

God's Construction Crew | Edifying One Another

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[0 : 00] And God's construction crew. Imagine stepping onto a busy, bustling construction site.! And there's hammers ringing, there's saws buzzing, there's blueprints unfolding.

! And that's the church. That's the picture of the church here. A dynamic construction site. I know I've got some builders amongst us here this morning who are builders or building supervisors. And think of this dynamic construction site that is the church. That's what it is, isn't it? You can imagine all these high-vis people walking around with hard hats on. We need some hard hats next to you.

And I just love speaking about edifying. I know I've talked about it before, but be encouraged this morning. Welcome to the construction site. Amen? And let's put our hard hats on.

I should have worn my high-vis. And come and join God's construction crew this morning. Amen? And so we're going to take a look at 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 11. It says, Wherefore, comfort yourselves together and edify one another, even as also you do.

[1 : 07] Edify one another. It's construction language. Literally, it's build a house. It's construct a building. That's the picture here. And it's speaking about a spiritual building.

That's the church of God. Not a physical structure that we meet in, but the living stones that we are as God's building. And edify one another.

That's our mission. That's our calling. Every interaction, when you think about it, is an opportunity either of building someone or tearing someone down.

It's our choice, isn't it? It's one or the other. And we can choose rather to edify, to build up. It speaks of a deliberate constructive process.

It's laying bricks. It's building. And you think of the church as this kind of spiritual construction site. We're called to encourage one another.

[2 : 04] We're part of the construction crew. God's construction crew. To give encouragement and spiritual strength to others. Look out for one another. That's the picture of it. I know I need to work harder at that.

We all can do better, can't we? Thankfully, the Thessalonians will recognise that they were already doing it. He says, even as also you do. So Paul recognised the Thessalonians were doing it.

But the picture, the sense of it really you could catch is that let's keep on doing that. Let's keep going at it. And let's work together.

We're all in this together and keep building. And let's see if we can do it even better than we already are. Keep building. And let's do it even better.

So let's grab our tools this morning and get to work. Let's have a look at some things about this building site, this building process, this project that we're in before.

[3 : 01] The context he's been telling of tough times. Of staying ready. In the context he's telling of the Lord coming suddenly like a thief in the night.

And he's saying, hey, let's stay alert. Let's get ready. Let's be putting on that faith and love like a breastplate as the armour. And the hope like a helmet.

These folk were under this real pressure. There was persecution happening. And all kinds of discouragement. Fatigue. Think of the building process.

Storms demand strong structures. That's why we had to do something with the roof there. Because it was leaking for one thing. And you see that storms will test out the building structure.

And life storms are going to come to you and me. Some of you are in a storm right now. I know there's some amongst us. Many amongst us. With all kinds of storms going on. And we can all get weary.

[3 : 57] We can get divided. We can get worn out. Fatigue can set in. We can be divided. Even deceived. As God's people there's lots of trials and tests.

Times of sickness. Of loss. Of doubt. Without encouragement. Any one of us can get worn down. And we need each other's strength.

That's the sense of it here. That's why fellowship helps. It helps us. That we can edify one another. Not only can we give edifying.

But we get it too. And the word edify in the Greek. It means this building of a sturdy dwelling. And Paul's saying let's be constructive. Let's be constructive.

Building up each other. Keeping each other strong and growing. And Paul says likewise in 1 Corinthians 3.9. For we are laborers together with God. Ye are God's husbandry.

[4 : 55] In other words like a farm. A field. And ye are God's building. It's a picture there of God's building. The building of God's people together. And it's telling us here we're co-workers. Workers together with God.

With God himself. In his building project. And Paul's saying let's keep at it. Keep on laboring. Romans 14.19 says. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace.

And things wherewith one may edify another. Paul's saying hey follow after. Or you could say pursue this. Chase after this. These things. The things that make for peace.

Chase after those things. With which we can edify. We can build up one another. And Paul here is dealing with the church folk. In the Romans 14. Folk are arguing about really side issues.

And he says don't chase after arguments. He says pursue peace. Chase after that. Arguments can tear down what God wants to grow. Paul's saying be about building.

