

(1 Corinthians) Building the Church

by Brian Brodersen

The church must be built on the foundation of Jesus Christ, using the proper materials of the word of God, the Holy Spirit, and prayer, and avoiding human wisdom.

Duration: 47:52

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 3:16, Ephesians 2:19

Topics: "Church Growth", "Biblical Authority"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the need to adapt to the modern culture and use multimedia presentations to teach the Bible effectively. He criticizes the idea of dressing up Jesus and using fancy clothes to appeal to the modern audience. The speaker argues against the infiltration of human wisdom into the church, emphasizing the importance of sticking to the basic principles given in the Scripture. He also criticizes the practice of building churches based on public opinion and adapting marketing principles, stating that these approaches have brought the church down.

Transcript

1 Corinthians chapter 3, verse 10. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation, with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear. For the day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire.

And the fire will test each one's work of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he himself, or he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are. These words constitute one of the strongest warnings in all of scripture to those who aspire to a position of leadership within the church of Jesus Christ.

But unfortunately, this warning has often been overlooked due to a failure to properly interpret the verses. These verses have suffered much at the hands of those who have sought to use them to prove their own

theological position. Like the Calvinist, who sees in the words, if anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved.

The impossibility of believers ever losing their salvation, or the Roman Catholic theologian, who finds his one and only New Testament reference to purgatory in the words, saved, yet so as through fire. Others have simply not been careful enough in their exposition, and have applied these words to Christians generally as an exhortation to build their own Christian lives with proper material. Paul addresses none of these issues, not even indirectly.

His concern is singular, that those currently building the church are doing so with the perishable material of human wisdom, and are in danger of destroying the church, and in turn, being destroyed by God. That is sort of an overview of what he's dealing with in these verses. Now, today we want to look at how the church is to be built.

And I want to say this before we begin. Sometimes when we're teaching, there might not be any direct application for you from what we exposit. But nevertheless, you have to remember that we're building a foundation.

We're establishing ourselves in Christian doctrine. In other words, we're re-educating ourselves according to the scripture. So certain texts that we'll deal with might not necessarily have any personal application in the sense that you listen and you say, Oh, yes, that's me.

Or, you know, I've struggled with that. And, oh, that helps me in this area. Those things are all, of course, fine and good.

And we need to have that kind of personal application frequently. But there are times when we need to just get a biblical picture of certain things that do pertain to us, but maybe not in an immediate sense. See, after all, the church does pertain to us, right? The whole church pertains to us because we're part of the body of Christ.

Therefore, although there might not be any personal application to derive from the text, yet we need to understand how the church is to be built so we can make sure that as we make our contribution, we're doing so according to God's plan and not according to our own thinking process. We also need to be able to evaluate the church in a larger sense and be able to see where the church is being built properly or where people are using the kinds of materials that God has not allowed in the building of this church. In other words, as Christian people, we need to be critical thinkers.

There's much hostility in certain circles today against any sort of critical thinking. And if anyone challenges certain procedures or methods right away, they're considered divisive and a person who's hung up on, you know, minor issues or whatever. But no, we need to be critical thinkers.

It's because people have refused to think critically that the church is in the desperate state that it's in today. So we ourselves as Christian people, we have to understand how the church is to be built. And that will enable us to build properly ourselves and as much as we are to contribute to it.

And it will help us also to be able to understand perhaps why the church isn't what it ought to be because of a failure to build properly. So again, we're going to be looking at how the church is built now. Paul, he is addressing the congregation in general.

But when we come to verse 10, it's obvious that he turns from the congregation in general and he begins to direct more direct his message more specifically to those in Christian leadership, to those who are building upon the foundation that he himself laid. You remember, he was the one who founded the church in Corinth. He laid the foundation.

And so he says, according to the grace of God, which was given to me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation and another builds upon it. So what he's going to do right now is he's going to warn these people who are carrying on his ministry to make sure they're building with the proper material. So this is a message that really is directed primarily to church leadership.

It's an exhortation to church leaders to make sure that they're building the church with the proper material. He begins with reminding them about the only legitimate foundation for the church. Verse 11, for no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Any church that's built on a foundation other than the foundation of Jesus Christ is doomed to fail from the onset. One of the fundamental problems with Roman Catholicism is that it is built on the foundation of the papacy rather than on the foundation of Jesus Christ. Anglicanism has a similar problem.

