

The Process of Building Part I

by Stephen Kaung

Stephen Kaung's sermon emphasizes the purposeful process of building the church as a divine creation reflecting God's intentions and heart for His people.

Duration: 1:12:21

Scripture: Exodus 25:8, Matthew 6:33, Colossians 2:17, Hebrews 8:5

Topics: "Church Building", "Christology"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the purpose and pattern of building the church. He explains that just as a building has a purpose and follows a design, the church also has a definite purpose and pattern. The speaker highlights that the pattern for the church is found in Christ, as depicted in the four Gospels. He emphasizes that the church is not a creation of man or history, but rather a purposeful creation of the Lord Jesus Himself. The speaker also mentions the use of types and pictures in the Old Testament to teach and lead to the reality found in the New Testament.

Transcript

Matthew chapter 16, just one verse, verse 18, Matthew 16, 18. And I also I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and Hades' gates shall not prevail against it. Thou art Peter, a stone, a detached stone, and on this rock, a massive rock, our Lord said, I will build my church.

Let's have another word of prayer. Dear Lord, we do praise and thank Thee for gathering us together this morning. We know that we are in Thy presence.

Lord, we will remove our shoes and bow before Thee. What hast Thou to say to us? Speak, Thy servants hear it. We ask in Thy precious name.

Amen. Amen. I do thank the Lord for the privilege of being with you, dear brothers and sisters.

Lately, the Lord puts upon my heart just one word. And that word is build. We know that this word build is a technical word.

It is used in construction. It is to form by gathering materials and parts together. And to make a form according to a design.

The pattern for the woman is the man. Adam will be the pattern. Only Adam could be the pattern of the woman.

And then after the pattern was decided, then God had to make the preparation. Where could he find the material for the woman? And again you'll find that in order that Adam be the pattern, the materials had to come from Adam. And it has to be from Adam.

Because only that which is out of Adam could be rejoined to Adam as one. You cannot have any other foreign materials. So God decided that the material should be Adam.

Now how could he get the material from Adam? So you'll find there is a process there. Now he put Adam to sleep. And then God did an operation.

Out of Adam he took out a rib. Now in the original it says he took out something out of Adam. He took out something out of Adam.

And after he took out that something out of Adam as the material, then you know he began to work to build it, a woman. But that was not the end of it. Because after the woman was built, God led the woman to the man.

He presented the woman to the man. And as soon as Adam looked at the woman, he said this is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. This is a woman.

Out of man. And they two were united into one. So we find that this is how the word built is used in the first place.

Now of course we know Adam and Eve are but types. They are just shadows. Where is the reality? We find Ephesians chapter 5. When Paul mentioned the relationship between a man and a woman, he said this mystery is great.

That is in verse 32. This mystery is great. But I am speaking of Christ and the church.

So in other words you find there in the New Testament, you find the reality of the relationship between a man and a woman. Christ is the man. And the church is the woman.

Now of course brothers and sisters, we know that the church is not a physical building. The church may meet in a physical building. But that doesn't make that physical building the church.

The church in the original means the called out ones gathered together. Out of every nation, every tribe, every tongue, every people. God called them out.

And gathered them unto the name of our Lord Jesus. And this is what the church is. And the relationship between Christ and the church is like the relationship of the man and the woman.

To put it more accurately, the relationship of man and woman is like the relationship of Christ and the church. The relationship of husband and wife is like the relationship of Christ and the church. This is the reality.

So brothers and sisters, my burden is that we may see that we are built in relation to the church. How all these five steps are being done in the building of the church. Now this morning we would like to touch

upon two of them.

First of all you find in this matter of building you must have a purpose. Why do you want to build a house? Because there is a purpose behind it. And you want to live in it.

And definitely, you know, there is something behind it. So brothers and sisters, the Lord Jesus, He said, on this rock I will build my church. Our Lord Himself is the builder of the church.

You know, the church is not just something that happens. It is not just you put people together, piling them together and you get the church. You find that behind it there is definite purpose.

The church is not the creation of man. It is not the creation of history. It is God's creation.

Because if you read the Bible, you will find in the letter to the Ephesians, in chapter three. Now if you will please turn to Ephesians chapter three. The apostle Paul tells us that he, by the grace of God, knows the mystery of the Christ.

To the holy apostles and prophets. So we now know what that mystery is. Now we read from verse nine.