[5 : 54] Be connected. Like a building. Like the bricks and mortar. The cement that joins us.

There's a connection. And it's like the picture of the body. Of the body of Christ. There's pictures of an actual.

Likened to an actual human body. And it talks about that in 1 Corinthians. Here. You could think if a sister in Christ is down. No one checks in. It drags on the whole group.

Because we're all interconnected. That's how it should be. Isn't it? But when we've been interconnected. Working together. Supplying. Doing its part. Each functioning part.

Adding to the increasing of the body. That's why. I know some of you. Are good looking physical specimens. Because all the parts. Are working. Some of you maybe not so. But every single part. Has a part to play. Doesn't it? If one part isn't working so well. It affects the whole. And it's a picture of this building. Of this body. All of these pictures. That tell us of the church.

[6 : 55] And of the church. We could think. That each stone. The other brick. That needs you. To come alongside. Hebrews 10.24. God's designed it so. It says. Let us consider one another.

And to provoke unto love. And to good works. Hebrews 10.24. The word consider. It means to really notice others. Notice what's going on with others. Pay attention.

Let's notice needs. You know. Consider one another. Sometimes we miss that. We don't consider one another. In other words. Keep an eye out for one another. And it's an active thought too.

That we're thinking. How can we help others to grow. To get closer to God. How can we from outside. When they're watching our church. Do they see us building each other up.

Or tearing others down. We want love to be. The hallmark. Of the church. Don't we. That's God's desire. And you think of.

[7 : 51] Really it's Christ's blueprint. If you like. I like to think. Really when you think of our Lord. That he was a worker. Wasn't he? He was a building man.

He was a carpenter. He was a worker. A labourer. I suppose if he was. Wearing modern day clothes. Maybe he would have had high vis on. Thinking that through.

What he could have looked like. And you think. Well when they found him in the garden. I know it was that brother Peter. Talked about that one time. Where hey. There's the gardener. But it was actually Jesus. It was actually the Lord.

At the resurrection. They thought. Oh he's just a gardener. So maybe he was just wearing. Gardening clothes. Modern gardening clothes. Might be high vis too. So who knows what. You could picture. In the modern context.

What our Lord. Would have been like. And think of. This idea of Christ's blueprint. What is he like. It's love in heaven. 6 verse 2. Bear ye one another's burdens.

[8 : 46] And so fulfill. The law of Christ. The law of Christ. It's love. Isn't it? That's the hallmark of Christ. That's the uniform of Christ. His love. It means we look out for each other.

Christ didn't just talk about love. He demonstrated it. And we know what he did. He washed feet. He forgave enemies. He died for sinners. How can we.

Have that same heart. To bear the burdens of others. To be like our Lord. In such love. It tells Romans 15. 2 to 3.

Let every one of us. Please his neighbour. For his good. To edification. For even Christ. Please not himself. It's telling us here. Make your focus.

Not to please yourself. But to please your neighbour. Not to. Elevate yourself. But to. Build up others. Build up others.

[9 : 44] As Christ. Please not himself. Put others needs first. How can we have that mindset. That heart. Edifying. It's Christ's blueprint.

It's love in action. It's also. A way of readying us. To have that readiness. That preparedness. And. It tells us here. Exalt one another daily. How can we have that regular encouragement.

It's fellowship isn't it. Fellowship. As much as you can. It's maintenance on the soul. And. It's like a repair. A restoring. Where the roof's starting to leak.

You want to keep it maintained. You keep. Patching it. Fixing it. And. Edifying helps us to prepare. For our Lord's return. And as we do this.

We grow towards maturity. It tells us Ephesians 4. Till we all come in the unity of the faith. And of the knowledge of the Son of God. Unto a perfect man. In other words. A mature man.

[10 : 41] Unto the measure of the stature. Of the fullness of Christ. We're all growing. Every one of us. Sometimes we've got to take those baby steps. To step outside of the comfort zone.

Like our brother did this morning. Sharing a public word for the first time. In this way. Now we've got to step outside of those comfort zones. Where we tend to just retreat.

And. God wants us to have. The faith that steps out. And. To grow. To be growing.

