

Building Fellowship in the Church

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of parental responsibility in raising children within the church and fostering genuine fellowship among believers.

Duration: 1:10:15

Scripture: Ephesians 2:10, Ephesians 4:15

Topics: "Church Unity", "Christian Fellowship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of building up the body of Christ by repenting of past criticisms, actively cooperating in the work of the church, and seeking to encourage and bless one another. It highlights the need to focus on positive actions that contribute to unity and growth within the church, rather than destructive criticisms or inactivity. The speaker urges individuals to humbly seek God's guidance on how they can play a part in strengthening the fellowship and serving others in love.

Transcript

I'd like to share something from God's word before we pray for these dear children. When God gives us children, first of all we must remember they are a gift of God. And they were given to us with a purpose.

Psalm 127 Children are a gift of the Lord. Psalm 127 verse 3 And they are like arrows in the hand of a warrior. You know what arrows are used for? Arrows are used for firing at the enemy.

And our enemy is Satan. So we have to bring up our children to fight against Satan. In other words, Jesus said, I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

So our children must become effective members of the church that fights against Satan. And you know how an arrow is fired? In the olden days they didn't have guns and rifles. They would put an arrow and pull the bow and fire.

So I picture that God gives parents a bow. And we put this arrow, which is our son or daughter. And pulling the bow is like training that child for 18 years.

We usually have our children at home for about 18 years. Some people have them for more, 25 years. I had my sons at home only for 18 years.

And I had to pull the bow, my wife and I, not me alone. Pull the bow, the string, in 18 years, train them. So that when we release them, they go and fight the devil.

So that responsibility is on parents. To bring up their children in the fear of God. And if your children go astray, I always say, never blame them.

I told my sons when they went away from home, I said if any of you go astray, one or two things. One, I will never blame you. I will not blame you.

I will say that I did not bring you up properly. Because the Bible says train up the child in the way he should go. And when he's old he will not depart from it.

Whatever may happen, he will not depart from it. So if you departed from it, that means I didn't train you up properly. According to Proverbs 22.6. So, the second thing I said was, Okay, even if it was my mistake, and I did not do my job properly, but you went astray, but I'm not going to let you keep on going astray just because I failed.

You know, because some parents have come to the church, to CFC, after their children have grown up. The children have already gone astray, and then the parents are converted and come to the church. Then what shall we do about them? Is there hope for them? Of course there is hope for them.

Because there is nothing impossible with God. But then I told my boys, if that happens to you, I will pray that God will deal with you drastically. And bring you to a place of need in your life.

I mean, I pray you have a car crash, or break your legs or something like that, so that you will turn back to him. So I asked parents whose children are going astray, Are you willing to let God break your children's legs in a car accident? They said, no, no, no. Okay, let them go to hell.

That's better for you? You prefer that? Do you see how serious it is for a child to disobey and dishonor God? His legs broken is nothing. If that will help him to come to a place of need. It's very, very important that parents take seriously their responsibility, and my children knew that I took my responsibility very seriously, of ensuring that they are not going to grow up to be a dishonor to God, and a credit to Satan.

So don't let any child here, parents, don't let any child of yours, grow up to glorify Satan. Because you have pampered him or her and spoiled them, by giving them whatever they want, maybe because you got lots of money, and not taught them the fear of God, not taught them obedience to parents, not taught them to respect older people, and not urged them to fellowship with other people in the church of like mind. My children were tremendously helped, because I urged them to fellowship in the church with others, more than they fellowship with worldly friends.

So there are ways to, it's a wonderful thing to be in a church, where we have godly values. But it doesn't mean that just because you are in a godly church, your children will grow up godly. It depends on what values you put for them.

For example, my wife and I decided, we will never sit at home, and criticize the brothers and sisters in the church. Have you made that decision? You sit around the dining table, and speak evil of the brothers and sisters, I can guarantee your children will go astray. And when they go astray, you know the reason.

They don't value the church. Because you, the great expert, have found so many things wrong with the church. You yourself, God has not used you to build any church.

I have been criticized many times in my life, Do you know the people who have criticized me the most? The people who have never built one church themselves. So, learn to value the church. Teach your children to value the church.

Nobody in the church is perfect. The young people are not perfect. But teach them to value them and fellowship with them, so that they are protected from the evil that is in the rest of the world.

So I want to encourage all of you, I believe God is on our side. The great encouragement we have is, Do you know that God is on your side, to help you bring up your children properly. But you better also be on God's side, and don't criticize His children.

