mind.

What kind of building do you want? What purpose that building will serve? And after the architect, he heard your thoughts, then he will, with his technical knowledge, put your thoughts into a blueprint, into a pattern. And then after the pattern is settled, you begin to build. Now if it is the way that man will do in building, how much more it will be the way that our God will build his church.

Now indeed, the Bible tells us that his thoughts are higher than our thoughts, and his ways are higher than our ways. It is like the heaven is far above the earth. Dear brothers and sisters, when we think about something, when we plan about something, our ways are limited by ourselves.

We being earthly. But God is in heaven, and his thoughts are higher than our thoughts. His ways are much higher than our ways.

So in the building of the church, God not only conceived a thought, a purpose, but also he laid down a plan before he does anything. And this is what in Ephesians chapter 1 verse 11 says, he works all things according to the counsel of his will. He purpose according to the good pleasure of his will.

Now after he has purposed something, then he laid down a counsel, a plan as how to carry out that which he has purposed. So we believe that when God does anything, he always do it according to the plan he has laid down. We mentioned yesterday, even when he said, I will make Adam a helpmate, his like.

And after God has decided to do that, he is looking for a pattern. And that's the reason why you'll find he led all these living creatures to Adam. And Adam would look at all these living creatures.

Is it that God does only want Adam to name the names of these living creatures? There must be something more than that. In other words, God led all these living creatures before Adam to let Adam choose whether he could find his helpmate, his like. Whether there will be something that will answer fully to his heart desire.

In other words, God used the law of elimination. Now God already knew what a pattern will be. But Adam didn't know about it.

And God wanted Adam to go through the test. It will be a tragedy if Adam will say, well, I will have to take what is there. Not the best, and brothers and sisters, what will a tragedy that will be.

God created everything after his own kind. God does not like hybrid. And thank God, Adam, instead of just giving and say, well, anything would be all right, he couldn't find his helpmate.

So God put Adam to sleep. And took something out of Adam. Now in our Bible is translated rib.

But in the original, it really means something out of Adam. God took something out of Adam. And with that something, God built the woman.

So in other words, the pattern, when God built the woman, is Adam. And the man. And because of this, you find the two are exactly alike.

And can be united back into one. And you're finding all God's working. God always works according to a pattern.

For instance, when God took the children of Israel out of Egypt, he brought them to Sinai. And he told them, make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among you. You know, brothers and sisters, God's original desire in creating man, is that he may dwell among man.

He wants man to be his house. His home. In Isaiah chapter 66, you'll find it is said, God said, heaven is my throne.

And the earth is my footstool. But where is the house that you will build for me? In other words, the heavens and the earth are God's office. But where is God's home? Where will he dwell? His desire is to dwell among man.

Make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among you. God is holy. He cannot dwell directly, as it were, among the children of Israel.

He can only dwell among them through a sanctuary. Build me a sanctuary. Now we know that Moses, he learned all the learnings of Egypt.

Egypt at the time was a great nation. It was noted for its architecture. Now even today, you go to Egypt, and you see the pyramids there.

These pyramids are marvels. Architectural marvels. But even during those early days, they had the skill, the knowledge, to build these tremendous buildings.

So Moses, he was mighty in word and in deed. He learned all the learnings of Egypt. In a sense, he was a great architect.

He was a great builder. An empire builder. And when God said, build me a tabernacle, that I may dwell among you.

Now to Moses, this will be a very simple task. Probably Moses said, Lord, fine. I will build you one that will really glorify your name.

And he would start to lay down the plan. To draw the blueprint. And start to build it.

But strange, strangely, God told Moses everything about the building of the tabernacle. He gave Moses a detailed blueprint. The pattern on the mountain.

He showed Moses the whole tabernacle. Not only the form, the size, but even the materials, the color, the shape of every utensil, and the way of worshipping in the sanctuary. In other words, God did not leave anything to Moses.

And allow Moses to plan for it. To put his own idea into it. This is God's sanctuary.

This is a house that God will dwell. And he alone will plan for it. He will not allow Moses to change it.

He warned Moses again and again, do everything according to the pattern that I show you on the mountain. Now brothers and sisters, we know that Moses is the faithful servant of God. He was faithful in all God's house.

Now in what sense he was faithful? In the sense that he did everything according to the command of God. He did not, he dare not, and he will not, put his own idea into the sanctuary. He will follow exactly, in every detail, what God has shown him, that pattern.