The Parliament of 1532 through 1536 created Henry VIII, supreme head on earth of the Church of England. So the Church of England is built on the foundation of the monarchy. You see, the Bible teaches clearly that Jesus Christ is the head of the church, period.

There is no human being who is the head of the church on earth. Just because Jesus is in heaven doesn't mean that he is not still the head of the church. Of course, because Jesus Christ is omnipresent.

He is in heaven, yes, but he's also everywhere, and he is especially dwelling within his church, within his people. So Jesus is the head of the church on earth as well as in heaven. In more recent times, we see people attempting to build the church on a variety of different things.

We see people today building the church on the foundation of what they would call revelation knowledge. Revelation knowledge is knowledge, supernatural, divine insight that comes to them directly from God by way of direct revelation. In other words, the Bible isn't really all that important anymore because we have a direct line to God.

He speaks right to us, and he tells us that the church is to be built with signs and wonders and different things like that. That's one example. Another example is that some churches today are being built on the foundation of public opinion.

This is a very common thing in the U.S. People will go into a community with the idea of starting a church and they will go into the neighborhood and they will interview the people and they will ask them what they would like to see in a church. And then they will build the church on the foundation of public opinion. So that the person says, well, you know, church has always been boring to me, so I'd like to see it a little more lively and entertaining.

OK, we'll give you entertainment. Church has always left me with a sense of feeling guilty. I'd like to come out of church feeling really good.

OK, well, we'll we'll make sure that we don't use any terms or talk about any concepts or anything that would ever make a person feel guilty. People say, oh, you know, the church doesn't help me on a practical

level. I need to know how to sort out my finances.

I need to know how to get along with people, have better relationships and so forth. OK, well, great. Then, you know, we'll have seminars on how to sort out your finances and we'll teach you how to love yourself so you can then get along better with other people and so on.

These are the kinds of things that presently the church is building upon these types of foundations. But the apostle Paul says Jesus Christ is the only true foundation of the church. The implication is this.

The church is to be built on the supremacy of Christ and on the authority of his word alone. That's the foundation for the church of Jesus Christ, the supremacy of Christ in all things and the authority of his word alone. Now, the second thing we see is that Paul mentions the builders.

I laid the foundation and another builds on it. Here again, he's speaking to church leaders. He's speaking to people who are in a position of spiritual authority within the church.

And he goes on to then. Talk about. The building materials, the building materials, verse 12.

Now, if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and straw. Now, there's two types of material that are possibly going to be used in the building. One type of material is imperishable.

The other type is perishable. So those, of course, who are going to build the church legitimate legitimately must do so with the imperishable material. The gold, silver and precious stones are that which is compatible with the gospel of Jesus Christ and him crucified.

That's that's simply what Paul is referring to here. The gold, silver and precious stones are that which is compatible with Jesus Christ and him crucified. God has given us basically three things with which to build his church.

Three things. Basically, he's given us his word. Number one, the church is to be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

Paul tells us in Ephesians chapter two, that's a reference to the word of God, the apostolic doctrine. When we look at the book of the Acts of the Apostles, the second chapter, we find right there how the church began to be built. It says in verse thirty eight, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine.

And so the word is to be a vital part of that foundation and that building, building upon the foundation of Christ himself, then using his word to actually build the structure. The Holy Spirit is also been given to us in order to build the church. Now, we're told that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of power.

We're told that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of love. So God has given us his word. He's given us his spirit, which includes the power of God and the love of God.

And then we have also prayer. So these are the three basic things with which we are to build the church, the word of God, the spirit of God and prayer. Now, am I saying that we cannot use some of the more modern conveniences in helping to build the church? You have to understand we're talking about building the church in a spiritual sense, not in the literal physical sense.

Can we use modern technology to build the church in a physical sense? Can we use computers and things like that? Well, of course we can use that. That's that's not the issue. That's not what Paul is talking about.

He's not talking about building a church, like building a building. He's talking about building the body of Christ and for building the body of Christ, for strengthening people and bringing people to maturity in the faith, bringing people to the faith and then raising them up to a mature position so they can enter into the ministry that God has ordained for them and fulfill God's will for their life. The three things that God has given us is the word, the spirit and prayer.