And to enlighten all with the knowledge of what is the administration of the mystery hidden throughout the ages in God, who has created all things. In order that now to the principalities and authorities in the heavenlies might be made known through the church the all various wisdom of God. According to the purpose of the ages which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

So brothers and sisters you will find in the building of the church there is a definite purpose behind it. Because the church is such a marvelous work of God. You will find that even before the foundation of the world.

Before the ages. God has already purposed his purpose in Christ Jesus. So think of that.

The church is not just a matter in time. The purpose is a product of eternity. Even before the foundations of the world.

Before God created anything. God already laid a purpose in his heart. And he purposed that purpose in Christ Jesus.

In other words. He purposed that purpose for his beloved son. And he purposed that this purpose will be fulfilled through his son.

And when it is fulfilled it is for his son. You know God created all things for his beloved son. But above all things.

He wanted to give to his son a most precious gift. To satisfy his son's heart. Because he knows that the creation could not satisfy the loving heart of his beloved son.

He has longed for something more. Something that will answer to his heart. Something that is like him.

Something that he can be united with. So in order to satisfy his son's heart. God purposed to build the church.

So brothers and sisters the church is not a small thing. It is not insignificant. It is not something cheap.

As a matter of fact you find it is a greater work in building the church than in creation. Creating all things. I am afraid that sometimes we look at the church as something extra, too much, additional.

We think that the church is something where you can have it or you can leave it. In our seeking, pursuing of the Lord Jesus. All we need to do is that we can build up our personal relationship with the Lord.

Whether we have a church life or not, that is insignificant. But if we understand the heart of God. We should see that in the heart of God the church is of such importance to him.

It is his most precious gift to his beloved son. And it requires him to do much more work than in creating the universe. It is the marvel of God.

And therefore you find when the apostle Paul mentioned that in Ephesians chapter 3. He said now to the principalities and authorities. That they may know the all various wisdom of God. Because all the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Is to be filled that church. And through the church the unsearchable riches of Christ is to be known even to the principalities and authorities. The principalities and authorities here refer to the angelic hosts.

The angelic hosts, they have superior intelligence. And their intelligence is much higher than us human beings. But even to them.

God said through the church today. God is to teach these principalities and authorities the wisdom of God. In other words what God can do.

What God can do with man. And turn them into the church, the body of Christ. That can be united to Christ in one.

And to store all the riches of Christ. And to exhibit the glory of Christ. And to teach the angelic hosts valuable lessons.

Something that they have never seen. Something that they have never thought of. And now in the church they see the all wisdom of God.

Brothers and sisters. So you can see that this purpose of God is so glorious. And this purpose is concerning the church.

Now brothers and sisters if this is the case. Do you think we as believers should neglect this matter of the church? Do you see that it is our responsibility. That we may know the will of God.

And that we will pursue after his will. And this is something that we must do. So brothers and sisters.

First of all you find in the building of the church that involves a tremendous purpose there. Now we come to the second point. That is pattern.

Probably before that let me add something to it. You know in the old testament you have lots of types. The old testament is the shadow.

But that shadow will lead us to the substance, the reality. That is the new testament. So in the old testament God used all kinds of pictures.

To describe things. Why? Because he wants us to learn the word through the pictures. You know when we were children.

That is the way we learn words. Now in the Chinese you don't have alphabets. And every single word stands by itself.

Now how do we learn these words? So you find that the way to teach us to learn the words is through pictures. And you draw a picture of an ox. And then underneath there is the word ox.

And so through the picture we learn the word. And that is the way God teaches us. The old testament gives us all kinds of pictures.

And then the new testament tells us what the words are. So in the old testament you find pictures, types. You remember God's dealing with the children of Israel.

After he led the children of Israel out of Egypt. He brought them to himself at Mount Sinai. And it was at Mount Sinai.

That he gave them the ten commandments, the law. Because by keeping this law they would truly be God's people. God said if you keep these words.

If you keep my commandment. Then you are my people. Now after they become God's people.

Now what are they going to do? You know when we read the book of Exodus. Our impression is on that Mount of Sinai. God gave the children of Israel the law.

And that is very true. Because without the law they could not truly be God's people. What differed them, the children of Israel.

From the rest of the nations is based upon the law of God. That is God's covenant with them. But brothers and sisters that is not all.

After God gave them the law. Then you find God follow with something very very important. When you come to Exodus chapter 25.

Now God said. You are now my people. Now this is something I want you to do.

