

Be a Builder - Edify

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[0:00] Ephesians 4 and verse 11 through 12. Ephesians 4 verses 11 through 12. It says, 'And he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Let us pray. Heavenly Father we thank you that we can come because of your mercy we can come. Because of your truth we can come. Because of your blood. Because of your open arms extended to each of us today. We can come to you and we can find that great joy and peace and welcome, that understanding that we need, that help that we need, that mercy that we need all the time. In time of need it's really all the time because we need you all the time Lord.'

And I need you Lord as I preach and I pray your people will call out and have ears to hear that they might be receptive to what you want us to hear Lord. Not so much what I want to say but what you want heard. That your Holy Spirit would be working in us and through us ministering by your words to each life and heart. That you would be glorified in each one. In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Amen. You go to some ministries for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. The edifying of the body of Christ.

My message today is being a builder. Being a builder. I know I've got a hard hat lying around somewhere and I was going to put it on at this stage as a bit of a visual picture. What a builder is. A construction worker. A brickies labourer. Someone who's in the construction industry. We've got some people in the construction industry here today. And they're builders. People who've got builders licenses or used to have. And the Word of God says that each of us should be a builder. God says that each of us has a role to play, to be a builder, to edify, to build up, to build up the body of Christ.

[2:24] Some people think it's the apostles and prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers who are the ones who are the building up of the body of Christ. But no. It says that the ministry is for the perfecting of the saints and it's then for the saints, for the saints, for the people of God, for God's people to have that work of the ministry. It's for all of us for the edifying of the body of Christ. Now edify means to build, to build a house, to build a house. God's building program is His church. Not a physical structure but a body of people, a group of people, God's people. And you and I, you and I are meant to be building up the body of Christ, the church. So we're going to look at three things. The why, the who and the how. Why build the church? Why build the church? Because the church is important. The church is important to God. How important is it? Look at the incredible cost. What He paid for it. He gave Himself for His church. The Lord Jesus, it says He became poor for our sakes. In Matthew 8 verse 20, Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. He didn't have a home.

He sacrificed His power and glory, Heaven's splendor. He left to come to earth's condition, to come to this earth, this world, to die on a cruel cross for man's sin. He came not only leaving the glory of heaven, but paid that awesome purchase price of His very blood. And He is the very builder of the spiritual house. The one who was homeless is the builder of His spiritual house, His own people. And He lives now in this spiritual building that in this spiritual building that is His church, His body, a people. Because the church is not a physical building, but it is a spiritual house. The headquarters of the church, you know some church denominations that have headquarters, we used to be in

London, the headquarters were in Melbourne.

But the headquarters of the church are not in Melbourne, not in London, not in Rome, or any other place on this planet. But the headquarters of His church are Heaven. Heaven is the headquarters and the head is Him, Christ, not some human person, not some man that they have some secret meetings and secret ballots and blow some smoke into the air.

And it's about Jesus Christ as the head of the church. And it's about Jesus Christ as the head of the church. No human man, no human being. And the church is important to God. It's vital. It's vital in His purpose and plan. It's important in His divine plan. His divine organisation is the church. It's not some human made concept. And it's important to God. So important that we must not neglect the church.

Or cause it any hurt. The church is God's idea. Not man's idea. It's God's idea and it's for our benefit. He has designed it. He has designed it that they are building up of the saints.

[6:12] That His people will grow and mature and they'll help others to grow. And it will extend and increase as new believers are added to it. The church will grow. The church will grow. The church will grow. The church will grow for His glory. And the saints will be edified and edified one another.

When? When God has His rightful place. When God has the rightful place. When it gets built up and strong and reaches out. When God has the rightful place. When God has the rightful place. When God has the rightful place.

When God has the rightful place. When God has the rightful place. When God has the rightful place. as workers together with God. Workers together with God as Yoke Fellows, as co-workers, as sharing together with God in that wonderful work of building the church.

All of us have a part to play, like we talked about of recent times of Nehemiah. One next to another, next to another, next to another. Everyone playing a part.

Likewise too in the church, the spiritual church of God, every one of you and I have a part to play in the building program. Each and every person in God's church has a role to play.

[7:45] And so it's important that not one is bearing more than his fair load. And that can happen. People can get exhausted. People can get burnt out.

And we want to address that. I think it's important, it's needful that we are mindful of that, that we share the load. Share the load, brothers and sisters. Let's not overload one or another.