Because God does not like it, if you spend your time criticizing His children, then He won't help you so much with your children. So you make it a decision in your life, that you are not going to spend your time criticizing the elders, and criticizing the people in the church, when you yourself have done nothing. If you don't do it for the sake of the Lord, at least do it for the sake of your children, that you preserve them from gossip, backbiting, evil speaking at home, so that you are stretching your, because every evil that you do or speak, that string of the bow becomes slack.

And then when you release the arrow, it doesn't fly, it just flops over there. Because you did not pull it tense, with godliness and spiritual values. So that's a little picture you can keep in your mind.

Remember God is there to help you to pull the string. Always remember, God is there to help you to train your children. Without God's help it's impossible.

But with God's help it's possible. I used to pray like this when my children were small. Today you know that all my four children are following the Lord.

They married godly women, and they are bringing up their own children now in godly ways. But what I used to pray for them was this, I say, Lord, today they are small children. I want them to grow up and become my brothers in Christ.

That I can treat each one of them like a brother in Christ. And that's what's happened. You pray like that, I don't want my children to always be children.

Some of you, your children are married, or they are grown up, they are in college, they are working. Have they become your brothers and sisters in Christ? Or you are like the Maharaja just ordering them around. That's sad.

As soon as my children grew up and started working, before they got married, I said, Lord, now they are my brothers in Christ. And I am going to treat them just like I treat any other young brother in the church. I am going to talk to them and relate to them about spiritual things, just like a brother.

So that is, if your children are grown up, and they have come to the place where they are past college and working, they should now have become your brother and sister in Christ. Work towards that. Let's raise up in CFC Sharjah a whole group of wonderful young brothers and sisters who will grow up to marry godly men and women, and who will be another generation fighting against Satan.

I am always very happy to pray for children because they are the next generation. And actually, folks like them are almost third generation. But we need in the church to keep on producing generation after generation of godly people.

And some of you have brought up your children already, as born again. That's wonderful. Some of them are married.

Now you must pray for the next generation, your grandchildren. I pray for my grandchildren. I pray that they will grow up to be the third generation of witnesses for Jesus Christ.

I am not happy with just one generation. I want the next generation. I talk to them, to the grandchildren, about reading the Bible.

And my wife is always talking to the grandchildren about the stories of the Bible. So we need to have generation after generation that is following the Lord. It is very, very important.

So I was sharing in the last session about the importance of being a spiritual Christian and not just an intellectual one. Jesus said, Thank you, Father, you have hidden these things from clever, intelligent people. But you have revealed them to babes.

What do babes have which clever, intelligent people don't have? Humility. You cannot compete with a baby in humility. A newly born baby is the humblest person on the face of the earth.

There is zero pride in a little baby. And when Jesus said in Matthew 11, 25, Thank you, Father, you have hidden these things from the clever, intelligent people. And you have revealed them to babes.

What he was saying is, God's greatest truths are revealed to those who are humble. The humbler you are, the more you will understand of the Bible. Not the cleverer you are.

The cleverer you are, the less you will understand the truth of the Bible. But the humbler you are, the more you understand. So what shall some of us do? Who are clever? I told the Lord.

I said, Lord, I have to acknowledge I am intelligent. I am not stupid. But that intelligence I see is helpful in the world.

But when it comes to the Bible, it's a handicap. I want to know. And the Lord said, it doesn't matter.

You can be intelligent and humble. Why do you have to be proud of your intelligence? Why do you have to depend on your intelligence? Then I saw the secret. That even if you are clever and intelligent, you can still understand the Scriptures if you are humble yourself.

And come to the Scripture and say, Lord, I cannot understand this unless you reveal it to me. And then you will find that God speaks to you, not only through clever people, but through some very simple people, who minister life. It depends on what you come to the Church for.

If you come to the Church to get information, or you go to the Internet to listen to messages to get knowledge, knowledge, knowledge, you will go astray. You know, this book and every sermon that you hear, even of my sermons, you have a choice. It can be a tree of knowledge or a tree of life.

There are about 1000 sermons of mine on YouTube. Every one of them can be a tree of knowledge or a tree of life. That depends on you.

Two people listening to the same sermon, one person gets knowledge, the other person gets life. Why is that? Because one person is humble. One person is trying to find out how to follow Jesus.

The other person is listening to get intellectual stimulation. And they think they are becoming spiritual, because they get intellectual stimulation. You can listen to me here and get intellectually stimulated.

And you think you are getting spiritual. You are not getting spiritual. You are just eating more and more of the tree of knowledge, of good and evil.

And Jesus said, the Lord said to him, you will die. And I have seen that. People die.

Some of the cleverest people are the ones who have left CFC churches in Kerala. They are not dumb people. They are clever people who cause splits and divisions and break away.