That is his faithfulness. And because of this, you remember, in Exodus chapter 40, when the tabernacle was built, and it was erected, and all the utensils were placed in their place, then the glory of God filled that place. In other words, God took that place as his sanctuary.

And the same thing is true. After the children of Israel entered into the promised land, for hundreds of years, God still lived in a tent. Not until David became king.

And he loved God so much. He is a man after God's own heart. And he had the thought of building God a permanent temple.

Now even though God did not allow him to build, because he was a man of war, he shed too much blood. That temple of God must represent God. It must be a symbol of peace.

So God did not allow David to build a temple. But God knew him. God knew his heart.

How he loved God, and loved the house of God. So you find that God showed the pattern of the temple to David. David said, God showed him the pattern of the temple by God's spirit.

God's hand was upon him. In other words, God's hand was upon David's hand, and guided his hand in drawing the blueprints. It was God who draws the blueprint.

And Solomon, the wisest of all men. Now in what sense he was the wisest of all men? In the sense that he was the person who asked God only for one thing. Instead of asking for riches, for power, for other things, he asked God for an understanding heart.

In other words, he wants to understand God. He wants to understand God's will. And because of this, he is the wisest of all men.

And his wisdom is expressed in building the temple. In other words, he built the temple exactly according to the pattern that God showed. To his father David.

And that is the wisdom of Solomon. So brothers and sisters, you find that whenever and wherever God lays his hand upon something, to build something, he always first have a pattern there. And then he will work according to the counsel of his will.

Work according to the pattern, exactly, until that work is finished. And only then, the finished work can be accepted by him. So brothers and sisters, in the building of Eve, in the building of the tabernacle, in the building of the temple, these are all types.

The bible says these are shadows. These are not the eternal reality. But even these shadows had to be so exact to the real image, to reality, that God warned them again and again that everything must be done according to the pattern.

Now if this is the case, how much more important when God is building that eternal reality, the church. But today, when you mention this matter of the church, does the church, the building of the church, have a pattern? Probably in the mind of most people, they will think of the church as a product of history. In other words, the church has no pattern.

In the beginning, when the hundred and twenty people in that upper room, being baptized in one spirit, into one body, and then on the same day, three thousand were joined into that body of Christ, and they just met together. There was no program, there was no organization, and they just came together, they met together, they shared bread, brick bread, from house to house, and if they wanted to meet together, because there were thousands of people, there was no private house big enough, so they went to Solomon's porch. And there in that open place, they sang, they prayed, they preached, they fellowshiped.

No prayer, nothing. Everything was so primitive. Then gradually, as a result of history, you find gradually, they began to be a little bit more organized.

Because you'll find that there were so many people there. Now even though they were all Jews, but they were Hebrew Jews and Hellenistic Jews. In other words, there were Jews among them that were born and reared in the promised land.

But there were other Jews that were born and reared in the Gentile cities. So these Hellenistic Jews, they have Greek culture, and yet God brought these Hebrew Jews and Hellenistic Jews together and joined them into one body. But you'll find that not very long, a problem came up.

Because those who were in responsibility were all Hebrew Jews. And they knew the conditions of the brothers and sisters who live in Jerusalem and in Judea. So in the supply of the widows, they neglected the widows of those Hellenistic Jews, because they didn't know their real condition.

And there was murmur among them, and thank God, you know, God gave them wisdom. And they said, well, we need to have seven men, full of the Holy Spirit, and of good name, to take care of the table. So we can devote ourselves to prayer and to ministry of the Word.

So here you'll find seven persons were chosen to take care of the table. Now we call them deacons today. And then gradually you'll find it's more developed, you know, and later on you'll find that even in Jerusalem you have elders.

Then you'll find the church began to spread. And as it began to spread and to increase, gradually you'll find more organizations have to be brought in. And when you come to the fourth century, when Constantine the Great became emperor, he made Christianity an acceptable religion, fashionable to join so-called the church.

And there you'll find thousands and thousands flock into the church. Those of his soldiers, if they were willing to be baptized, they will receive money and also garments. So who would not do it? And during that time you'll find most of the people in the church were unsaved.

Their background were all heathen. They still long for these festivals, the heathen feasts. And in order to help them, to cater to their desire, you'll find all these so-called Christian festivals came into view.

