

# I Will Build My Church

by Richard E. Bieber

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*Jesus is building his Church, and we are living stones that need to give ourselves utterly to him, fit in with brothers and sisters, and perform the work at hand.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 5:26, Hebrews 3:6, 1 Peter 2:5, Revelation 1:12

**Topics:** "Church Growth", "Spiritual Transformation"

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## Description

Richard E. Bieber preaches about the signs of the End times, pointing to the earth, Israel, and the Church as indicators. He emphasizes the importance of the Church being a pure and holy vessel for God's work, highlighting the need for personal transformation and conformity to Christ's image. The sermon underscores Jesus' active role in building and purifying His Church, bringing about miraculous transformations and the formation of a new people. Bieber warns against being a 'junior architect' or a 'sidewalk critic,' urging believers to fully yield to Jesus, fit in with fellow believers, and faithfully carry out the work at hand.

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## Transcript

"On this rock I will build my church and the powers of death shall not prevail against it."

If we want evidence that the End is near there are three places we can look:

We can look at the earth itself to see the beginning of the sufferings Jesus foretold.

Or, we can look at Israel, shakily emerging from what Jesus called the "time of the Gentiles."

Or, we can look at the Church, the custodian of the gospel of the Kingdom which Jesus said must be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations - before the end.

The earth, Israel, the Church: The Spirit of God is doing wonderful things in all three places. But the place where the most drastic changes are going on at the moment is the Church. Everything else has to wait until the living God has a Church on this earth that manifests the nature of her Lord. A church that is clean, righteous, obedient, holy.

When God has a Church on this earth that satisfies him, then suddenly there will appear, everywhere, evidence that Jesus is offering forgiveness to the people of this planet for the last time.

What happened in Jerusalem and Galilee twenty centuries ago will appear with multiplied force in every neighborhood of our cities and every street and alley on this planet.

And while this redemptive ministry is taking place from Siberia to Peru there will be stirrings in the land of Israel that will make their present irritation with "Jews for Jesus" seem like a mere mosquito bite.

Prophetic voices will be heard from one end of the state of Israel to the other calling the people to repentance and faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and in his Messiah who is not only a light to lighten the Gentiles, but the glory of his people Israel.

But before there can be such stirrings among the nations of earth and in the land of Israel, the stirrings of the Spirit which are now going on in the Body of Christ must run their course and accomplish their purpose.

- Not that we should cancel all outreach until the Church is spotless.

- Not that we should give up our prayers for Israel until the Church has passed through her time of refining.

We continue to proclaim the gospel .... and we pray for more laborers and a more powerful witness .... and we continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

But when we wonder why we aren't seeing more happen out there, remember that many, many things are still lacking in the household of God itself - in the Church.

There will have to be more miracles here in the Body before the miracles will happen as God has ordained them to happen outside the Body. And,

- those miracles that need to happen in the Body will happen,

- those changes that need to take place will take place---

---with us or without us.

Many saints are so excited about the vision of what God is doing in the Church at this hour that they take things into their own hands and try to help it along.

The temptation comes to us to get in there and cleanse the Church, or build the Church, or pull the Church together. We don't cleanse the Church, or build it, or pull it together.

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it.

That he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his breast.

- Jesus is in the midst of the lampstands.

- Jesus is building his church.

- Jesus is cleansing her and making her ready.

Many of us have been involved in little Bible Studies for years. Now suddenly our little Bible Studies are no longer little...

- we have crowds,

- crowds of souls who came out of nowhere to study the Word and praise the living God.

We didn't draw them.

We didn't bring them to faith.

We didn't do anything but what we've been doing for years.

What does this mean? It means that Jesus is building his Church before our eyes. Jesus is making things happen which we couldn't make happen if we tried for a million years.

- It's not just souls being saved.

- It's a Body being formed and built up.

- A new people.

- Sons and daughters being brought to glory.

And while this is going on, what's left of our little old Bible Studies and our little old Churches is going through a thousand changes.

The Lord is saying to those of us who have been around a long time,

"It's not only these new ones who have to conform their lives to me, you have to change too! You have to conform your life to me or you're going to be left behind as the cleansing continues."

In the coming days the Lord will call for changes in all our lives we haven't even dreamed of.

