

Building Walls Of Paths

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[0 : 00] I'm not sure how this is going to work, and so I need your cooperation. Tim, I need your help, so if you'll help me, that would be a help.

And then if you'll all take your Bible and turn to page 100. Let me see where I want you. I want you at Galatians chapter 2, the passage that was read today as the lesson for the day.

I have a special word for all the babies that were baptized this morning, and that is persuade your parents to listen very carefully to this, because this is important if you'd bring that around here.

Now, that's great. Thank you very much. The problem that I have to deal with is that I want to talk to you about Galatians chapter 2, verse 11 to the end.

And some of you are visitors to the church and may be wondering what's going on, but this doesn't usually go on. Some of you are children who usually come up to the front, and I would be grateful if you would come up to the front and be an encouragement to me by sitting as close as you can to the table on the steps here.

[1 : 11] Would you all do that if we were up here before? Don't be frightened. I am, and you needn't be.

Do come and have a seat, because it's a nice, soft carpet. The only thing is I don't want to have anybody sitting right down there, sort of sit to one side or the other.

And if some of you want to sit with your backs to the front, that's all right, too. But it's nice to have you. And in order to help preach this sermon this morning, I brought along some bricks.

And somebody thought I was going to throw them, but I'm not, even though you may feel like that's what's happening. That's not really what I'm doing.

I want a great big pile of bricks, because that's sort of what happens to it. You see, the reason I don't want you too close to the front is in case one of the bricks falls.

[2 : 16] And we have this great big pile of bricks. We're looking at Galatians chapter 2. We have a wide range of ages in the congregation that I want you all to pay very close attention.

And I want at the end of the time to have explained to you what Galatians 2 is all about. And this is how I propose to do it.

If you look at verse 18, you'll get the cue for what I'm talking about. When Paul says, in chapter 2, verse 18, If I build up again those things which I tore down...

I'll stop there. If I build up again those things which I tore down... Would you all say that with me so that you know exactly what I'm talking about?

If I build up again those things which I tore down... Were you there? Try once again. If I build up again those things which I tore down...

[3 : 22] Well, what happened was... And this is a story... It's sort of like understanding Galatians chapter 2... Is like arriving at one of the highest pinnacles in the whole of the New Testament.

Way up there. And the trouble with me this morning is that I'm starting from about the lowest place in man's imagination. And I have about 12 minutes to get to the top of the mountain.

So you're going to have to follow me very closely. Now what happens way down in the valley is there's a man comes along... And he says, well here I am on a brand new world...

And what am I going to do with it? And he doesn't know what to do with it. And he says, even if I was going to do it... What would I do it with? And all he can see is a pile of bricks.

And so he looks at the bricks and he says... Now, what's that for? What am I going to do with it? He doesn't know.

[4 : 31] Well, he decides he'll get another brick and see what he could do with it. And he sees what happens and whether it fits together. But then he realizes that one of the good things you could do with bricks is build a wall.

And then he would be safe from everybody. No wild animals could get him. He could protect himself from anybody. So what he decided he was all about was building walls.

And he took bricks and he started to build a wall. And then he could live behind the wall. And he would be free so that nobody could attack him.

Nobody could sneak through and murder him or his family. And nobody could steal from him. And he could keep everything that belonged to him. And instead of having to live in this great big world, he could create a little world all of his own behind the bricks.

So he did. And that's how he built his civilization. One brick was called school. And another brick was called color.

[5 : 48] I wonder what that means. And another brick was called law. And another brick was called...

I don't know what that says. Do you know what that says? Don't you know what it says? What does it say? You probably come closest to knowing what it says because you can't read.

And people who can read will never guess. What? Primary. No, actually it says language. It's a kind of a short form that nobody would understand.

And here's another very important brick. Do you know what that brick says? What is it? It's a church. Yeah, there's another good brick. You can hide behind that.

Very well indeed. And this brick is called... Can anybody read that? What's that say? Clothes. So you can have nice clothes and hide behind them.

[6 : 52] Sometimes it's handy to hide behind them. It helps keep warm. So... This is just another brick. And... I guess this is just another brick. And...