Let's share the load. It's very important. Now let's look at some of the features of this building and how we can all play a part. In Ephesians 2, verse 19. Turn with me to Ephesians 2 and verse 19. Tells us more about who are the builders. It says there from verse 19 of Ephesians 2, it says, Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord.

So, friends, it's saying there there's a foundation. It's laid by the apostles and prophets. So it's not something that we need apostles and prophets laying today because it's already been laid.

[9:04] It's that foundation. Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. The purpose being that it will grow and it will be framed into a holy temple in the Lord.

So how are you going to be a builder? How are you going to be a builder? The Bible says you are a builder. You are a builder. So let's take a look at the builder's toolkit that each of us ought to use.

How are we to build? Here's some building advice for budding builders here today. Building advice. I know my wife and I, our first home, was living in a semi-detached double unit housing trust house, and we were blessed to be able to rent a house from the housing trust.

And when the time came that we sought to have a place of our own, we went and saw a builder, and we got the cheapest thing we could buy. We got this building that we wanted to buy.

We had to be in quite a budget because it was quite a limited income, but we were able to scrape together enough to get a deposit and to build a building, a house of our own.

[10:13] And we designed it just how we liked it, you know, just some modifications of the plan, and we had a house that we could count our own. And so as time went by, I went to visit this house over at Burton as

it was getting built, and the timber frame went up on top of the concrete slab, and then ultimately the bricks and the mortar and the concrete around and the walls and so on.

And then we could walk in and turn the key, and it was our home. And friends, it's a picture of the church, isn't it? It's a building in progress.

It's a construction project. You know, it's like I've seen a bumper sticker, I'm a Christian under construction. You know, God hasn't finished with me yet. And that's the same for all of us, isn't it? You know, the minute we think we've arrived is when we get knocked on our faces, because, you know, he that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall.

None of us need or oughtn't to get so prideful that we think we've arrived, but that we're always under construction. So three things to do in this builder's toolkit that we need.

[11:26] And number one, how we are to build, build with your faith. Build with your faith. Build your life in faith on Christ. On faith in Christ.

Christ is the cornerstone. He is the vital component, the cornerstone, that pivotal starting point, that central point, that foundation stone, Christ and faith in Him.

That is the core about what we are as a church. And if we miss that, if it's not to His glory, if it's not to His honour, then we're missing the point. You know, it's not about building a crowd of people in some kind of just gimmicks and gadgets and marketing of men.

You know, pulling a crowd by putting on a circus show or some kind of glitzy performance or having some names in lights or some crowd drawer type methodologies.

Christ is the core. Christ is the core. And everything must be centred upon Him. He is the starting point. He is the cornerstone.

[12:38] And it is to His glory. That is the fundamental that should dictate how our church services are run. That it is to His glory and to His honour.

And so build with your faith in Christ, with faith and fellowship, to glorify Him, to glorify His name, to build on that solid foundation that everything else then will be strong and honouring to Him.

And so that's why, God willing, as a church, our youth program is founded not upon games and gimmicks and, you know, whatever the latest jazzy thing is, but it's founded upon the foundation of God's truth.

And I've heard some of the material that is being given to our young people is strong, biblical, Christ-centred, Christ-honouring material. Likewise in our Sunday school.

Likewise with our choir. With all of the aspects of our church. That it is Christ-centred and glorifying Christ. That Christ is the foundation stone.

[13:48] And we keep those fundamentals of being true to His Word. And they're not, again, there's a danger when we do such things as honouring as we can unto our Lord, we need to go against pride again.

I was just talking with some friends lately when everything's, you know, down pat and they're saying, oh, we're doing better than everybody before us and we've got it all together. It's pride again.

We need to be humble. So that we're not saying we're better than the church down the road because of who we are or why we're doing certain things. But that at all times it's honouring to Christ and to our Lord.

It's only by His mercy and grace and His truth that we can be thankful and be completely absorbed with what is honouring unto Him. that it be a holy temple unto the Lord.

Ephesians 2, 21. And God's church will be filled with His Holy Spirit. His Holy Spirit. Notice that. There's lots of talk about the Holy Spirit but sometimes they miss the holy part.

[14:50] God wants His church to be a holy temple unto the Lord. Not holier than thou, nose in the air and looking down at everybody else but holy because we are separated.

As was referred to earlier, we're separated unto Him. But there's a dividing line. There's a sense of the fear of God and of what would honour Him.