Why is it? What they lack is not knowledge, not cleverness. What they lack is humility and the fear of God. There is a beautiful verse in Proverbs in chapter 22 and verse 4. Please remember this all your life.

Proverbs 22 verse 4. The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord are spiritual riches, spiritual honor and spiritual life. So whenever you come to church to a meeting of the church, whenever you listen to a message on the internet, always say, Lord, I don't want knowledge. It will kill me.

Knowledge killed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. And it will kill me. I want to go to the tree of life.

I want to become a better Christian, a humbler Christian after listening to this message. I want to be more spiritual. I want to build more fellowship with others and build the church more after listening to this message.

Otherwise, with all this knowledge, it will be like a balloon filled with air going up and up and up and up and thinking that I am very spiritual. We can deceive ourselves. I have seen that happen to so many people.

There are people who listen to my messages just to get points for their sermons. You know that there are people in many denominations who listen to my messages just to get points for sermons and to get information. Well, they are destroying themselves.

Don't let that happen to anybody here. Say, Lord, I want life. And one mark that you got life, I will tell you this, listen, it will bring you more into fellowship with other members of the local body of Christ.

If it is not bringing you into fellowship with other members of the body of Christ, something is wrong with your Christianity. Something is wrong with your holiness. You are an old covenant person.

You may be a very godly person. Even if you are as godly as John the Baptist. And John the Baptist was one of the most godly people in his generation.

But he was an old covenant person. What did he lack in holiness? John the Baptist would not watch pornography. He will not be spending his time gossiping.

He was a prophet. He fasted and prayed. But what is it he did not have? He did not have fellowship.

Whom could John the Baptist fellowship with? Nobody. He was a lonely holy person. That is the finest old covenant person had no fellowship.

And same with Moses. He couldn't fellowship with his own brother and sister. There was nobody.

He was a very holy person. But he was a lonely person. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elijah.

Whom did Elijah have fellowship with? The Lord told Elijah once, there are 7,000 people in Israel who have not bowed down the knee to Baal. But did Elijah have fellowship with them? Did he have fellowship with any of them? No. Because in the Old Testament, the word fellowship is non-existent.

There is no fellowship in the Old Testament. There is no church in the Old Testament. Only congregation.

600,000 people. No fellowship. All individuals.

So remember, if you are holiness, you may be a very holy person, as holy as John the Baptist. But if you don't have fellowship with others, you are an old covenant Christian. That is the truth.

And you may possibly find that you don't even have fellowship with your wife or your husband. I mean you can have a friendship, but not a deep spiritual fellowship. And even if you do, you don't have fellowship with other brothers and other sisters in the body of Christ.

Shall I tell you why? Listen. Because every church you go to, you feel it's not good enough for you. You are so holy, no church is good enough for you.

You will live and die as a lonely old man. A lonely old woman. Having wasted your life because you never built fellowship.

Because everybody was inferior to you. May God have mercy on you. Do you know that Jesus did not come on earth to produce holy individuals? He came to produce a body.

To destroy all the distinctions that there are between people. I told you about mystery. I told you the mystery of godliness, that Christ came in a flesh, always denied his own will, rent the veil, which is his flesh, so that we could live in the spirit.

That is how we can live in the spirit, serve in the spirit, worship in the spirit. All you have to do is say no to your own will, every day. You will be a worshipper in the spirit that the father appreciates.

I want to show you another mystery in Ephesians chapter 3. Please turn with me to Ephesians chapter 3. He speaks here in verse 4. By referring to this when you read, you will understand my insight into the mystery of Christ. What is this mystery? Verse 5. Which in other generations was not made known to people. But now it has been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the spirit.

And what is this mystery? Listen to this. This is a mystery. Verse 6. That the Gentiles are to be fellow heirs and fellow members of the body.

Do you know what it means to tell a Jew about a Gentile? It's like in all nations there are different groups of people. One despise the other. In some countries the whites despise the blacks.

In Kerala you have churches for the scheduled caste and the churches for the Syrian Christians. They are two different classes. They cannot become one body.

No, no, no. It's like Jews and Gentiles. The Jews were complete.

They say I will never have anything to do with the Gentiles. I mean Peter even after the day of Pentecost found it very reluctant to go to the house of a Gentile to preach the gospel. That is how much they stayed away from Gentiles.

There have been dividing walls like this in all groups of people in the world. And so when you come to a church you can also feel there are people who are very different from me. Not as different as Jew and Gentile but they are different from you.

They are not exactly like you. They don't have the same values. But the great mystery is that God is making them into one body.

That's an amazing thing. People are completely different from me. Intellectually different.