This is another brick. And... This is another brick. And this brick is... Do you know what it is? Money. So now I have lots of bricks to hide behind. And nobody can get near me. And one of the ways is that I could build the bricks so high, you know, so that eventually I would have a...

Remember what happens if this falls over? It gets higher and higher. And as I get more money and more law and more church and more education and more...

What did I leave out? School. And I decide that my color is better than anybody else's color. Then I bring up a higher and higher wall.

[7 : 54] And I'm safe from everybody. And what happens is as man lived on the earth, he learned to be a builder of walls. And he built bigger and bigger and higher and higher walls that went up and up and up.

And so man became a wall builder. But one time he found out... You know what you can do if you turn that like that? You can look out through it.

See, and I can see all the people out there. And they probably can't see me. So I can look out. But you know what else walls do besides protect you?

Do you know what they do to keep you in prison? What do they do? What? They build... So you won't run away.

They build... They build... Walls. Great big high walls. And then... So what suddenly was discovered was that the very wall which the man built to protect himself was in fact...

[9 : 05] A prison. And he was behind looking out like it was out through bars. And he realized that somehow he didn't think this is what life was all about.

Well then along came another person into the world. And he said... You've got it all wrong. He said...

What you do is you tear down the walls. That's what you're supposed to do. And you put them like that. On the ground. Flat. And you can make them go wherever you want them to go.

So that instead of building walls... Do you know what you're building? You're building a sidewalk. Or a path.

Or something that people can walk along. And so instead of high walls... He said... What you're supposed to use those bricks for...

[10 : 07] Is to build paths. And when you build paths... Then you can go walking along them to wherever you want to go. And places you could never go before...

You now have a path. And you can get people to come and see you. And you can go and see them. And you can go places where you couldn't go before. And that's what a path is for.

But what he didn't realize... Is that there was a whole lot of people... That still thought... That what bricks were for... Were building walls. And so they went back to building walls...

Because they didn't like paths. And they were frightened. Way down inside them... They were afraid. And if you were going to walk along a path... You had to have faith. But if you had not faith... But fear in your heart... Then you'd be a wall builder. And so the whole contest is between...

[11:10] The wall builders and the path builders. And you see... If you used things like the church... To build a path... Instead of to build a wall...

Then the church would be a means of getting to other people... To visit them, wouldn't it? And making friends with them. And they could come and visit you. And you could show your love to them.

So you could use that for that. And you could use school... In order to help understand people... And build new paths. And you could use... What else have we got here?

We always get... You could use clothes... To help you to relate to people... And not to protect yourself from people... And to hide from people. You could do all those things...

With building paths... Instead of building walls. But you see... The wall builders felt that... That was really the most important thing.

[12:10] And that was what life was all about. And they were very angry... With the man who came and said... You should build paths... Not walls.

But nevertheless... Some people admired... The path builder. And they decided... That they were going to go... And build paths too.

And so they started to build paths... And the people who built walls... Built walls beside the paths... So they could throw bricks down...

On the people who were walking along on the path. And so it became very dangerous... To be a path builder. Well...

What happens in our world... Is that people build walls... And they keep building them so high... That finally... They inevitably must fall over...

[13:05] Because when they get high... They get tottery. And as they get more school... And more civilization... And more work... And more law... And more things like that... Finally the old wall begins to wobble.

And then along comes the shock... And shakes the wall... And it falls down. And they say... Well now... Why did that fall down? It was such a nice wall.

And they don't understand... What it all means. Well... They had been taught... That they were to build... Walls...

And they couldn't understand... Why somebody wanted them to build... Paths. But it's the Lord Jesus... That came and taught us to build paths. And he wanted to build a path...

So that we could come right into the presence of God. And he wanted to build us paths... So that we could be friends... With one another. And he wanted to build paths...

[14:02] Between great civilizations... And great languages. And he wanted people to be able... To get at each other... And not to build walls... To hide from... Behind each other.

But the brick makers... And the brick makers... Were so angry at him... That they put him to death. And the wall makers... And the path builders...

Still don't understand each other. And the wall makers... Always fight with the path builders. And so it takes a lot of courage... And a lot of faith... To be a path builder.

And you see... What happens... When a baby comes to be baptized... Is sometimes the parents think... That they're building a wall... Around the baby...