Ultimately to the measure of the stature. Of the fullness of Christ. To be more like our Lord. That's the goal isn't it. That we be a people who look more like Jesus every day. That Jesus will be seen in you.

And if we fail at this. If we fail at building up. We're going to crumble. Think of a building that's left in disrepair. What a picture that would be.

[11 : 36] Of a church. Where the building isn't happening. It's stalled. There's been a stop work meeting. And. People are not getting on with the job. And.

And. The building. To be an edifying church. An up building church. A church that builds up other people. What does it look like when a church gets that right. Sometimes it's those small acts of kindness.

And connection. It's how we grow as a family. How can we make that happen. How can we be more minded that way. That we don't just come to church for the meeting. And then. It's just a flit in and flit out.

But hey. We take time. Get to know someone today. Get to know each other. Time to connect together. Everyone. Have a psalm. Have a doctrine. Have a revelation. Have an interpretation. A little excited about. Coming at six o'clock tonight. And to get some fellowship. Maybe you'll do a better job than the one. No. Seriously. There's always got to be those technical hitches. It's the video beast fault.

[12 : 34] No. We all do our part. Don't we. And we all. When we all do our part. It all works. And God gets glorified. Even through our mistakes. And our lack. That God gets glorified.

That's what it's all about. Isn't it. That we all bring something. And we're not afraid to fail. Or slip. Or make the errors. If they're carrying a burden. You don't even know about. And there's some people here.

That are carrying some big burdens right now. Do we take the time to care. To share our love. To bear one another's burdens. To share a psalm.

A song. A revelation. To share something. All that we should do. Should be unto edifying. Let all things be done unto edifying. Everything that we do.

We'll have that mindset. When we want to say something. Hey. Is it going to be unto edifying? Let all things be done unto edifying. And we've all got a part to play in the church.

[13 : 30] Everyone brings something. The emphasis here is always building up. Back to our text then. 1 Thessalonians 5.11. Wherefore comfort yourselves together. And edify one another. It's receiving and giving isn't it?

Even as also ye do. God calls us to this mutual comfort. And when tough things happen. We're here for each other. Now this word comfort here. In our text. It means to encourage side by side.

So it's coming alongside. It's getting alongside one another. And how can we do that? Unless we're present. You need to get here. To get together. To get alongside one another.

Comfort yourselves together. So when someone's going through a loss. For example. Like a job cut. Or the doctor's bad news. We'll step in. We'll show up.

We'll get alongside others. There's people that need comfort. And we're here to give it. Amen. Do we want to be a comforter? It's the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The comforter.

[14:27] And he dwells inside of us. So we can get alongside others. And step up. Step in. Show up. The early believers lived this out. You see. What actually helps.

Not hurts. And this is a critical scripture here. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth. But that which is good. So the use of edifying.

So edifying again. That it may minister grace unto the hearers. Let no corrupt communication. The sense of it here. It's rotten stuff. Literally rotten stuff.

Who's ever opened the pantry. Or the fridge. And you smelt those potatoes. Oh. They've been in there a bit too long. Or the whatever fruit you can imagine.

It's the picture of it. This rotten fruit. Oh. Gross. That's the Greek meaning of the word here. Poor. That stinks. That's rotten. Corrupt communication.

[15:22] He says. Don't let it come out of your mouth. That kind of gone off fruit smell. That gossip maybe. That can spread like mould. Criticism that drags everyone down.

Are our words building or bulldozing? Can our words minister grace? Minister grace unto the hearers. And before you speak.

Ask yourself. Before you keep your. Zip the lip till you say it. Will this build or tear down? I'll keep it. I'll keep it shut then. I won't say that.

All right. Because Proverbs tells us that death and life are in the power of the tongue. Isn't it easy to be a critic? I know I'm inclined to be a critic. To think.

Oh. This or that. Are stirring us. How can we have rather that edifying speech? May we speak life. Not death. May our words be like medicine.

[16:20] For others. That bring grace and healing. And strength. Words that support. And encourage. A scripture. An uplift. When you see someone low.

Can we make that effort to check in? To take time? You can make some edification appointments. Whether you can try to catch up with a struggling saint.

And share with them. I know I could do better. We all can. This is for all of us. To check in. Exhort one another daily. When someone's off track.