The birthday of the sun god become Christmas today. Because they say Christ is the son of righteousness. Very clever.

And brothers and sisters, you'll find more and more organizations come up. And very soon you'll find not only the bishop, instead of ruling as the elders of the local church, they began to rule a diocese. And then you have archbishop, and then you have cardinals, and then you have pope.

In other words, you'll find the church began to develop and develop until it became a nation, a country. And a country above countries, a world empire, it is a matter of history. And some people who were not happy with that, you know, they began to branch off, and you have all these different denominations, and different organizations, different emphasis, different focus.

So people say, well the church doesn't have a pattern. It cannot. It is just the product of history.

We cannot go back to the primitive condition of the first century to build a church. We are in the 21st century. It's progressive.

And we have to go on. Brothers and sisters, in the mind of many people today, the church is patterned after the world. As the world changes, the church changes.

Even in our time, the so-called church today is worked according to the principles of the world. To be a pastor of a big church, you need to have executive ability. Because you are ruling an empire.

It is more important than you have the word of God, the living word of God. The church is patterned after the world. Like a great organization, big company, big corporation, everything is patterned according to the world.

Instead of the world imitates the church, the church is following the way of the world. Why? Because we think that there is no pattern from God. We have to draw our blueprint in order to build a church.

Of course we know. What we have built is the tower of people. Now some people say, well, the church has no pattern.

It is just to be built according to the ingenuity of man. Man has the wisdom to know how to build a church according to the time and according to the need. So actually there is no pattern.

And if you want to find pattern, then probably you have to go back into tradition. Someone with wisdom, with ability, he invented something. Or he laid down some rules, regulations, some ways, some techniques as to how to build a church.

And as time goes on, those who follow will just follow the tradition of the fathers. That is the way that the church is built. As in Judaism, you find that they follow the traditions of the fathers.

In the beginning, it was a living faith. When the children of Israel were gathered together at Mount Sinai. And God gave his commandments to them.

The Ten Commandments. The living word of God. And at the time it was a living faith.

But as days go on, gradually you find people will ask, What do you mean by keeping the Sabbath? God said, keep the Sabbath. On Sabbath you do no work. Now what do you mean by doing no work? What is work? And then you find these wise rabbis.

Through the centuries, they began to explain what work means. And their explanation was explained by the rabbis in the succeeding generations. So you find word upon word are being added.

Until it became a huge tradition. And it stifled, it buried the word of God. The commandment of God.

So at the time of Christ, you find that's what Christ said. You follow the traditions of man. And not the commandment of God.

But it's buried by the mountains of traditions. In the gospel you find they always complain and murmured and criticized our Lord. That he was breaking the Sabbath.

Because on Sabbath he healed. He did good things. And they say, you violated Sabbath.

And because of this, they will get rid of him. How strong was the tradition of man. Brothers and sisters, the church followed the same footsteps of Judaism.

In a sense we find that Christianity is more and more Judaized. You know in Judaism, there are several things that are prominent and absolutely necessary. One, you need to have a place of worship.

Jerusalem, the temple, that was the place of worship. Now even though after Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple was destroyed. And the Jewish people, they were taken captive into Babylon.

And thank God, God healed their idol worshiping. By taking them into a land of idol worship. So when they were taken into Babylonian captivity, they were healed of idol worshiping.

And they wanted to worship God now. But they couldn't go back to Jerusalem. There was no temple there.

So what did they do? My, they are really clever. You know the Jewish people are very, very clever. And I think that one of the most ingeniously they invented is the synagogue.

It is so clever. Why? Because if you have ten men of leisure. By leisure it doesn't mean that you have no job.

It means that you are willing to devote some time for religious purpose. If you have ten men of leisure, you can organize a synagogue. And you can organize synagogue according to what you want.

In other words, you can gather some of like-mindedness. Same idea, same opinion. Maybe the same temperament.

Or the same trade. And you can organize a synagogue. And in the synagogue you can read Torah, the five books of Moses.

You can read the prophets. And you can pray to God. And you can sing the songs.

And there was much liberty in the synagogue. Because they allowed people to share, to fellowship. You remember when Paul and Barnabas, they went to the synagogue.

And they were asked to speak. Lots of freedom. The only thing they couldn't do, they couldn't sacrifice.

And according to law, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. Brothers and sisters, so you find in Judaism, you need a place of worship. Temple, synagogue.