The perishable materials under the heading of wood, hay and straw are simply human wisdom in all of its various forms. Human wisdom in all of its various forms. The infiltration of human wisdom into the church has been a reoccurring problem from apostolic times up to today.

This is undoubtedly the greatest problem in the modern church. You see, the problems in the modern church stem back today to church leaders building with perishable materials. Church leaders today, so often instead of building with the word, the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the truest sense, the biblical sense and prayer are building instead with philosophy, building with pop psychology, building with managerial techniques. All of these other things have come into the picture and by seeking to build the church with these things, what they're doing in actuality is destroying the church. Now, if you just take a look back maybe 100 years ago and follow the course of the church for the past 100 years, you find that the church has embraced so much of human wisdom.

And that is undoubtedly the cause for the pathetic condition of the church. Today, you think back to the introduction of higher criticism into the church. When Darwin's theories were becoming popular, not only in the realm of biology and the various natural sciences, but Darwin's theories were being applied across the board to everything.

Social evolution and things of that nature, men in the church wanting to be seen as respectable by the world began to embrace those same kinds of theories, and then they applied them to theology. And so as they look back at the scriptures, they said, well, certainly Moses couldn't have actually written those books that are attributed to him because man had not evolved to the place of being able to write at the time of Moses. Therefore, somebody else must have written those and then just attributed them to Moses.

And so they put later dates upon the writings of Moses and said that Moses didn't write those things at all. And because rationalism said there's really no such thing as the miraculous men in the church said, oh, no, we can't believe in miracles. People 2000 years ago believe in miracles because they were superstitious.

Those weren't really miracles that were recorded in the Bible. In some cases, they said that was just certain natural phenomena that these ignorant people thought were miraculous things. In some cases, they just flat out denied and said that the people just these were mythologies and things of that nature just to give more credence to their message.

But these are men in the church that are doing this for the sole purpose of seeking acceptance by the world. They've embraced philosophy. As you move further along and closer to the present day, you find that so much ministry is built on pop psychology.

And so often the emphasis coming from the pulpit is the need for self-esteem, the need for self-love, the need to know how to live a successful life in business and in family and in relationships. And, you know, drawing a scripture here and there to use as some sort of a springboard to go off into their what I call psychobabble. But yet it's another manifestation of human wisdom being embraced and brought into the church by church leaders, which has subtly but yet effectively brought the church down.

And then you see with the whole adapting of marketing principles into the church. So the church is now a big business and church leaders are the corporate officers of the business and and the congregation. They are the consumers and you've got a product and you've got to sell this product to your consumers.

And so you take all of your advice from the world of marketing and you see how they do it down at Disney or somewhere like that. And so you dress up your presentation like that and then you present it to the consumer and all they're so happy. What a great product.

You see, all of this is the infiltration of human wisdom and it does the exact opposite of what it's intended to do, because no doubt many people who embrace these kinds of things do so sincerely and are thinking that this is really the way it needs to be done. They say, oh, you know, we're living in modern times and people are different than they were back when the Bible was written. And those basic principles that we have given in the scripture, those things certainly can't be effective today because of the modern culture that we live in.

I mean, there are some that even say that what I'm doing right now shouldn't be done. You can't get up and teach people. You can't get up and preach anymore.

You can't expect that anyone today could have an attention span that would extend more than 10 to 15 minutes. So preaching where you get up and, you know, 30, 45, even 50 minutes all, you know, that's relegated to something you could get away with 50 to 100 years ago. But today, nobody has that kind of attention span today.

So we can't really teach the Bible to this present generation. We need to give multimedia presentations of the gospel and things of that nature. We need to harness modern technology.

We need to use all of these things. We need to compete with MTV. We need to dress up Jesus.

You know, years ago, Alan used to sing with a guy named Malcolm. And they wrote a song called Say It Like It Is, and it's on their Fool's Wisdom CD. But the lyrics are great.

It says, Don't dress up my Jesus in fancy clothes. Don't dress up my Jesus in fancy clothes. And that's what people are trying to do today.

Dressing him up for the London shows. And then they said he'll take care of himself wherever he goes. He just says it like it is.