In Exodus chapter 25. Verse 8. God commanded Moses. And tell the people of Israel.

Make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them. God made the children of Israel his people. By giving them the law.

And then God said. After you have been my people. I want you to do something.

I want you to build me a sanctuary. Why? Because I want to dwell among you. Actually you find in the book of Exodus.

There are more chapters devoted to the sanctuary, the building of the sanctuary. Than in the giving of the law. Because this is the purpose behind the law.

You know I remember. When I was. Seeking.

To be saved. I remember. I attended a conference.

And in that conference. In the morning. There was a brother who spoke on the tabernacle.

And he came from North China. Shandong. Now I am a Chinese.

I couldn't understand Shandong dialect. And furthermore when he talked about tabernacle. I just couldn't understand anything.

Because at that time I wasn't saved yet. I didn't know the purpose of God. All I care for is I want to be saved.

This is most important to me. What is important to God is not important to me. So I went to that meeting every morning.

And I just couldn't understand anything. And I am afraid brothers and sisters. Even many of us today are still like that.

We are afraid to hear about the tabernacle. And when we read the Bible we skip over. What has that to do with me? Brothers and sisters.

But you know. After I was saved. As the years go by.

Gradually I find it is so precious. Because there I see the picture. A picture of something that I will be involved.

And this picture. There is a very important thing behind it. I will be involved in it.

That is not to say that I will be involved in the picture. That is to say the words behind it. Those words.

So when God gave the revelation to Moses. Four chapters are devoted to the building of the tabernacle. And then in describing the law to us.

Why? Because that is the purpose. That is God's purpose for his people. So it is very important to God.

And of course it is important to the children of Israel. And then later on you find even in the building of the temple. You know God chose David out of all the people.

Now why does God choose David? Actually you know David was neglected by his father. Despised by his brothers. He was sent to the field to be a shepherd.

He is nobody in the eyes of man. But God chose him. Why? In the New Testament.

God tells us the reason why. He said I have found in David a man after my own heart. Who will do all my will.

See David is a man of God's heart. He knows God's heart. Now what does he know? You know when you read to 2 Samuel chapter 7. There David tell Nathan the prophet.

He said I live in a palace. And the ark of God still live under a curtain. Now I couldn't do that.

I have to give God the best. I want to build God a house. Now even though he was not allowed to do it.

And yet God's heart was touched by David. Because that is the very heart of God. He wants to dwell among his people.

He wants to make his people his home. Brothers and sisters always feel. That God was homeless.

You know you remember in Isaiah. God said heaven is my throne. The earth is my footstool.

Now what does it mean? It means that the heaven and earth is his office. But where is his home? He will dwell with those of a concrete heart. So David knows God's heart.

And then he wants to build a house for God. So brothers and sisters. Here we are.

Do we know God's heart? Do we really know what God wants? You know I often feel that we are so need oriented. You know everything is need. I need this.

I need that. Give me this. Give me that.

To satisfy me. Now to be need oriented. You remain a babe in Christ.

When you grow up. You will find you will be purpose oriented. So that's the difference of the matured and the baby.

Now do we really desire to fulfill God's heart? Do we see what his purpose really is? Do we take his purpose as our purpose? And that is something that we really need. So first of all. Let us pray to the Lord.

That he will really give us the spirit of wisdom and understanding. That we may know his purpose. We may know his heart.

We may know what he really wants. And by the grace of God. We offer ourselves to him for that purpose.

So that is the first step in the building of the church. We need to see God's purpose. Secondly.

After a purpose is purposed. Then you will find God will set up a pattern. You know an architect.

When he asks to make a building. For instance this building. We will tell the architect.

We need a building. He says for what purpose? Is it for private residence? Or is it for public meetings? And what kind of meetings will you have? And after that you know the architect will draw a blueprint. He will design the building according to the purpose.

And very very true. The building he builds is an expression of the architect. Because when he plans it.

He will draw a blueprint. And there is a certain pattern there. Everything is there.

You know I came from a family of construction. For three generations we were engaged in construction. But I know nothing about construction.

I remember sometimes I went to the construction place. My elder brother was involved in it. And in his desk you will find all the blueprints there.

When I look at it. It means nothing to me. It's just line and circle and all these things.

But when my brother look at it. Brother look at it. He saw the house.

And there is a pattern there. And everything is to be built according to the pattern. Now brothers and sisters the question is.

