

If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

1Corinthians 3:17

Store In My Heart

Matthew 11:29

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

This is part of the invitation of Christ to find rest in Him. We notice the rest offered and the description of gentleness and humility. Yet do we pay attention to what He expects of those who would come to Him for rest?

First, He calls for us to "yoke" ourself with Him. A yoke ties two beings together so that they must labor in unison. Jesus calls us to work in unison with Him in what He does.

Second, He tells us to learn from Him. In this yoke, we are not the one with experience. We must accept our role as student. He is our example and leader. We must learn from Him.

The promised rest depends upon our uniting with Christ and following His example.



Faith Is A Construction Project

George Hutto

Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer suffer derision." And I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king had spoken to me. And they said, "Let us rise up and build." So they strengthened their hands for the good work. (Neh 2:17-18, ESV)

The Bible is a history of things being built. It begins in Genesis with the creation of the world; then, the building of the ark by Noah; the misguided building of the Tower of Babel; and the building of the nation of Israel. The Bible ends with the building of the church and the promise of those many houses of the Father awaiting the faithful in heaven.

The discussion of God's building projects is a discussion of faith. When Noah built the ark at God's direction, he made God's will a reality, a vessel for the race's salvation. So it is with all that God says. When we have faith in God and obey, we make God's will a reality. And doing so always results in man's salvation. When we follow our own ideas and desires, as in the case of the Tower, we will be lost.

Consider the institutions which stand, built by God, but are pretty much matters of faith: the Bible, the church, the family, and the moral fabric of society. The present clamor for the dismantling of the police forces in our country is a sad indicator of just how ungodly some of our neighbors have become. Folks have been dismantling the Bible in their minds and in their teaching for a long time. Likewise, folk are dismantling the church, either through resentment or neglect, for some time. The family has been under assault, and now folk are – incredibly – calling for anarchy.

Do you see that anything that can be built can be dismantled? – God was 1,600 years putting the Bible together, and people disregard it, ridicule it, defame it, and otherwise discredit it.

"Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good." (Ecclesiastes 9:18)

As with the Bible, which is the foundation for faith, so do the church, the family, and the moral fabric of society suffer assault. Peter lauded the words of Paul the apostle with a troubled comment on his distractors: "which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures." (2Peter 3:16) People are not just biting the hand that feeds them – they're blowing themselves up like radical Muslims, and taking out others with them when they go. It is the work of the enemy, the devil.

So, let us rise up and build; and repair; and restore: like Ezra and Nehemiah had to do (above.) Some of the old fellows who had seen Solomon's temple cried when they saw the scrawny beginnings of the new structure. Others were crying

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For Our Information

John & Betty Ragsdale are both doing better after dealing with health issues for the past couple of weeks.

Joyce Venable has been coughing a good bit this past week.

Ruben Keisler continues to do well with his physical therapy.

Paula Laubach has been suffering with headaches as well as knee pain.

John Jackson also has knee pain still.

Pray for safety, courage & healing.

because they at last had a project to immerse themselves into in the name of God. (Ezra 3:12-13) God has a building project for every generation. Ours is no different.

As the Israel Bible Center says, "The Bible doesn't need to be rewritten; it needs to be reread." Many hammers have been worn out against the anvil of God's Word, and discarded. The Bible stands today as well as it has always stood, and ever will stand. But it will do no good unless studied and put into practice. Noah could have left the blueprints for the ark perched on an elegant display for hundreds of years, but the ark would never have become a reality without his discipline and work. So it is with the New Testament of Jesus Christ. Let us defend it, practice it, and teach it to others.

"For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." (Ezra 7:10) Let us rise up and build!

Our society has suffered much by those who have on the one hand said that a piece of paper means nothing, and on the other clamored for a license for homosexuals to "marry." But, you know, there are many good, godly marriages in our land. Folks have seen what God expects of men and women, boys and girls, and conformed to the Word. They have, by faith, made marriage from God's book a reality. Such a thing can happen. Mormons talk about marriages made in Heaven, New Agers talk about soul mates. Jesus talked about marriage from the beginning, the one endorsed by God. (Matthew 19:3-9) Such a marriage often takes planning, work, and biblical love.

Newlyweds, older-weds, and every godly couple in between; let us rise up in faith and build!

Jesus said "I will build My church..." and we can see it going up piece by piece in the book of Acts. Jesus is the foundation. (1Corinthians 3:11) The first church was at Jerusalem. (Acts 2:47) The kingdom spread through Judea, to Samaria, & out to the Gentiles. (Acts 1:8) The New Testament is a testimony to the reality of salvation brought by the gospel to sinners all over the world. The church is "the called out body of the saved." (W.E. Vine.)

And, you know, the church is still being built. It happens stone by stone, person by person. "...You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1Peter 2:5) That's the church, and those who obey the gospel become a part of it. The building happens when the gospel is preached, when people believe and obey, when the Lord adds them to the church. (Acts 2:47) So, let us preach and teach the gospel. Let us rise up and build.

Now, when it comes to society, we might say, since the church is such a spiritual construction project, that Christians have little to say about what goes on in society. However, the destruction of Sodom could have been halted by the presence of only ten righteous people (who could not be found). (Genesis 18) Early Christians were told to pray for their rulers & administrators. (1Peter 2:13-17) They were taught to be good examples for others. Western Civilization is a history of people who relied on God's Word for moral instruction, who prayed to God for deliverance, who sought happiness based on what God tells people to do in the Bible. All of these things are possible today.

If people would only believe. Without faith in God, God's will cannot be made a reality. Institutions of faith do not erect themselves. The Bible must be revered, as it should be, as the Word of God. Families must be shaped by behavior of God-fearing people. The church must be built by the instruction of the apostles (Acts 2:42), as Moses was instructed to build the tabernacle "by the pattern shown thee in the mount." (Heb 8:5) The Northern Tribes of Israel came to ruin because "they would not listen, but were stubborn, as their fathers had been, who did not believe in the LORD their God." (2Kings 17:14)

Let us rise up and build.

We seek only to serve God according to His Will!