Well, that's, you know, they wrote that song in the 70s. It's certainly applicable today. We don't have to do that.

And I think over and over again, what I find consistently with people who do that is they dismiss the material that God has provided for us to build a church with. They have a low opinion of the word of God. And they have a distorted concept of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

And therefore, they're building with their own types of materials. The building of the church is not to be done through human wisdom. Jesus said.

I will build my church. That's what Jesus said. I will build my church.

Church leaders listen to this. Church leaders are not to come up with a strategy or a plan or even a vision with which to build the church of God. But yet we find so many church leaders today.

That's that's what they're doing. They're calling in the experts from the marketing world. And they're saying, OK, this is our community and help us to develop a strategy.

And they say, you know what? You need a five year plan. All right. Write that down a five year plan.

But you know what? There's no place in the Bible where God ever said, go out and build my church, strategize, plan, come up with something to get my program established in the earth. God never said anything like that. Jesus said, I will build my church.

It's the job of the Lord Jesus Christ to build the church. And our only part in it as leaders is to use the material he's provided and follow the directions that he has already laid down for us. I remember years ago, people would come to me and they would say, what is your vision? What is your vision? You know, quite frankly, I'd say I don't have any vision.

If I've got a vision for the church, then we're in trouble. My answer to them was, I'm just here to teach the Bible. I'm here to tell you what God's word says.

And he's got the plan. He's got the strategy. He's got the vision.

And he's going to carry out his plan and his strategy and his vision as we simply learn about him and yield ourselves to him. But so much in the modern church has been reduced to formulas and programs today. It's pathetic.

And, you know, the amazing thing is the non-Christians so often have more discernment than the Christians do. Non-Christians walk in and they can smell it a mile away. It's like, man, this place smells like a business.

Smells like just a big, a big franchise or something. Some sort of a marketing thing. And the Christians, on the other hand, are going, oh, no.

No, this is this is this is the way to do it. These are the 90s. We've got to do it this way.

Church leaders are to follow the instructions given in Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit. That's the way the church is to be built. Remember the tabernacle.

I mentioned that in a previous message. But remember the tabernacle. God said to Moses, see that you make it according to the pattern given you on the mount.

See that you make it according to the pattern given you. He said, Moses, do not deviate one fraction from the pattern that's been given to you. So you see, as a person in church leadership, I really am not responsible to come up with a strategy or a plan.

Not only am I not responsible. I'm not even permitted to do so by God. God has the plan, and I'm simply to implement what he wants to do.

And until church leaders realize that, unfortunately, the church is going to continue to go in the direction that it's going. And it seems that more and more and more, the church is anxious to embrace human wisdom and quick to reject. God's blueprint for the church.

Oh, that's so simple. That's simplistic, they say. You can't just teach the Bible and rely on the Holy Spirit and pray and things like that.

This is the modern world. What Paul goes on to tell us is that there is a day in which the structure that is built will be inspected. And this is where every person who aspires to church leadership needs to listen closely.

There is a day when all of our building will be tested to see what sort it is. Church leaders, in other words, will one day answer to God for how they built his church. His church.

And I think that is the very thing that people in church leadership need to remember today, that the church does not belong to them. It's his church. It's not my church.

We say that, you know. It's not necessarily implying that we feel it, but, you know, sometimes we say, well, my church. Even as a pastor.

Well, you know, my church is this. But to be correct, to be accurate, I have to always refer to the church as his church. Unless, of course, I'm building it with human wisdom that it is my church, not his church.

And it's going to fail the test on that day. Now, he says this. Each one's work will become clear for the day.

Will declare it because it will be revealed by fire and the fire will test each one's work of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss.

So again, as I mentioned initially, this passage is a very severe warning to people in church leadership. Those who are builders are going to have to stand before God someday and give an account to him of how they built his church. And for some, there will be a reward.

Those who have followed God's plan will be rewarded. Those who did it according to human wisdom, be it their own or someone else's, will suffer loss. Whether it's their own wisdom or someone else's.

You see, some church leaders have embraced a larger philosophy, something that's been passed on to them. And they've embraced this philosophy and this is what they're going about building the church with. Others have not necessarily embraced some philosophical system, but they're building the church on what they think.