Community wise different. Racially different. Education wise different.

Economically different. But God is making us one. That is the great thing in the body of Christ.

And it says here in chapter 2 verse 14. Ephesians 2 verse 14. He himself is our peace who had made both groups into one and broken down all the barriers of the dividing walls between them.

And he abolished in his flesh this enmity so that he might make the two into one new man. And when it says two it's not just two, it's two million or any number of people into one new man so that, verse 16 he might reconcile them both in one body and present this one body to God. Do you know that Jesus is not presenting thousands of holy individuals to God but he's presenting one body that was not possible in the old covenant.

That is one of the things we emphasize in CFC that we're not just preaching holiness which is one aspect of the new covenant but the other most important aspect is that holy people become one with other holy people. Imperfect holy people become one with other imperfect holy people because Jesus has broken down every barrier of the dividing wall. When he stretched out his arms on Calvary he was saying, Jews, Gentiles, come die on the cross with me and become one.

The only reason why two people cannot become one only reason is because one or both of them are not willing to die on the cross. The only place of unity is the cross. It says here on the cross, verse 15 he abolished the enmity and in verse 16 through the cross did you see that? Verse 16 middle through the cross he put the enmity to death.

Enmity means what? There's something in me that repels that other person. He's not like me. So I can't fellowship with him.

It may not be enmity that I want to kill him. There are different shades of enmity. Worst enmity is where you want to kill him but enmity can also mean I don't want to get too close to him because he's so different from me and he doesn't think like me and doesn't know the Bible like me and doesn't have the same values and I don't think he's spiritual like me so many things.

Jesus destroyed that enmity and through the cross he put it to death. So in the church we have to demonstrate how my holiness is not a holiness that has made me like John the Baptist one lonely individual but a holiness that has brought me into fellowship with other imperfect holy individuals because

I'm also an imperfect holy individual. I want to ask you if that has happened.

Ask yourself how much have you come into fellowship with people who are completely different from you and who don't agree with you perhaps in some things but you know that they are really godly people and you they may not be great preachers but they love the Lord and they love their family. One of the wonderful things I have seen in our church in Bangalore is how God has broken down all these barriers and made people of completely different languages and you know Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Anglo-Indian all one all these divisions make no difference that we are one in Christ and that's how we know we have experienced new covenant life. A holiness that does not bring you into fellowship with others is a deception.

Don't keep on deceiving yourself that you got holiness if it does not bring you into fellowship with others. Real holiness will always bring you into fellowship with others. Will teach you to value them even if they are imperfect.

I've been greatly challenged by Jesus when he went to the Garden of Gethsemane he wanted sometimes you know we need somebody to pray with us so I want to ask you a question if you want somebody to pray with you whom will you go to? You go to the elders right? Whom could Jesus go to? Shall I tell you whom he called to pray with him? Peter who was going to deny him in the next few hours James and John who were so carnal that they wanted to bring fire down and destroy the Samaritans he said please come and pray with me.

I've been tremendously challenged by that that sometimes when I am in a need probably I need to go to some young brother say brother will you come and pray with me? we got to pray through this that's how Jesus was but some of us are so spiritual that we can never pray with a younger brother what does he know? These are people who have not understood the body of Christ you know in the body of Christ all of us need one another in the physical body there is no part of this body that despises another part for example we know the right hand is always in most of us more efficient we sign letters and everything with the right hand and the left hand is a weaker hand but the right hand never despises the left hand if you want to play a musical instrument properly you need the left hand as well if you want to lift a heavy table you need the left hand as well even though it's a weaker vessel there are many things you want to play a game with a ball you need both hands so I find that there is an illustration there of how a stronger member realizes I need that weaker member even though he may not know as much as me and even though he is not as capable as me I need him because God has put him in the same body with me that is the true church true church is not just coming together once a week and listening to a message no that's why in Bangalore sometimes on a Sunday we wouldn't have a meeting we'd go for a picnic I think we were the only church in Bangalore that went for a picnic on Sunday because it's such a sin to go for a picnic, right?

