

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for August 19, 2018

The House of God
Ephesians 2:19-22

I. The fellows of the church (2:19)

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

- Review of previous verses
- Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians can and must experience peace now
- This is completely based upon what Christ did on the cross
- In reconciling man to Himself, God has reconciled man to one another
- Here, Paul speaks primarily to the Gentile Christian audience at Ephesus
 - No longer strangers and aliens
 - Ephesians 2:12 “remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”
 - But you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God
 - Galatians 6:10 “So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”
 - 1 Timothy 5:8 “But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

II. The foundation of the church (2:20)

20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,

- Foundation is of utmost importance for any building project
 - This is why Jesus commended the wise man for building his house upon the rock in Matthew 7:24-27
 - The fool, however, built his house upon the sand only for it to experience a great fall after the rain, flood, and wind
- Foundation of God’s household or the church is composed of the apostles and the prophets
 - This is referring to the New Testament Apostles and New Testament Prophets
 - This is not referring to the Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles
 - First, consider the word order, “the apostles and prophets”

- If attention was not given to the angle of the cornerstone, then the walls of the structure would be angled improperly
 - Of course, these things are not easily fixed after one has completed the building of such a structure
 - Can't simply prop up the building on one side to help level the foundation
 - Can't simply shift or spin the building to the desired angle you might have
- For the church, Christ Jesus is that most significant and perfectly laid cornerstone
- God promised this in the Old Testament
 - Isaiah 28:16 "Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation"
- Jesus proved to be this cornerstone in the New Testament
 - When Christ came to earth, He was tested in every way that we are, yet He was without sin
 - He was a "tested stone"
 - In Christ's earthly ministry, God declared Jesus to be His beloved Son, proving to be the precious cornerstone
 - He was a "precious cornerstone"
 - Due to Christ's perfect life and love for the Father, His sacrifice of His own life upon the cross was effective and sufficient to save all who call upon His Name
 - He provided a "sure foundation"

III. The forming of the church (2:21)

21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

- The church possesses an undeniably rich history as we have seen in its foundation 2,000 years ago
- However, the church stands unique in the sense that it is still under construction!
 - This is not because it has been abandoned
 - Or because funding had stopped at some point
- The church, after 2,000 years, is still being built
- Paul says this plainly in verse 21 that "the whole structure," is "being joined together"
 - As stones are stacked and fitted together to construct the walls of a structure, so also does Paul explain that God is joining the stones of His church together
 - Who or what are these metaphorical stones that God is joining together?
 - Peter tells us in 1 Peter 2:4-5, "As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 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.”

- We are the stones being joined together!
 - As God saves people from every tribe, language, people, and nation
 - He is joining us together as living stones in the construction of the church
 - This was a testimony, once again, to the one new man that God has created in the church through Jesus Christ
 - It is no longer about Jew or Gentile, but all are joined together as one in the construction of the church built upon the cornerstone of Jesus Christ
- Notice also that Paul says this structure is growing
 - This speaks to the ever-expanding nature of the church
 - This building is not only impressive because of its unified diversity
 - This building is constantly growing and expanding
 - This is another way of highlighting the church’s evangelistic mission
 - We have been saved and we await the return of Christ
 - Our mission is to proclaim the excellencies of Christ until He returns
 - As God uses weak vessels like us to declare the good news of forgiveness in Jesus Christ, we will find that God is faithful to build His church
 - He continues to grow His church and join it together in a unified cohesive structure

IV. The filling of the church (2:22)

22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

- Verse 21 ends with a more specific description of the church
- Paul calls it “a holy temple”
 - There is no question that the description of the church as a holy temple would have secured the attention of the Jewish Christians in Ephesus
 - For those of Jewish background, it was a given that the temple in Jerusalem was a most glorious structure
 - Even the disciples were in awe and impressed at the temple in the last week of Jesus’ earthly ministry
 - Mark 13:1 “And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!’”
 - For Paul to make a comparison between the church and the temple would have been a shock
 - However, this was Paul’s point
 - He wanted them to see and truly appreciate the newness of what God was doing in the church

- The church was no add on to Judaism
 - The church was not a supplement to the temple
- The old covenant was obsolete as well as the old covenant system of sacrifice (Hebrews 8:13)
- God would no longer dwell in a small portion of the Holy of Holies in the temple in Jerusalem
- Now, God is pleased to dwell in the people of His church
- The church is His holy temple
- The church is His dwelling place
- Paul reiterates this to the Ephesians in verse 22, “In you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”
 - The mixed congregation of Jews and Gentiles in Ephesus had become a dwelling place for God
 - This is a massive responsibility for the church and it is not a responsibility that should be taken lightly
 - The church must accurately represent God in the fullness of His character