To worship. Outside of the place, there is no worship. You need a set of rules and regulations.

You need a form of worship. Worship in a certain way. Ritual.

Ceremony. And you need a special class that are trained to worship. Now brothers and sisters, if you look at Christianity today, do you see any difference? That building, in the corner of the square, is called the place of worship.

As if aside from that place, you cannot worship. If you want to worship God, go to that place. This is the place of worship.

Every Christian organization must have a creed. There must be a program of worship. And there must be someone or ones who are specially trained to lead the worship.

Isn't it that Christianity has Judized? I remember when I was a boy. I was raised up in a Methodist church. And in a Methodist church, even though they have a place of worship, they have a creed, the discipline, they have the program, and they have the pastor.

But even so, you'll find the pastors, they do not wear a special garment, with all these things hanging there at different festivals. But today, what a difference. More and more, you'll find Christianity is Judized.

Now, how can you have a church? How can you have a church worship without choir? Now, where does the idea of choir come from? Do you find that in the New Testament? It was David who started that choir. Special people, trained to worship. And even today, you'll find when you want to worship, you have to have a special group of people leading worship with music.

Isn't that we are turning more and more into Judaism? I believe this is a tendency of Christianity today. The tradition of man. And how strong is that tradition? Well, thank God, I think it's in the 60s.

There was a movement in the world. We want New Testament church. We will build New Testament church.

In other words, they want to find that pattern in the New Testament. Instead of in the Old Testament. Now, that's a big improvement.

So, where can you find a pattern of a New Testament church? Well, naturally, you go to the Book of Acts. Because this was the beginning of the church. So, you go to the Book of Acts.

And try to find in the Book of Acts a pattern. But unfortunately, what you are looking for is the technology or the technical side of the church. Instead of seeing that the church is spiritual, that the church is living, is life, that the church is heavenly.

When we look into the Book of Acts, because we are so earthly, we are so worldly, we are so natural, and therefore you find when even we are going into the New Testament, all we look for are the technical sides, the technology of it. And we find, well, if you want to organize a church, of course, you want elders. Without elders, there was no ruling, no authority in the church.

And then according to the New Testament, the church should be plural. The elders should be plural. In other words, there should be one person to be the elder.

Or the presiding elder. No such thing in the Bible. Elderhood is always plural.

Why? Because Christ is the head of the church. No one person can represent Christ as the head. So it needs more than one, so that no one will really take the place of Christ as the head of the church.

Christ is still the head of the church. So you have elders in plural number. At least two.

Then, of course, with the elders, you need some deacons and deaconesses. And with the deacons and deaconesses, you have the congregation. So I sometimes say now, if you have ten persons, and you want to organize a church, well, make two elders, three deacons, and five congregation.

And you have the New Testament church. Complete. Now today we laugh at it, right? But in those days it was serious.

People really think that they have found the New Testament pattern. But unfortunately, it didn't work. Now why? Brothers and sisters, I think there is a basic misunderstanding there.

Or a lack of understanding there. We do not really understand the nature of the church. What is the nature of the church? The nature of the church is heavenly.

It is spiritual. It is of life. You remember when Peter, on that roof, he was hungry, he was praying, and he was given a vision.

He saw a sheet coming down from heaven. It is heavenly. But it touches the earth.

And in the sheet, all quadruples, creeping things. And God said, Peter, kill and eat. And Peter said, Lord, not so.

I have never touched anything unclean. And God said, what God has claimed, let no man say is unclean. It happened three times.

Because strong was the tradition in Peter. And then, he lifted up, back to heaven. That's what the church is.

It is from heaven. It is heavenly in nature. But it touches the earth.

It reaches down to all the unclean. And thank God, we are the unclean, but cleansed by the precious blood of the Lamb. We are to have fellowship one with another.

Do not consider anyone unclean. Whom Christ has received, we receive. But remember, on earth, it is just a testimony.

It will be received back to heaven. This is what the church is. That's the nature of the church.

So, dear brothers and sisters, if you want to find the pattern of the church, and we believe that there is a pattern, because if God will have a pattern for shadows, for representations, how much more God will have a pattern in the reality, in the real thing. But where can you find a pattern? Where is the pattern? What is the pattern of the building of the church? The Lord said, I will build my church. When He builds the church, on what pattern does He build it? You know, brothers and sisters, it is really not far from us.