And so Acts 9, 31 reflects that. It says that the churches had rest and were edified, built up. The churches had rest or peace and they were edified.

How? As they were walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit were multiplied. That's Acts 9, 31. So it was a church that was building on biblical faith.

It was Bible based. Acts 20, 32. There's a similar verse talking about building again. Paul says, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace which is able to build you up.

[15:55] I commend you, he says, to the God and to the word of His grace which is able to build you up. It's able to build you up, give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, separated, made holy.

2 Timothy 3, 16. It says that the word of God is able to build us up and make us perfect or complete. It's that sense of completing, of coming together, of a perfecting work that happens, that construction project.

So number one, build with your faith. Have that faith that is solidly biblical faith. Christ-centred faith. Build with your faith. Secondly, build with your words.

Build with your words. Ephesians 4, 29. We must be careful and watch our words. We can resort to the world's words. It's the words of impurity.

The words of gutter language. Or we can choose words that glorify God. In Ephesians 4, 29 it says, Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.

[17:06] There's that word again. Let your words, the words of your mouth, be that which is good to the use of edifying. Words that will be used to edify, to build up.

Let's be that constructive people that the words that we speak will be words that lift. Words that lift when we gather together. The words that are out of our mouths will be words that don't condemn or hurt but words that lift.

That lift others. In Hebrews 10, that sense of, as you see the day approaching, we want to exhort one another all the more. That lifting of the words of our worship.

In 1 Corinthians 14, 26 it talks about, Let all things be done into edifying in the context of spiritual gifts. that the capacities and abilities that God has given to us are not for our own edification but for the edifying of the body.

The edifying of God's people. And house to house they went. In Acts 20, verse 20, there was the sense that there was a getting together, a joining together, a building up.

[18:16] And it wasn't just on the Sunday morning. Let's be edifying Christians. Edifying. Where grace and love and truth can be spoken out of our mouths.

Let's be Christians who are lifters and labourers. Now friends, we can come to church and be selfish. We can come to church and it's all about me and yet, church is about us.

It's about us. It's about the body. When one hurts, we all hurt. We want to care and have that consideration. There's needs here today. There's hurting people here today.

We acknowledge that. But God is here. And there's a brotherly shoulder, a sisterly shoulder that we can lean on. Let's be those Christians that others can lean on from time to time.

We all need that. And show that real character of Christianity in the day by day of our lives. 1

Thessalonians 5.11 it says, Wherefore, comfort yourselves together and edify one another even as also you do.

[19:29] Comfort and edify one another. One another. Notice that. Edify one another. How do we do that? Say something to your neighbour to encourage them.

Show your care. Take time. Check your attitude. Check your attitude. We can say words that are harsh. Words that are thoughtless. Words that are careless.

Words that hurt. Check your attitude, friends today. Check your attitude. Encourage the faint-hearted. The feeble-hearted. Support the weak.

Admonish the disorderly. Be long-suffering to all. 1 Thessalonians 5. Romans 14.11 it says, Follow after the things which make for peace and things wherewith one may edify one another.

Look for those things. Look for those things. Things that you may use to edify one another.

Ephesians 4.15 talks about growing up into him in all things.

[20:28] So friends, think of the words. Are they thoughtful words? Are they words that reflect that you have the mind of Christ? Is that a word

that you would see our Lord saying? Is it a word spoken with compassion? A word spoken with understanding? And this can happen even in church discipline where there is need to say a hard word. A hard word.

Where we can exercise church discipline with the object of restoration. With the object of restoration. With the object of healing. So that when a time may come to bring a correction that the motive behind it is restoration.

And we see that I think it's Titus talks about that kind of thing. That we can restore a brother. And watching yourself lest you also mess up. Now that's the Andrew Craig version.

So we can have that sense where we can try to bring discipline and then we end up worse than them. But the object of discipline is restoration and the sense of it I understand is like a broken bone being put into the correct position.

[21:43] It's the sense of bringing healing and restoration. And so your words matter. Your words matter amongst one another.

And we can't edify one another. We can't obey that scripture by sitting at home watching songs of praise. As much as that might be a blessing sometimes.

Whatever it is that you might listen to or watch. But we've got to get together in order to edify one another. Otherwise we can't obey that scripture can we?

So let's build up one another with our words with our actions lift others and show grace. Edify one another. And someone's pictured it like you'd see in the old fashioned days the gothic arches you know these kind of rounded doorways of these stone buildings and these rounded doorways built from stone they work because every stone was leaning upon another.