Sunday means we must come and sit like holy people and listen to a message and have zero fellowship with each other I said listen to a message you can sit at home and listen to it on the internet you can go to church on a Sunday the purpose of coming together in a church meeting is what you cannot get on the internet for example somebody listening to this message on the internet what is it he cannot get which we can get in a church fellowship you can't get fellowship when you are sitting alone listening to a message and some people even though they are sitting in a church building listening to it just like watching on the internet they have no fellowship with others then the whole purpose of fellowship is defeated so I believe that sometimes when we went for a picnic on a Sunday we

accomplished more than when we just made everybody sit there and listen to a message because we built fellowship we got to know one another but the worldly Christians can't understand that because fellowship is not valued in most churches so long as you admire the pastor and pay your money and go regularly you are considered a good member but that's not the mark of a true Christian a true Christian is one who values fellowship what would you think if you had say five children and none of them would mingle with the others they all play by themselves one plays with his game and the other plays with the other game and five of them sitting in the same house tell me would you be happy as a father and one of your children looks down on the other yeah he is in much junior class I can't have what

would you think of such children you think something is seriously wrong in your family that the children can't fellowship with one another because one is eight or nine years older than the other so what that's the thing that the Lord the father in heaven is concerned about that his children so often are not able to fellowship with another and they deceive themselves that they are spiritual just because they like to listen to good messages so I want to ask all of you sitting here I am not preaching to the walls I remember once after a meeting somebody came to me and said Brother Zak were you preaching to me I said yes I was not preaching to the walls and the chairs I was preaching to you only who else so if you ask me after the meeting were you preaching to me I will say yes I was

preaching to you only I don't preach to the walls and the chairs it's for you do you have fellowship do you value them or do you despise them or are you a member or you feel you are too holy to be in this church why don't you you know what I tell such people why don't you leave this church and don't waste our time go and sit somewhere else find that holy church and sit there don't waste our time here we want the only people we want in this church are those who value fellowship with their brothers and sisters the 15 year old boy can fellowship with his 5 year old sister at home even though he knows 100 times more than that 5 year old girl haven't you seen your children play like that my children were like that my oldest son was about 9 years older than my youngest they play wonderfully

together even today what does it matter the older child may know much more than the other so what it's a family do you have that sense of family in the church or do you always feel that I know more than the other person or he is not as spiritual as me he is not as holy as me why don't you fellowship with him and make him as holy as you are fellowship we don't despise a child in the family just because he is sick or he is too short or he is not healthy no I feel that we haven't understood the church as a family we haven't understood the importance of fellowship together in a body body is even more than family there is no part of this body that is more important than working together with the other I want to ask you do you cooperate cooperate with the elders and with the other brothers in

doing what this church is seeking to do or are you a lazy member who just comes and sits here listens goes home and does nothing for this church yes are you like that I hope God will shake you up before he destroys you you know there is a very serious verse which says if anyone destroys the temple of God God will destroy him it's a very serious thing 1 Corinthians if you destroy the temple of God God will destroy you best is go and join some other religion and be outside but if you are part of a church you must build up build up that's our calling build up with the others we cannot be a passive member which member of your body is a passive useless member tell me in your human body I'll tell you the one that is paralyzed think if my right hand is paralyzed it's still a part of the body

wherever I go this hand will come just like you go with this church wherever this church goes and you are here every Friday but what do you do to bless the rest of the body nothing you just come and sit there

hang around receive whatever you can you know this paralyzed hand gets a lot of nourishment and all from the body but it doesn't do anything there are people like that they come to a church and they just receive, receive, receive they don't do a single thing they are the paralyzed members and what such paralyzed members need is power they need to be filled with the Holy Spirit but they think they are filled with the Holy Spirit if they were filled with the Holy Spirit they would be cooperating with the body but they are not they are just carried along by others honestly I wish such

people would stop coming to CFC I wish they would go and find some other church and not sit and waste our time here and then there are others who are even stabbing us in the back here they will come and act as we are all members of CFC when they go somewhere else they are cooperating with people who are against us who call us a cult and things like that they are the backstabbers exactly like Judas Iscariot and I want to say that what happened to Judas Iscariot will happen to them if you are a part of a church you must be loyal to the church what would you think of a son of yours who is sitting in your home and working against your family working with your enemies what sort of son is that very dangerous if anyone destroys the temple of God God will destroy him you have to be very very

careful I don't know whether you realize that the church is the temple of God please turn with me to 1 Corinthians in 1 Corinthians we read here chapter 3 and verse 16 do you not know that you are a temple of God 1 Corinthians 3 verse 16 the Holy Spirit is here the church is the temple of God verse 17 read verse 17 if anyone destroys the church the temple of God God will destroy him because the temple of God is holy if anyone tries to destroy the church which the Lord is building with his backbiting and speaking evil and backstabbing I say that God will destroy him and his family do you want God to destroy you and your family I'll tell you the quickest way to do it do everything you can to destroy this church by speaking against it stabbing them in the back spend your time speaking