It is right before us. When you open the New Testament, when you come to the reality, because in the fullness of time, Christ came. And when you come to the reality, what do you find? First, you have the four Gospels.

Now, what are the four Gospels? The four Gospels give us a picture of Christ, looking from four directions. In other words, in the Gospels, you have the story of our Lord Jesus, while He was on earth. He began to speak and to act in this body that He got from the Virgin Mary.

In that body, He declared the Father. In that body, He accomplished the work of redemption. So, in the four Gospels, you see Christ.

A living person. A heavenly person. A spiritual person.

Then you have the Book of Acts. And Luke said, when he wrote the first discourse, that is, the Gospel according to Luke, he told us what Christ has begun to speak and to act. But now he is writing the second discourse.

And what is the second discourse? The Book of Acts? It is the continuation of the speaking and the working of the same Christ, but in a different body. In Luke, the Word became flesh, incarnated, full of grace and truth. We see the glory as of the Son, only begotten with the Father.

And then, after He ascended, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down. In one Spirit, the 120, baptized into one body. In other words, Christ ascended to be the head and He took upon Himself a mystic body, a corporate body, the Church.

And in that body, He continued to live, continued to work, He continued to speak. That is the Book of Acts. That is the Church.

So, brothers and sisters, what is the pattern of the Church? The pattern of the Church is the living Christ. Christ as revealed in the four Gospels. He is the pattern.

And the Church is built according to Him. So, in Colossians chapter 2, we find that. Do not be misled, thinking that you will work according to man or to the elements of the world.

But the Church is built according to Christ. Not technical. It is living, changing from glory to glory, transforming, conforming to the image of Christ.

Now, that is the pattern of the Church. So, dear brothers and sisters and God, in building the Church, He has Christ, His beloved Son, as the pattern. Everything is to be built according to Him.

We have to build up in Him and rooted in Him. In other words, it will be Christ and nothing else. That is what the Church is.

So, in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 12, the body is one, but has many members. But even though the members are many, the body is one. So also is the Christ.

Now, often times when we read that verse, now, if you are very careless, it may not mean anything to you. But if you are careful, when you read that verse, immediately you notice something wrong there. The body is one, many members.

Members are many, one body. So also is the Church. That is what the Church is.

But the Bible says, the Holy Spirit says, so also is the Christ. In other words, the Church is the Christ. Because it is built exactly according to Christ.

There can be no deviation, no departure, no change, no alteration, no mixture, no foreign elements. Everything in the Church is Christ. Brothers and sisters, therefore, the building of the Church is a spiritual thing.

It is a spiritual work. It is a heavenly work. It is exclusively of life.

The more we know the Lord, the more we are transformed. The Church grows in statues. So in Ephesians 5, Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her.

He sanctifies it, purifies it by the washing of the word with the water so that the Church may be a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle of any of sorts thought, holy and blameless, to be presented to him as his bride. Brothers and sisters, when the Church is built, what do you see? You see Christ. Everything is Christ.

So that's why in Ephesians 1, verse 23, the Church is body, the fullness of him who fills all and in all. Nothing more, nothing less. Now if this is the pattern, brothers and sisters, how spiritual, how heavenly,

how living is the Church.

And God warned again and again, build everything according to the pattern of the month. Oh, brothers and sisters, how we need to see this. It will deliver us from anything that is merely technical.

You know, today people, when you talk about the building of the Church, it's all technology. That's the wrong direction. The building of the Church is intensely spiritual.

That's the reason why we have to be spiritual. The building of the Church is intensely heavenly. Nothing earthly can be added to it.

The building of the Church is exclusively the life of Christ in each one of us. His life is the building block, nothing else. And how glorious when the Church is built.

It is his like. And our Lord said, this is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. Oh, brothers and sisters, does this warm your heart? Does it give you that longing that we may not in any way work against God, but by His grace we may work with Him.

Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, what Thou has purposed for Thy beloved Son is so glorious that nothing can be patterned after but Thy beloved Son Himself. O Lord, do open our inner eyes to see it that we may not be so foolish as if we are able to build Thy Church.

O Lord, give us understanding heart that we may see Thee as our pattern. May Thy Holy Spirit work in each one of us according to that pattern and bring us together according to that pattern. Lord, our heart's desire is Thou shall have that Church for Thy beloved Son.

We ask in Thy precious name. Amen.

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