In the building of the church is there a pattern? You know many people think the church. Is just a product of history. When God's people come together.

They gradually find out the best way for the church. Therefore you will find many churches are being organized. According to any organization in the world.

It becomes the genius of man's mind. As people will build a great corporation. So today you will find they build a church into a big corporation.

And if you are the CEO of a big corporation. You can be the elder of the church. Because you know how to govern.

It's the idea of man. Now is it that the church has no pattern? God who purpose that church and yet he give us no pattern at all. And he leave it to man's imagination.

So throughout the history you will find all kinds of churches so called are being built. And you do not really know which is the right one. They all have their good points and they all have their bad points.

And it just cater to whatever your desire is. Now is that the case with the church? And thank God there are some who try to find the pattern of the church in the Old Testament. Oh they say you cannot find the pattern of the church in the world.

In the world. You have to find the pattern of the church in the Bible. So they go to the Old Testament.

And they find. Now in the Old Testament you have priests. So we need priests.

We need pastors. That is the pattern of the church. And then you go to the Old Testament.

Oh you will find there is a choir there. You know the Levites. Some of them were separated to sing.

So let's have a choir. And then they go to the Old Testament. And find all kinds of things there.

And they transport it to the church. That is the pattern of the church. Now in the Old Testament.

You find the priests all clothed with garments. Beautiful garments. So now in the churches you will find all these garments put on the pattern.

Brothers and sisters. You try to find the pattern in the Old Testament. And you say it is according to the Bible.

But it is the shadow. It is not the reality. Because the children of Israel were God's earthly people.

So whatever God deals with them is physical. But the church is spiritual. We are heavenly people.

So God will deal us with the heavenly and spiritual things. So we cannot make the shadow to substitute the reality. I often feel as we are approaching the end.

Christianity is going back and back and back to the Old Testament. That is a pity. Because we are playing with shadows.

And the shadows will pass away. And when it passes away. It is vanity of vanity.

Nothing. Ah, there are some people who are much wiser. Oh, we will find the pattern in the New Testament.

We believe that God must give pattern. The pattern of the church. So they go to the New Testament.

Especially in the Book of Acts. And they find that there are apostles. You find there are elders.

There are deacons. So let's have pastors. As apostles.

Let's have elders. And let's have deacons. And if you have all these, you have the church.

Brothers and sisters. It's a physical imitation. But where is the spiritual reality? It is not in these technical things.

It is not in these physical arrangements. You know, I know years ago. When this wing of New Testament churches is blowing through Christianity.

Everybody wants to build New Testament churches. And what some of them do? If they have ten people there. Well, we have to have some elders.

And the Bible says the elder is collective. So at least we should choose two to be elders. And then we have to have deacons.

So you have only eight left. Now, have three to be deacons. And the five become laymen.

So we can meet and we be a church. It is a New Testament church. Technically we are correct.

But is this a church? Is this the pattern given to us in the New Testament? Brothers and sisters. I strongly firmly believe God does give us a pattern. Because God never leaves anything to man's mind.

Especially the church. Which is so tremendously important and glorious. Can he just leave it without giving us any blueprint? It is impossible.

Some people say there is no pattern. But I disagree. I feel there is a definite pattern for the church.

But what is that pattern? When you open the New Testament. What do you find there? You find the four Gospels. And after the four Gospels you have the Book of Acts.

Now I believe there is a significance there. Because the four Gospels give us the story of Christ. Show us our Lord Jesus himself.

And then it follows with Acts. And Acts is a continuation. In other words.

The church you find in the Book of Acts. Is patterned after the Christ in the four Gospels. So in other words Christ is the pattern.

Just like when God wants to build Eve. Now who is the pattern for Eve? It is not in these living animals. It is not in these birds.

It is in Adam. That is the pattern. And only that pattern works.

Now if you try any other pattern. You will find it is misfit. So brothers and sisters.

What is the pattern of the church? In one word. Christ. He is the pattern.

He himself is the pattern. So the church is built according to Christ. And this Christ is not technical or physical.

It is spiritual. Heavenly. We need to know him.

And that is the reason why you find Apostle Paul. His whole passion is to know Christ. To know him and the power of his resurrection.

And to have fellowship with his suffering. And to be conformed to his death. That he may arrive at the resurrection.

Now brothers and sisters. Christ himself is the living pattern. The pattern is not a dead one.