against the elders criticizing that is the surest way you can go and destroy your own family and your children and your own life 1 Corinthians 3 verse 17 those are not my words we need to face up to the truth of God build fellowship if you can't build fellowship at least stay away and don't do anything Herod and Pilate were better than Judas Iscariot do you know that Pilate was a heathen and I believe some non-Christians are better than some believers who sit in our churches because those non-Christians are not destroying the church but a believer who sits there finds fault and criticizes backstabs acts as if he is a part of the church then goes away and is different over there I'd rather have Pilate as a member of our church because he is not destroying the church so we gotta be very

careful some of these verses are sometimes people don't read it or take it seriously it's so important to build a fellowship what does it mean to destroy the church I'll tell you think of the church as building a building here are a number of masons working together, working hard working overtime collecting bricks, cement and all and building building building a house and at night some of the masons who pretended to be working with them come and break down some of those bricks and pull it down and break down and the next morning you come, hey somebody has broken down something here it was one of those masons only who was a deceiver he pretended to be working together with the other masons to build a house but he was interested in destroying it that's what I mean by destroying the temple

of God it's much better those other people on the street who don't do anything, just look at it and go away but to destroy the temple of God it's a very serious thing you know nobody will tell you the truth like I tell you I remember I've often said this there was a brother in CFC Bangalore newly came and he told somebody brother Zack he preaches so hard so I called him I put my arm around him and I said hey

brother I love you I know I preach hard but in the day of judgment when you stand before God and you see what happened to these other people who listen to other preachers and you see how your life was saved by my hard preaching that day you will thank me that day I'm willing to wait for that day today you can think I'm a hard preacher or you can say what you like I know in that day

you will appreciate what you don't appreciate today a strong preaching that saved you from calamity saved you from wasting your life and destroying your life so what am I emphasizing I'm just saying my dear brothers very strongly build fellowship build fellowship I don't know what I can do but I want to do something to build the fellowship and to strengthen the bonds that bind the church together see Ephesians in chapter because that's what God is doing Jesus is building the body don't destroy what Jesus is building don't tear down what Christ is building I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ is building his body here in CFC Charger I urge you don't try to destroy it because you'll be working against Jesus Christ if you can't do anything at least keep your mouth shut that's the

second best the best is you cooperate with building the body every brother, every sister Ephesians 4 it says here verse 15 speaking the truth in love Ephesians 4,15 we are to grow up in all aspects to him who is the head even Christ and now listen to this, verse 16 from whom the whole body of Christ being fitted and held together fitted and held together means like these bricks that are cemented together in a building that somebody has built somebody has taken pains to put bricks and cement why do you want to go and criticize and push it down if you don't like it just go somewhere else go and work on some other building but don't destroy what somebody else is building don't you think it's evil supposing you go down the street and you see a nice building being built and you get so angry

and go and push down some bricks from there people say you're off your head or what I mean if you don't like the building just leave it and go somewhere else that which is fitted and held together and this is the part I want you to notice in the middle of verse 16 according to the proper working of each individual part causes the growth of the body by the building up of itself in love love is the cement love is the cement that holds the bricks together don't remove the cement and make the bricks all loose add a little cement instead of taking away the cement that is holding the bricks together so the proper working of each individual part means what that means like in the body every part has a function and my dear brother and sister even if you're a new believer I want you to know that

what you can do to build the body of Jesus Christ here you however weak you may be you may be born again yesterday you may have come from a non-christian background you don't know the bible but you have a part to play to build the body of Christ because Jesus chose you to be his child has Jesus chosen you to be one of his children then be a builder not a destroyer be a builder and be loyal and faithful don't be a hypocrite pretending to be one thing in the midst of God's people and something else when you're away by yourself or with others that's a hypocrite don't be that, be a builder the proper working of each individual part means every part has got some function to do can you think of some part of your body which has nothing, no function every part of our body has got some function

like I say the nails for example the nails are so small but even the nails have got a function when you feel scratchy or something your tongue can't help you your eyes can't help it's only your nails even the smallest part of your body has got some function in the same way you may be a very new believer with very little knowledge but if you're humble you've got a function if you're not humble then you will just sit and sit and sit I've seen people like that who sit and sit and sit and sit for years they never do something for the body of Christ because I believe it's because they don't have a hunger for the Lord they don't love Jesus I mean