For the Church that he is building will not have anything in it that's mediocre,

or half-baked,

or dishonest,

or ungodly,

or covetous,

or adulterous,

or petty,

or childish,

or ego-centered,

or slovenly.

And while Jesus is building his Church - bringing it to the place where it is without spot or wrinkle - there are two kinds of people who are eliminating themselves from it. Jesus isn't eliminating them, they're eliminating themselves.

1. The junior architects.

2. The sidewalk critics.

1. As Jesus builds his Church, according to his plan by the power of his Spirit, the junior architects come along and insist on making their own improvements.

"The Lord showed me that it should be this way." Or, "I have a word from the Lord for you, Brother."

But before they've talked five minutes, it's clear that they have come, not in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, but with a plan that they want to impose.

Instead of fitting into the building where the Lord puts them, satisfied to be one of the living stones fitting in with others, these junior architects remain aloof from the building itself. They are never part of it, they're over it, superior to it, busy trying to improve on the work of the Architect Himself.

Often they will withdraw completely from brothers and sisters who aren't enthused about their super-plans and go off and build their own church - a church that will one day have to be torn away with their fleshly scaffolding.

2. The sidewalk critics also remain aloof from the building of the Lord. They've always been accustomed to churchianity where the demands are light and you have all the room you want to do your own thing.

When they see human lives being built together into a temple of the Living God,

when they see a building going up where the stones are no longer free to jump around and do their own thing, they panic. They run for the sidewalk and criticize the whole thing from a safe distance.

"Me go over there and become a part of that? Never on your life! Why that's nothing! That's just a fly-by-night fad!"

"Fit in with those weirdos? I have more respect for myself than that!"

Meanwhile, the Lord goes on building his Church. He's building it with living stones, human souls that have been washed in his blood and quickened by his Spirit.

- He doesn't force anybody.

- He doesn't violate anyone's will.

If you want to be a junior architect, be a junior architect.

If you want to be a sidewalk critic, go right ahead.

But if you want to be joined to Jesus Christ you have no choice but to be joined to all others who are joined to him.

If you belong to Jesus you are part of his Body, and you function in that Body where he puts you, according to the gifts he gives you.

You are not a free-lance disciple.

Jesus does the building - we're the living stones. To be living stones means three things:

I. We give ourselves utterly to Jesus.

Totally. Not with this reservation and that limit, deciding for ourselves what we'll do, or how far we'll go. We go all the way. We put ourselves in his hands to command of us what he pleases even as Jesus put himself in the Father's hands to command what he pleased.,

Are you utterly given over?

- If you aren't willing to be broken bread and poured out wine in the hands of Jesus, why are you eating the bread or drinking the wine at his table?

If there's something in your life that isn't his, give it to him -do it now!

2. To be living stones in his temple means that we fit in with brothers and sisters.

Many of us can fit in nicely with doctrines and ideas. We can fit in easily with man-made organizational structures, serve on committees. But we balk at fitting in with flesh-and-blood people. Some of us haven't even begun to fit in with the people in the house where we live.

Now, by his grace and at his command, we fit in where he puts us,

- if he puts you next to a young freak, you fit in,

- if he puts you next to an old person, you fit in,

- if he puts you next to a little child, fit in,

- if they're singing too slowly or if they're singing too fast, you fit in,

- if the lady is crying, if the man is disturbed, fit in,

- if they like sauerkraut, and you like pizza, why make an issue?

3. To be living stones in his Temple means that we perform the work at hand. Not the work on the other side of the mountain, but the work right in the valley where you are.

Some of us are forever getting ready for a great work somewhere else. What about the work under your nose?

- Welcome that stranger.

- Speak that word of encouragement.

- Seek that lost one.
- Preach the gospel right there.
- Pull yourself together and start praying.

Do well what's before you to do. Then if God wants you to be doing something else, he'll bring that other work to you, or you to it.

If God wants you in Poland, he'll put you there, when it's time for you to be there. Meanwhile, you're here with a God-given job to do. Are you doing it?

"On this rock I will build my church and the powers of death shall not prevail against it."

Jesus is building his Church before our eyes.

God grant that he may find us yielded enough to be part of his building!

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