

Building His House

(Loving Community)

What is God's house?

*Exodus 25:8 (nlt) "Have the people of Israel build me a **holy sanctuary** so I can live among them."*

*1 Kings 8:10-13 (nlt) "When the priests came out of the Holy Place, a thick cloud filled the **Temple of the Lord**. The priests could not continue their service because of the cloud, for the glorious presence of the Lord filled the **Temple of the Lord**."*

OT: A physical place where God dwells

*1 Corinthians 3:16 (nlt) "Don't you realize that all of you together are the **temple** of God and that the **Spirit of God** lives in you?"*

*Ephesians 2:20-22 (nlt) "Together, we are **his house**, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, **becoming a holy temple** for the Lord. Through him you Gentiles are also **being made part of this dwelling** where God lives by his Spirit."*

NT: A spiritual space where God dwells

Matthew 16:16-19 (nlt) *Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17 Jesus replied, “You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. 18 Now I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.*

Jesus is making it clear to Peter that the very foundation of God’s house is built upon who Jesus is AND it is Jesus Himself who builds His church.

1 Corinthians 3:5-9 (nlt) *After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God’s servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. 6 I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. 7 It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. 9 For we are both God’s workers. And you are God’s field. You are God’s building.*

It is **not us** who build God’s house. We merely partner with Him in the construction process.

In God's house, there are clear priorities:

1. Love God.
2. Love others

Matthew 22:37-40 (nlt) “Jesus replied, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.””

1: Accept Each Other

Romans 14:1-2, 6-8, 13 (nlt) Accept other believers who are weak in faith, and don't argue with them about what they think is right or wrong. 2 For instance, one person believes it's all right to eat anything. But another believer with a sensitive conscience will eat only vegetables.... 6 Those who worship the Lord on a special day do it to honor him. Those who eat any kind of food do so to honor the Lord, since they give thanks to God before eating. And those who refuse to eat certain foods also want to please the Lord and give thanks to God. 7 For we don't live for ourselves or die for ourselves. 8 If we live, it's to honor the Lord. And if we die, it's to honor the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

We have a tendency to look down on people who do not do things the same way we do things

because we often think our way is the best way.

Entering God's house means that we **set aside what we think is right and adopt what God says is right.**

Being a loving community isn't about changing people to fit a mold, it is about **pointing them to Christ and supporting and encouraging them as God continues to work and transform them on the inside.**

Romans 12:2 (nlt) Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

God and His word should be the **primary transformative power in the life of the believer.**

2: Aim for Harmony

Harmony is the lubricant we need to be able to live in close proximity with each other every day.

Romans 14:17-19 (nlt) For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 If you

serve Christ with this attitude, you will please God, and others will approve of you, too. 19 So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up.

For the construction process to commence in building a loving community, **harmony must be a top priority** in our hearts.

One notable adversary to harmony is the inability to handle being wronged by others.

Psalms 145:9 (nlt) “The Lord is good to everyone. He showers compassion on all his creation.”

There is not one person that God does not desire to show His love, grace and mercy to.

1 Corinthians 6:6-8 (nlt) But instead, one believer sues another - right in front of unbelievers! 7 Even to have such lawsuits with one another is a defeat for you. Why not just accept the injustice and leave it at that? Why not let yourselves be cheated? 8 Instead, you yourselves are the ones who do wrong and cheat even your fellow believers.

The world doesn't need to be fair for you to be able to exercise **love, forgiveness, grace and understanding to others.**

3: Carry the Cost of Others

Romans 15:25-28 (nlt) But before I come, I must go to Jerusalem to take a gift to the believers there. 26 For you see, the believers in Macedonia and Achaia have eagerly taken up an offering for the poor among the believers in Jerusalem. 27 They were glad to do this because they feel they owe a real debt to them. Since the Gentiles received the spiritual blessings of the Good News from the believers in Jerusalem, they feel the least they can do in return is to help them financially. 28 As soon as I have delivered this money and completed this good deed of theirs, I will come to see you on my way to Spain.

Macedonia and Achaia: Generous financially
Jerusalem: Generous is sharing the Good News

As believers we should desire a heart that wants to carry the cost of others.

*Ephesians 2:8 (nlt) God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a **gift** from God.*

Gift = *dóron*. Meaning: a gift, present, a sacrifice.

For salvation to be possible, **God did something that actually cost Him something.**

SUMMARY

To build God's House (a loving community)

- *Accept each other*
- *Aim for Harmony*
- *Carry the cost of others*