I used to think like this supposing I was living in Noah's time and I saw Noah working hard building the ark you know how much work it is to build a

ship a wooden ship he and his three sons and their wives are all working hard cutting the wood, shaping it and putting the nails do you think I would go at night and destroy some of that work I would never do it God will deal with me if I do that or do you think I'll sit there stand there and watch them hey Noah that's not the way to do it put that down and be like an expert these critics who stand outside and criticize, criticize, criticize I wouldn't do that I mean if you don't agree with the way Noah is building the ark at least don't criticize go and mind your own business do something else but why stand there people who don't lift their finger to do something for the work of the church sit there and criticize why are they doing this please stop that some of you have done it and are

probably doing it still I want to urge you in Jesus name to stop it think of Noah building the ark today we are building the church if you can't cooperate in building the ark at least don't go and destroy it at least don't stand back and criticize it go somewhere else and do something else that's my honest advice and that will be for your good when Christ comes again at least you'll save your soul by not having destroyed the work of God it's so important but the best is you join hands and say Noah can I go and get some wood for you from the market can I get some nails for you what can I do for you can I plane some of that wood and shape it and cut it I want to cooperate with you Noah because this is the only thing that's going to remain when the world is destroyed and the church is the

only thing that's going to remain when the world is destroyed I want to spend my life and I've spent 50 years now trying to build the church and when I did not agree with some church I've been in many churches I started off in the orthodox church and I left that and I went to my family then I was another I mean you heard the guy who told me brother Zach you're a very unstable man you go from one church to another church to another church I said I've been unstable all my life I left first standard and went to second standard and I left second standard and went to third standard I didn't always remain in first standard all my life like a steady individual if you found something better and stayed with the old thing that's up to you you can stay there but whenever I found something I moved on

and I did not spend my time criticizing the old church I don't spend my time criticizing the orthodox church or the brethren assembly I disagree with them I was with brother Bhaktsingh for a number of years I still consider him but I found something more in the word of God in the new covenant I moved on so I always say if you find something better I say that in Bangalore too have you found a church better than CMC please go there don't stay here but don't come here and criticize go and join that better church and do what you like over there but don't waste your time like being an expert who does nothing but criticize God wants you but we can do so much damage with our tongue it's good for us to humble ourselves and sometimes I'll tell you I've also seen that sometimes people get upset

because they're not given the recognition that they expect in a church oh, they're not giving me the prominence and recognition I've been here so long have you come to the church I request you please go and find some other church please, this is not the place for recognition this is a place for humble service with zero recognition just like zero salary zero recognition and you can boast that I don't want money but you want recognition no, can you do a work in secret for this church without anybody knowing about it then you're a great brother or sister that you can do something secretly for this church and you don't want anybody to know that you did it you don't want recognition you don't want honor you just want to quietly build the body of Christ I tell you we need many precious brothers

and sisters like that here and it all comes out of a personal devotion to Jesus Christ when I love Jesus I will do so many things without any recognition from anybody about Him and if you're a true disciple of Jesus there'd be many things that you have done which nobody knows about which you did because you loved Him in secret we always do things of value to those we love in secret so this is our calling in the church to build the body of Christ in the short time we are here on this earth we have no regret when we look back the bible says one day we will stand at the judgment seat of Christ and I believe we will look back on the life we have lived let me show you this verse in Ephesians 2 Ephesians 2 I hope you're encouraged by what you read here in Ephesians 2 there are two things it

says here in Ephesians 2 verse 8 by grace are you saved through faith not of works verse 9 not of works that salvation is not by your good works it is by faith in Jesus Christ I cannot have my sins forgiven by any good works no works zero only the work of Christ but once my sins are forgiven what about after that after the foundation is laid when we build a superstructure it says in verse 10 we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus verse 10 for many good works which God has prepared beforehand that we should walk in them so verse 8 and 9 is the foundation verse 10 is the superstructure of your life verse 8 and 9 is where you say Lord how am I going to be forgiven no works you came to Christ empty handed God Jesus forgave you but after you've laid that foundation now there are plenty

of works that you were supposed to do for the church now you shouldn't sit back and say no works that is in the foundation like we say in the foundation we don't put doors and windows no doors and windows in the foundation but in the walls in the building doors and windows sure so no works in the foundation Jesus did it all my sins are forgiven after that many many good works that God has prepared before you were born that you should do them do you believe that I know I'm so gripped by the fact that before I was born in my mother's womb God chose me and you to do some specific works for the body of Christ I want to find out what that is and I'll tell you one thing those are not works to destroy the body of Christ those are works to build up the body of Christ and I want to find out what

those are which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them now that means long ago God made a plan for your life how you are going he knew where you would be and he knew which church you would be a part of and he planned that you should do something to build up that body I want to ask you whether you have done those works which God planned for you have you tried to find out what those works are have you ever gone to God and said Lord can you please tell me what are the works which you prepared long ago that I can do some of you are young and don't say this is not for me this is for you if you are not born again this is not for you God has prepared something that you are to do I want to encourage you to seek God if you have never done it say Lord I learned something in Ephesians 2