Rather than on what God has declared in his word, both types of building fall into the same category of perishable material. See, I'm not to build a church on what I think. I'm not to come up with my strategy again.

I'm not to develop my formula or my method. I must always come to the church. And as I'm thinking about building it, I must always consult the Lord himself.

I think any person that steps into a pulpit without the sense that they are completely reliant upon God at that moment is to some degree building the church through their own energy. Even if I say, oh, well, I did all of my praying and all my preparation and I've got my great sermon put together and I'm confident as I go into the pulpit. I think that that's overconfidence.

I think that every time a person stands before God's people, they ought to have the sense that they are speaking on behalf of God and therefore they want to know what God has to say. I make it my practice whenever I'm preparing to teach it all to remind the Lord that. You're his people, not mine.

And that I don't know you like he knows you because I don't know you like he knows you. I really don't know what you need, but he does. And so basically what I'm doing is just casting myself upon God and saying, Lord, you know what they need to hear.

So you have to impart that to me so I can give it to them. But, you know, really, that's what that's what preaching is is all about. That's what teaching is all about.

Peter talked about exercising your gift of teaching. He said, when you when you teach your to do so as the oracle of God. In other words, what Peter is saying is when you get up and open your mouth, God will be speaking through you.

And if he's not, then you shouldn't get up and open your mouth. You should sit down. God ought to speak through you.

But the only way God can speak through you is if you recognize that God has to speak through you or anything that said is wood, hay and straw. And so you cast yourself upon God and you just are not going to do anything until you're certain that he's going to speak through you. She again, that's going back to to rely on the Lord, but but man is so insistent.

On thinking that he knows and so much of it is based upon human pride. You know, when you think of the whole idea of a professional clergy. And you think of seminary and things like that.

Now, I'm not here to say that anyone who's gone to seminary is, you know, out of out of the will of God or can't be used by God or anything like that. But what I am saying is that seminary and degrees and things of that nature were all borrowed from the world as an attempt to impress the world. So I come with my Ph.D. and that is the authority behind what I say.

Oh, that man has a Ph.D. You see, the focus is put back on human learning and human ability and things of that nature. And in the church again, the modern church, so much like the Corinthian church, so much desiring. The the applause of the world, so much wanting to be accepted and to be seen as something significant and important in the community.

The modern church has done the same thing, and therefore the seminaries have been developed and the degrees are given. And that's what so often is used to validate a person's ministry or to see them as insignificant. Oh, well, they've never gone to university or they've never studied.

They don't have a theological degree, so they're discounted immediately. Well, you see, if you go back to your Bible, you don't find anyone there really with any sort of a degree. But you do find men who did not trust themselves, but they trusted God and they cast themselves upon God and God empowered them.

And Jesus Christ, in whom is hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, he spoke through them. And so when the apostles were brought before the civil authorities who were also religious men, it says they marveled because these men were ignorant men in their estimation. They were uneducated.

They had not gone to the local universities. But yet they did something that no doctor of theology could do. They had healed a man who had been lame for 38 years.

They did so through the power of God. So it's the infiltration of all of these various manifestations of human wisdom that have served to weaken the witness of the church. Now, again, let me reiterate, I'm not criticizing a person who goes to seminary unless, of course, that's what you're putting your confidence in.

If you are, then that's my criticism is directed toward someone like that. If a person has a Ph.D., well, fine. Don't trust it because it's certainly not the basis of ministry.

It's certainly not the indication that this man can speak for God. If a man has a degree like that, fine, but let him not have any confidence in it. That's the whole point.

Let him put his confidence in the Lord. You remember, Paul said that earlier to them. He said, let not the wise man boast in his wisdom.

Don't trust in those things. And that is, I think, in essence, the problem with so much of the modern church trusting in human wisdom, not only trusting it, but preferring it to the wisdom of God. Now, he talks about the rewards and he talks about the suffering of loss, the meaning of suffering loss.

I don't know exactly what that means, but here's the picture. One day church leaders, those who have built upon the foundation, are going to stand before God and give an account. Some are going to receive a reward and some are going to suffer loss.

What does it mean to suffer loss? I don't know, but I'm sure it will be something less than pleasant. Therefore, I don't want to be in that position on that day. Now, as we come to a close here, verse 17, I think, is one of the most frightening verses in all of Scripture.