But you do it gently. And with care. With the object to restore. Brethren. If a man be overtaken in a fault. You which are spiritual. You'll restore such an one. In the spirit of meekness.

Have that heart of humility. It's fixing a broken part. Not smashing it. When someone is at fault. Got to look after ourselves.

[17:19] Make different. But we need each other. That's the edifying church. It's where the strong help the weak. And everybody grows. It tells us. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

In all wisdom. Teaching and admonishing one another. In psalms and hymns. And spiritual songs. Teaching and admonishing one another.

We all can. This is our focus. We want a godly harmony. A blessed. Upbuilding. A unity of the spirit. Rather than trying to.

Win arguments. And that. Glue. The glue of the church. Is love really. Isn't it? That knowledge puffeth up. But charity edifieth.

You see. We can know the bible inside out. But if we're not delivering it with love. It's going to. Fail. Love builds. Charity. Edifier.

[18:17] And everything. No. It's not true. Is it? We're all growing. We're all learning. And if we get knowledge. So knowledgeable. That we're puffed up. The Pharisees had all the doctrine pretty right.

But they had. Their. Attitude very wrong. And we want to be there and learn. And grow together. Where we prioritize people. And this is the bricks and mortar of church life.

Really. Where people can admit their struggles. They can be fallible and fail. There's no shame. We can serve. Without a spotlight. We can encourage one another. We can be.

Real. Let's be that church. Where people leave. Feeling more equipped. That they've been together. Architects. With the plans. You've got the carpenters. Electricians. The painters. They've all got a role. And every one of us. Too in the church of God. We're all God's construction crew. But we've all got different parts to play. In this construction effort. Of building up the church. [19:14] It requires all of us. With all of our different gifts and abilities. And again. Every person matters. It tells about. The body growing. When every part supplies.

Every part. Functions. And we can all get involved. Don't feel like you can't get involved. But you can get involved. Pastors teach.

But you all encourage. You host. You pray. You give. You share. You testify. And when. Things are working right. God's word is going to build us together.

It talks of that. In Acts 20. Paul commends the brethren. To God. To the word of his grace. Which is able to build you up. He says. Or edify you. To give you an inheritance.

Among all of them. Which are sanctified. Paul says. I command you. To the word of God. The word of his grace. Is able to build you up. The more of the word we get. The more we'll be built up.

[20:10] Think of it then. As it were. Tools in your belt. As construction workers today. As part of your induction. To the work site this morning. That you can put these tools.

In your belt. And have them. At hand. Think of the habits we can have. To edify. To build. It's like when we're learning a new skill too. We start small. Sometimes it's going to take time.

To learn these skills. To get these new habits. To have these patterns of thinking. Of acting. To be mindful that our actions can.

Either be constructive. Or destructive. Your words again. Can I say it again. I know I've repeated a few here this morning. But our words matter. It says. Let only a tiny bit of corrupt communication.

Proceed out of your mouth. No it doesn't say that. Let no rotten communication. Let no of that. Oh. Yuck. That stinks. Stuff come out of your mouth. Don't let it happen.

[21:11] Speak rather what's useful for building. And giving grace. Swap criticism. Forgiving praise. Find something to acknowledge others about. Appreciate them.

And before you speak. Ask. Does this help or hurt people? Keep it shut otherwise. All right. And shut down gossip. Sometimes.

Juicy. Juicy gossip. Oh. Yeah. What else did they say? What else did they do? That's human nature. To want to be like that. I know for myself. Rather than to say.

Let's pray about that. Let's pray for them now. Rather than. Go over and over. Hear all the goss. Hear all the dirt. But rather.

Really. Give people something to hold on to. A scripture. Even if it's just a scripture you can share. The words of scripture are the best words. Aren't they? They can give hope.

[22:09] And if you know of a friend that's stressed. You could say for example. Philippians 4. 6. 3. 7. I've got words. It's word of God. Isn't it? Pleasant words. Like a honeycomb.

Sweet to the soul. Health to the bones. There's no sweeter words. Than these words. Amen.

Sweeter than honeycomb. Amen. The word of God. Don't you want that?

