

The Church As A Building Construction Site. Ephesians 2: 19 - 22



“This is the church; this is the steeple; open the door and see all the people.” My grandmother taught me this little poem when I was very young. This saying also involves actions in which the interlocked hands, representing the church, are slowly turned upward to reveal all the people inside the church. But is this innocent little religious rhyme guilty of constructing a picture in our minds of church as a stationary building instead of a living, growing, Spirit-filled temple?

In Old Testament times the temple in Jerusalem became firmly established as the place where people went to worship God. But over time this grand religious structure became a stumbling block to God’s people as they began to focus too much on the greatness of the building and forget about God. This is why Jesus finally entered the temple, overturned the tables of the money-changers and declared that this building would be torn to the ground (and it was, forty years later). Jesus is now building a new eternal temple of which he is the chief cornerstone and his followers, are the living stones being built around him. The Apostle Paul writes,

“Consequently, you are... members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.” (Ephesians 2:19 – 22 TNIV)

1. This passage begins with the word, ‘*Consequently*’. What has made it possible for us to become members of God’s holy household? (see Eph. 2:1 – 10)
2. As God’s household how are we built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets? (2:20)
3. What does it mean that Jesus is our chief cornerstone? (2:20)
4. In practical terms, how are we being built into a holy temple in the Lord? (2:21)
5. ‘*And in him you too are being built together...*’ The ‘you’ in this verse is plural, referring to the collective members of the church, rather than to individual believers. Therefore, how do we participate together with God in building his new eternal Spirit-filled temple?
6. How does this teaching change your picture of what church is?