Because it is indeed a severe warning from God to those who would destroy the church through human wisdom, leading to division. He says, if anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

And as I pointed out in a previous study, the context here is clearly the church corporately, not the individual Christian as the temple of God. Later, Paul will refer to individuals as the temple of the Holy Spirit. But right now in the context, he's speaking about the church and he's speaking to these men who are trying to build the church with human wisdom.

And he's saying to them, you are defiling the temple of God and God will destroy you. I believe that this is stating that God will bring judgment upon people who defile or destroy the church in this present life. He will bring judgment upon them.

And I think clearly he's addressing people who are genuinely Christians, but yet have embraced worldly wisdom over against God's wisdom and have just in a cavalier sense gone ahead with their vision for the church that's undermining the witness of the church. We have examples in scripture of people who experience judgment because they brought false teaching into the life of the church. Paul mentions a man

named Hymenaeus and another man named Alexander.

And he said, I have delivered them to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme. So here Paul is delivering people over to Satan for judgment upon them in the physical sense. We think of another situation with Ananias and Sapphira, the couple who had lied to the Holy Spirit.

You remember, as they came before Peter, he challenged them on their deceit and they were stricken dead by the Spirit of God. So what Paul is saying is that if you take it upon yourself to try to build the church through your own wisdom and end up implementing human wisdom, you really end up defiling or destroying the temple of God and you put yourself in a place to be judged by God. I think there are contemporary examples of people who have come under the judgment of God because of the destruction they have brought into the church.

I can think of one man in particular that I have often wondered whether or not his illnesses are perhaps related to all of the havoc that he has wrought upon the Christian church. Now, I think. Incidentally, also.

There's a distinction that's made here between those who are. Truly Christians, but yet off building the church with human wisdom and those who are not Christians at all, but are rather wolves in sheep's clothing. I think the distinction is this.

Those who are truly Christians will come under the judgment of God. In the form of a chastisement, but those who are not Christians at all, but truly wolves in sheep's clothing, men who are not really God's people, but just mere deceivers. They themselves would not necessarily come under judgment presently, but will definitely come under judgment in the life to come.

And I think that's a way to, in some sense, discern between who's truly a Christian who has just gone off on their own ideas versus those who are not Christians at all, because let's face it. There are many people who are claiming to be Christians who are teaching all kinds of things that are absolutely contrary to the scripture, and they go on without any sort of affliction whatsoever. They go on in prosperity.

They go on seeming to be blessed. The judgment is coming for them. But the fact that there's no judgment presently, I think is an indication that they're not really God's people at all.

But then there are those who have brought certain elements of destruction and defilement into the church who are truly God's people. And you find in them, you find those those signs of of God's judgment upon them. Now, finally, let's remember this.

The local church is to be Christ's witness to the community and an alternative to the wisdom, religion and vices of the world. That's what the local church is such a precious thing in the sight of Jesus, because it's through the local church that he wants to manifest his life to those outside of his kingdom. And he wants to draw them in.

But you see, a church built on worldly wisdom loses its distinction and therefore loses its witness. It is then useless. And I'm reminded of the words of Jesus.

You remember, he said, you are the salt of the earth speaking to the church. He said, but if the salt loses its flavor, it is good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trampled under the foot of men. And that's what happens when a local church embraces human wisdom.

It loses its distinction and it becomes meaningless in that society and therefore it's good for nothing. And it does inevitably end up being trampled under the foot of men. It ends up being trampled under the foot of men.

And as you look around this country today and as you see churches that once honored God, men maybe a hundred years ago built or laid a solid foundation, but others came along and began to build on it with the perishable things of human wisdom. You see today, those churches are being turned over to become mosque in some cases to become temples of various sorts are being turned over to become local theater houses and things of this nature. And what do you find? You find just as Jesus said, the church is being trampled under foot by men.

But it's all because of the refusal to follow the Lord's instruction on how his church is to be built and to think that we can do it better by implementing human wisdom. God help us in leadership here and those of you as you grow in your faith and as you move into various forms of service for the Lord to always remember that this is his church and that if the church is going to be built, it must be built according to God's plan, never according to ours.

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