That's how you can get a gothic arch because every stone is leaning upon another. And as they lean together they lock together. They lock together and join together.

[22:52] And that's a picture of the church and its strength. As we lean on one another maybe someone might lean on you more than you lean on them sometimes or vice versa. We need that throwing sisters.

We need that edifying one another to build one another up. So use your faith, use your words.

Thirdly, use your giving. Use your giving. I can smell something.

Some of you have got a bit of an odour. I can smell something. Can't you smell that today? You know, if you put your deodorant on. No, I'm being a bit flippant here.

But every one of us has an odour. An odour. We read of that in 2 Corinthians 2 verse 15. You have an odour.

A sweet smelling fragrance, I trust. A sweet smelling fragrance. That's what God wants us to have. Amen? He wants us to be like those sacrifices in the temple.

[23:53] You know, when you walk past someone's house and there's a barbie cooking. You know, I would imagine there would be some of that fragrance in the temple sometimes as the sacrifices were barbecued, as it were.

That there was a fragrance to the worship of God's people. And it says in 2 Corinthians 2 verse 15, for we are unto God a sweet savour or fragrance or odour of Christ.

In them that are saved and in them that perish. You are a fragrance of Christ. He's talking in the context about a giving attitude. The fragrance of sacrifice.

In Philippians 4 verse 18 it says in part an odour of a sweet smell. An odour of a sweet smell. a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.

Now friends, today you can be a rotten egg. You can have the odour of a rotten egg. You know, is there a smell of that rotten egg gas smell?

[24:58] It's not very edifying, is it? Or you can have the smell of a sweet rose. The smell of a sweet rose. Which would you rather be? A rotten egg or a sweet rose?

A rose. You know, someone had to describe our church today. Would they say that we edify one another? I pray that that would be so.

1 Corinthians 14, 26 Let all things be done unto edification. Let all things be done unto edification. Let some things be done?

No. Let all, all, all things be done unto edification. So that everything that we do is meant to be building up other people. We're not putting them down.

As a weightlifter, edifies his arm. Now that's why Brad looks so strong because he's constantly working so hard and those muscles are just so trim, taut and terrific because he's edifying his muscles.

[25:58] You know, he's got that weightlifting gym in his home and he runs around the block five kilometres every morning in his imagination and he edifies his arm. He edifies his arm.

That's how we get strong, brothers and sisters. We work it, we work it, we work it. Edify the arm. It makes us stronger by means of exercise and that strengthening, that building.

That's why, you know, some of the blokes here, look, like they're, you know, got some muscles here, like Brother Stuart, because he's a hard worker. And yet, you know, some people, even, but then it's all muscle with me, you see, it's, you know, some people, they don't seem to show the muscles so much.

But it's all about using that ability that we have. As we use our spiritual abilities, they'll grow stronger, just like our physical abilities grow stronger too.

And so it's by our using the gifts that we have, by our giving, by living our lives as a living sacrifice, as a gift. Every one of you are a gift to the church.

[27:07] You're giving in the person of your life, in tangible ways, but in intangible ways. You're giving in your worship. There's that sweet smell of that sacrifice of your worship, the sacrifice of your lips, giving thanks to his name.

There's that sense of that edifying, let all things be done, to edifying in the worship time. That God has gifted every member, every one of us to give. Every member is gifted.

And every member is responsible to edify, to build up the body with the gifts they have been given. So give yourself, give your time, give your offering, give your spiritual gifts, give of yourself, be a giver.

It's interesting, someone worked out in the Bible apparently 272 times it says believe, 272 times, love, 714 times written in the Bible, love, 714 times, give, 2,162 times, 2,162 times.

And we're not talking necessarily about financial giving, but about giving your life. sacrifice, lay it on the altar.

[28:25] You know, that picture, I surrender all. Be that picture of a living sacrifice. Let your life be a living sacrifice. Let your life be a gift unto him.

It says of giving your singing, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord.

There's so many ways that we can give. So build with your faith. Build with your faith, brothers and sisters. Build with your words.

Watch your words and build with words that are building words and build with your giving. To close, how can we make this live, this message?

How can we make this message live today? The word tells us of growing in grace. In 2 Peter 3 verse 18, growing in grace and knowledge of the truth.

[29:26] Ephesians 4 verse 15, it talks about growing more like Christ, more and more like him, more and more like him. Growing love, Philippians 1 verse 9.