10 today there are some works that I am called to do to build up the local fellowship of which I am a part please show me what those works are maybe it is just to pray Lord God may burden you to pray for somebody somebody here who is needy okay pray for that person maybe it is to visit somebody and encourage them but don't tear it down don't tear down the work of God definitely that is not a God's plan and in the past if you have spoken things and done things to tear down the work of God I humbly request you in your own interest ask God to forgive you ask God to forgive you for destroying a little bit of His work with your words and your attitudes say Lord I did not have light please forgive me I was ignorant please forgive me God will forgive you He won't hold it against you don't do it

again don't do it again don't destroy my work I gave my son to die on the cross to build this don't go and destroy it but say Lord what can I do to help that work in future let me make up for my past failures by

doing something positive now to build up the church to pray for it to encourage to do something saving money is not the most important thing there is one thing but it is not the most important the most important is to encourage and build up make sure that the church becomes more and more united if you can make two brothers who are not united united in the body you have done a great work for the body of Christ if you can help a married couple that is having a struggle to come together and be united as husband and wife you have done a great work for the body of Christ instead of

sitting there and saying oh that married couple they are always fighting with each other true but what do you accomplish by just saying that what have you accomplished by just sitting and criticizing that married couple they are not like us we are always that is building up the body instead of sitting and criticizing them and finding fault but yet that is what many Christians do they don't do lift one finger to help that poor struggling couple but they sit and say they are like this that is not the right way let's change if you find somebody's child going astray wayward somebody's son or daughter if you can't help that son or daughter at least keep your mouth shut bless that family by keeping your mouth shut because you can't help them if you can help them, help them if you can't help,

keep your mouth shut why should we destroy a family that is struggling to bring up their children they must be shedding so many tears because their children are going astray why add to their problems by you criticizing them if we can't help keep our mouth shut sometimes we can bless a church just by keeping our mouth shut that we don't say anything negative so I don't want anybody here to feel I have nothing to do to build this body my brother, sister that is what I have been trying for the last one hour to tell you that there is plenty that you can do to build the body of Christ here in this church plenty and you say what can I do first first you start repenting that's the first step Lord, think back and sit down before Jesus take five minutes to sit before the Lord and think of all the

things that you did in the past to hinder or criticize or destroy the work here and say Lord I repent of it that's the first step I repent of it I was foolish I don't want to do it anymore please forgive me, cleanse me Jesus died for all these foolish things I did I don't want to do it anymore cleanse me first step and your heart is clean then you go to the second step say Lord how can I make up for all the bricks that I pulled down in the past I pulled down a lot of bricks how can I make up by building something now at least if I'm not an expert builder let me carry the cement and give it to people let me take a little love and show it to people if I can't build at least let me help in some way let me go to the elders and ask them brother is there anything I can do to help in the church

some practical thing you want me to go here and go to them and say I've not been a committed member of this church till now I've just been like a visitor sitting here listening to messages every Friday but I want to be a committed member I want to commit myself to this church I want to be a part of it tell me what I can do to be a committed member of this church I know it's not perfect but there's no perfect church in the world and I feel God has called me to be a part of this church and I want to commit myself to it from today onwards it's the glory of God life is short Christ is coming soon you better set these things right before Jesus returns I say this for your own good may God help you all let's bow in prayer Heavenly Father I pray for the dear brothers and sisters here whom you

have brought here not accidentally but in a wonderful way there's so many churches they could have chosen to go to in Sharjah or Dubai and yet they chose to come here there must be a reason and I want to respect them and value them because they chose to come here for a reason and they're stuck here through the years I pray that you'll make everyone fitting here to repent of their past failures repent of their

past criticisms etc and help them Lord from now on to build the body to actively cooperate in the work Lord Jesus that you are doing from heaven in making so many different individuals from different languages different communities into one body in Christ I pray that work will progress quickly since you're coming back soon help each one here Lord encourage each one I pray especially

for families where there may be difficulties between husband and wife families that may be having difficulties with some of their children Lord Jesus we don't want to criticize them we want to pray for them we want to encourage them we want to bless them we're living in a difficult world and the whole world is our enemy we don't want to fight with each other we want to help one another in this world that is seeking to swallow up our children and seeking to destroy our marriages we want to fight against the enemy outside and not fight within Heavenly Father let your grace be upon us and make this a strong testimony for you in this area of UAE a strong testimony for your name give great wisdom to the elders to lead the church forward and that every brother and sister will realize that they

have a very very important part to play in building this body everyone thank you Father in Jesus name

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/2Wb4whSf0QE.mp4>

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