To share that? That's our union to us. To get on the soil. Oh right. Yeah. Amen. Let's be construction workers. Have those pleasant words. Those words of God.

Words are like a honeycomb. And to restore. To encourage. God has not called us to be critics. Inspection. Beyond words. Words aren't really enough.

We should show our love. As we said. Bearing burdens. It's the law of Christ. If we find a need. Lift the load. Take time.

[23:04] Use your gifts. Romans 12. Are you good at teaching? Tutor a younger one. Are you handy? Fix the widow's leaky tab. Are you a giver? Help with the bill anonymously.

When you're wronged. Forgive. And do it fast. And don't let it fester. There's practical things. Spiritually we can do. Practically do. And be present.

You can't build what you don't see. So Hebrews 10.25. Of course. Don't skip gathering. Exhort each other. How can we exhort one another if we're not here?

So especially as the end nears. As you see the day approaching. It's all the better. You know the next opportunity. For the building crew.

Is 6pm tonight. There's opportunities. For the getting together. To do more construction work. To get together as God's people. The every opportunity that we can.

[24 : 00] Don't miss it. You could miss a blessing. So show up consistently. Take time to attend church groups. Events. And what can we do to be a constructive Christian?

Arrive early to chat. Sometimes the fellowship is not the meeting. It's either side of the meeting. Isn't it? Come early to chat. Stay late to connect. Take the time.

Make the time. To touch base with others. It's how we can. Edify one another. And pray for one another too. Guard your attitude. It underpins everything.

Philippians 2. 3 through 4. We see humility. As the mind of Christ. As the Christ example. Of taking upon him the form of a servant.

Of his humility. It's the mortar that builds that unity together. Isn't it? We're not elevate Lord before my mouth. Keep the doors of my lips. Better not say it.

[24 : 58] Than it be destructive. Be destructive. If it's constructive. Say it. Say it. And love like 1 Corinthians 13.

Love is patient. Love is kind. It's not easily angered. Hey. Just chill out. And love one another. Pray as you go. It powers the work.

James 5.16 says pray. For one another. That's a good way of edifying. Isn't it? The people we're praying for. We probably want the best for them. We want to see them grow.

We want to see them learn. We want to see them be blessed. Pray as you go. And building up yourselves on your most holy faith. Praying in the Holy Ghost. Pray through.

Pray believing. Pray spiritually pray. Building up yourselves. Build up yourselves. Then you can build up others too. And you receive and you give that building.

[25 : 59] This construction site that is the church. It's for every one of us. We can put our high vis on. We can believe God to grow this fellowship.

We can be workers that get on with each other and get the job done. And we can grow. And the body functions in love.

Ephesians 4.16. How will we know if we're getting all of this right? By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one to another.

Again, let's put that love into action. Think how can we be a more loving church? And let's aim for truth with grace. And have serving hearts.

Let's have those efforts that are united. Let's have a heart for growth. Sometimes the construction can't go ahead because someone's not here.

[26 : 56] And the work stops. We've all got to be turning up. All hands on deck. We've all got a responsibility to build this church. As God himself, our Lord, is the master builder.

We're all part of this crew. This construction crew. So let's look out for those things that can hinder gossip, division, selfishness, pride.

When we fail to edify, there's going to be fights, fatigue, fruitlessness. It's going to hinder the work of God.

Let's rather forgive, serve, pray harder. Think of it, brothers and sisters, that really our Lord Jesus is the... There was times he corrected, but it was gently and with grace.

Think of our Lord, what he's done for us. Let's give a word, a deed, a showing up. Let's be the crew, the construction crew that builds the church.

[28 : 06] Let us pray. Father, we've costed you to do so. We've placed our faith in that, that you have done. Lord, help us to see the grace you extend, to be such a people that we can be part of the building work.

Lord, we know that you will build your church, Lord, to grow and be glorified in every heart. Lord, help us to do our part, to contribute, to participate, to engage our gifts, Lord, to your glory, that you will get all the praise in Jesus' name.

Amen. And may we be that church known for building, not tearing down. You are God's construction crew. So get your high-vis on, grab your tools and go and build.

Amen. God bless you. Amen. Amen.