The Bible talks much about growing, not being stagnant and stationary and static, but growing. Now friends, there are some bearing more of the weight than others and they're overloaded.

They're getting whacked out. All of us need to play a part. All of us need to play a part. Step up to the place of service.

Now we have a roster. I don't like to have to write your name on the roster to make you do things and that's not how it is anyway. I know that there's willing workers here, but sometimes we can all take the position of sitting back and not getting involved.

To grow the church, we've all got to play a part to be more effective. And watch with yourself. Ask yourself, am I a destroyer or a builder?

[30:38] Now there's some people that come and they're like a wrecking ball. I've had people like that. I know a young fellow and he's known to

some of us and the one job that he had that he's very good at was demolition.

I think Brother Jim knows who I'm talking about. And he's got an anointing for demolition. He's like a human wrecking ball. And he had this job in a demolition salvage business and he was very good at it.

Now I don't think he didn't last there either. But he had that gift to demolish things. And some Christians are like that. They've got an anointing for criticism and for attacking and such like. We've all got to watch that. I can be like that too. I can be like that too. And let's rather than being a wrecker, be a builder. Find some ways that you can bless that brother or sister who runs you up the wrong way.

That would be a good thing to do, wouldn't it? Find a way to bless somebody. There's hurting people here today. And if you would just take time to talk to some people today, that would be a start, wouldn't it?

[31:50] Take time to talk. And let's build up rather than tear down. Every believer is called to this work. It's not the ones wearing the dog collars or who've got the titles for some kind of position of men or in people's minds that they've got more of a work to do than others.

It's at every part. Ephesians 4 verse 16. How many parts? Every part doing its work. Ephesians 4 verse 16. It's not a clergy and laity thing.

That's unbiblical. It's every part, every part, every believer, every one of us doing our part. In Romans 15, 1 to 2, it says about those, we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves.

We know there's some weak Christians here today. There's some Christians or people who may not yet be Christians who've got some pretty rough edges. And they need correction and instruction and education.

They need to be carefully corrected, lovingly corrected. We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves.

[33:12] And verse 2 of Romans 15, let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. Every one of us please his neighbour for his good to his edification. Again, every one is that common sense here.

Every one of us bear with one another, lift up one another, build up one another, edify one another. Are you going to be a builder this week? Are you? Are you going to be a builder this week? Oh, we've got one. Amen. Are you going to be a builder this week? Yes. Yes. We'll get a report next week on the things that you've done.

The things that you've done, it's true this week ahead. We'll get you to write it down. No. We'll just have it for homework. Have it for homework through this week ahead.

Between you and the Lord. Between you and the Lord. That's your homework. Be a builder. Build. Build in unity.

[34:18] Build in encouragement. Build in faith. 1 Corinthians 8 verse 1 it says love edifies. Love always edifies. It always builds up.

Ask yourself, this is your homework now, ask yourself, can I help someone grow? Can I help a younger Christian know more about God and his truth?

Can I help a stumbling Christian by being a friend? Can I minister to somebody this week? Take time.

Take time. Are you building people up or tearing them down? Watch your words. Your words can either mortify or edify. Mortify means put to death.

You know morticians, they run mortuaries. Your words can mortify, kill, or they can edify. Let's use words that don't mortify, put people to death, but edify, bring them to life, help them to grow and live.

[35:24] Be a blessing with your faith, with your words, with your life, with your giving, with your prayers. Pray for people. Have a prayer list. There's people you can pray for.

You might think when it comes to prayer time, oh I don't know what to pray for. Well there's numbers of names here you can write the names on a list and rattle them off before God. Names

that you can name before the throne of grace.

Names that you can name in prayer. Have a prayer list. Pray for people. You can be a builder. You can be a builder. Let's pray. Heavenly Father we thank you dear Lord that you loved your church and gave yourself for it.

It's important. Your church is not a building of bones, of bricks, of stones, but it is a building of people. Help us Lord to have an eye to the people around us to build others up.

Let love edify, build up, let our faith be built and build others. Let our words be words that build and lift.

[36:34] Let our lives be living sacrifices as we give of ourselves, as living sacrifices, as gifts of ourselves, of gifts, of our lives, of gifts, of your enabling us.

Let us be employed in your kingdom work. Let us be construction workers that you would be glorified. Let us be workers together with you, working with your strength and empowerment for your glory we pray, Lord Jesus.

Amen. Amen.