It is not a technical one. You may be correct in every technical sense. But it is not it.

It is knowing Christ in a living way. Knowing Christ through the Holy Spirit. It is a personal knowledge of the living Christ.

What Christ is to us. Brothers and sisters. This is the pattern.

So remember the church does have a pattern. And the Lord said I will build my church upon this rock. The rock is Christ himself.

We are not only built on Christ as the foundation. We are actually built out of Christ and into Christ. The church is an extension of Christ.

So Paul in 1 Corinthians 12. He said The body is one but has many members. There are many members but one body.

So also is the Christ. We will say so also is the church. Because the church is one body with many members.

And many members one body. And Christ is the head. But the Holy Spirit says so also is the Christ.

Because the church is the Christ. Because it is patterned according to Christ. So the more you know Christ in the spirit.

The more the building is going on. The measure of Christ is the testimony of the church. So you find in Ephesians chapter 4. He said until we all arrive at the unity of the faith.

And of the full knowledge of the Son of God. We arrive at the unity of the faith. And in the knowledge of the Son of God.

Until we into a full grown man. To the measure of the statue of the fullness of Christ. You know that is the church.

We are to grow. To grow in the full knowledge of Christ. We are to grow in the faith.

Until we become grown ups. And what is being grown up? The measure of the statue of the fullness of Christ. So when Christ is fully grown among us.

And when he is able to fill us. And when he is able to manifest himself. Fully through us.

That is the glorious church. To be presented to him as his bride. So dear brothers and sisters we have the pattern.

But unfortunately we do not follow that pattern. Because we are involved always in technical. And physical faith.

We neglect that which is spiritual and real. No matter how well you are organized. If there is a lack in knowing Christ.

The church is not built. So it is a spiritual building. His glory.

And when you look in the old testament you will find the principle is there already. Because when God revealed his purpose to the children of Israel. Make me a sanctuary.

That I may dwell among you. And immediately following. God told Moses.

The pattern. The pattern on the mount. The blueprint.

A detailed plan. Nothing left for Moses to change. And Moses was warned again and again.

See that you do everything according to the pattern that has shown you. You know Moses is a marvelous architect. Because he was reared in Egypt.

And at that time Egypt was noted for its architectural feat. You look at the pyramids. It is an architectural marvel.

And Moses learned all the learnings of Egypt. To us it seems to be ridiculous. That God has to tell every detail about the tabernacle to Moses.

God said make me a tabernacle. Moses said I can make you a palace. That is what Moses could do.

But God said no. Because this is a type. A type of the future reality.

Therefore every detail had to be followed. And the Bible says. In Hebrews chapter 3. Moses is faithful in all God's houses.

In what way? He followed everything according to the pattern. So when it is done. The glory of God descended.

Brothers and sisters. And the same thing is true. In the building of the temple.

Solomon is the wisest of all men. If David wants to build a temple for God. Just tell Solomon.

And he will design a beautiful temple. The world has never seen before. But no.
God gave the pattern to David. God used his finger to draw it. You know if you read.
Chronicles. And you find how God showed David. The blueprint of the temple.
When I read these verses. It is just like a line and circle to me. I cannot build a temple.
With this pattern. Because I don't understand. But Solomon understand it.
So he built everything according to that design. And so the glory of God descended. When he is finished.
Brothers and sisters. Why is the glory of God does not descend upon the church? It is because it is not
built according to pattern. We change it.
We invent it. We think that is the best for God. God will not accept it.
There is no glory. The presence of the Lord is not there. If his presence is not there.
It is nothing. You may have a magnificent temple. But if there is no glory.
No presence of God. It is empty. It is vanity.
So dear brothers and sisters. How we need to seek to know the Lord. It is our spiritual pursuit.
We pursue Christ himself. Not just the mental knowledge about Christ. But an experience knowledge of
Christ in our life.
And this is the pattern for the church. So may the Lord help us. Now if the Lord permits.
Tomorrow we will continue on. We will speak of the preparation. The process.
And the presentation. Let us pray. Dear Lord we do praise and thank thee.
Because thou dost make known to us thy purpose. Who are we that thou shalt share thy purpose to us.
That we may seek to do thy will.
And we do want to thank thee also that thou dost show us the pattern. We pray that by the revelation of
the Holy Spirit. That we will increasingly know thee in a living way.
That all the building will be according to Christ. And to thee be all the glory. In the name of our dear Lord
Jesus Christ.

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