To protect the baby. But they're not really. They're starting the baby out... On a path. And they're going to have the path builder... Teach that baby...

[15:00] How to build paths. And so parents must be very careful... That they recognize... All that. That they are in a world of wall builders...

And they're called to be... Path builders. And to tear down the walls... That we build... And to use the same materials...

Because there's nothing wrong with a brick... It's just as good for a path... As it is for a wall. And they're to build... Paths so they can get to one another. Now boys and girls...

I want you to go back to your parents. And because I want all the parents...

To work hard on... Chapter 2... Of... Galatians. And to use this picture... Of the wall builders... And the path builders...

[16:05] To help interpret it... I want just to give you... A few clues... As to how you interpret it. The Jews... Built a wall...

To separate them from the Gentiles. Jesus came along... And tore the wall down... And taught them how to build... Paths...

So that they could relate... Not only to the Gentiles... But to the barbarians... And all the people of the world. But they didn't like Jesus... For doing that...

So they put him to death... Because they said... Man is a wall builder. And he didn't want them. And they didn't want him...

To change them. And so... Jesus... Called people... To trust him... And to believe in him... And to join him...

[16:57] In the work of the kingdom of God... Which is to build... Paths... Not to build... Walls. And people found... That by doing that...

They were going against... Everything that men believed... About themselves. Men believed they were meant... To hide behind walls. And the fear that was in their heart...

Expressed itself... In building walls... To protect themselves... From one another. But then what happened... And what's written up in... Galatians chapter 2...

Is Peter had been called to be... The head... Path builder. And Paul... Caught him... Going back to build...

Walls. And he said... Peter... You can't do it. It's no more walls. And he publicly...

[17:57] Embarrassed Peter... As was read for us... In the lesson today. And we too...

Sometimes... Use our church... And our faith... And our religion...

To create a wall... To hide from people. And to think... That we on the inside... Are so much better... Than the people on the outside. But that's not what Jesus...

Taught us to do. He taught us to build... Paths. You live in a world... Where wall builders... Are admired...

And path builders... Are despised. And that's why... Paul said in this chapter... I am crucified...

With Christ. But then he went on... To say... Because... He was subjected... To the... Public humiliation...

[18:53] And the scandal... Of doing something... That people in his world... Thought he shouldn't do. And that is... Build paths. But Jesus... Had broken down the wall...

And Paul certainly... Wasn't going to start... To build another one. And we... If we are followers of Jesus... And are being taught by him... We're not to hide behind walls...

But to use all that God has given us... To build paths... So that we... And all whom we know and love... May come... Into the presence of God.

Fear... Fear... Essentially... Builds... Walls. And Jesus has called us... To faith. And faith...

Builds... Paths. And the chapter ends... That Jesus is not... A wall... Protecting us from God.

[19:53] But when he says... I am the way... He means that... We use him... As the path builder...

And as the path. And he brings us...

Into the presence of God... Where we don't... Fear... The wrath of God... That makes us... Build our walls higher.

But we have faith... In the grace of God... Which allows us... To go out... On the paths... Further... In reaching out... To one another...

With the love... That Jesus has taught us. So I hope... Paths and walls... Will help you... To understand... All that Paul...

Is teaching us... About what lies... At the heart... Of the Christian faith... And which has been... So eloquently... Presented to us... In this...

[20:49] Last part... Of Paul's... Second letter... To the Galatians... Amen... Our offertory hymn...

Is a lovely hymn... Number 725... In which we're called... Verse by verse... To consider... The Lord Jesus... From birth... To resurrection...

And ascension... And to rejoice... And to crown him... Our Lord... In other words... To follow him... In making paths... Who is in...

Yonder stall... At whose feet... The shepherds fall... Tis the Lord... In 725... In 725... In 725... In 725...

In 725... Over ■■■■■■■■... Is a wonderful son... Forever... In 825... To reach ahead... In 826... Where may the fundamental things... In 825...

[21 : 50] In 825... In 927... In 818... Toroy... To tenir... In 9üh Woop... To■■■■... In 925... In 929...
llong Cup... To ■■■■ plan... Yeah... Bye. noch... Thank you.
Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[25 : 06] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

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