

# Building a House of Rest & Prayer

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## Introduction: God Is Building His House

God is building his house. Right? That's what Jesus said in Matthew 16 when he appointed Peter as his um as the pioneer leader. All right? Um and and his disciples when the church was built on the day of Pentecost Jesus said, "I will build my church." And the church ecclesiasta, he could have said, "I will build my sons and daughters or I will build my kingdom." But he used the word church. And church really implies community. Not just any kind of community, but a generational community.

## The Pattern: Heaven as Father's House

Because the pattern for what God is doing on earth is actually heaven. Right? That's why the Lord's prayer is on earth as it is in heaven. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And it's not just about his kingdom on earth, but also also the house he's building cuz Jesus called heaven his father's house and so he started with man and woman Adam and Eve and he gave them a child who have children and children not just to populate the earth but to multiply families right because the word family means father's house which began in heaven because God is a father we call him our father and so if heaven is father's house it's a family like on earth right but because of sin the sin of Adam, many families have been broken.

## The Need for the Church as a Family of Faith

Um, many have been raised in non-Christian families or had uh crisis and trauma and tragedies and broken families. And so, it's so important. This highlights the need for the church as a family of faith where everybody can be part of a household of faith because not everybody has a healthy saved family. Not everybody has both dad and mom. Not everybody has families that are what they should be that are healthy. Many are abusive, toxic, uh have caused more hurt than than blessing.

And so Jesus said, "Look, I want to build something that everybody can be part of a house of faith. Everybody can have a spiritual mom, dad, parents, brothers, sisters." That's why we

often call fellow believers. You know, hey, my brother in Christ, my sister in Christ. In fact, this is where the denominations like the Anglicans and the Catholics call the leader father, Padre. In fact, the word pope also comes from the root papa of father, right? to remind us that the church is relational. So Christianity is not supposed to be a religious ritual or routine or institution. We're not called to be a religious institution. We're called to be a family of faith where we are relational. You don't just come everyone comes in and goes back and we don't have contact. No, it's a family.

## Building by the Lord vs. Vain Labor

Right? So Jesus said in Psalm 127:1, unless the Lord builds the house, well Jesus didn't say David wrote that in the book of Psalms. Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build which means not every house is built by God. And sad to say that many houses that are built are not built by the Lord. But many assume that well if that's what church is, I want nothing to do with it. They don't realize that that's not what it's meant to be. Right? And so it's so important that we don't stop eating apples because we've tried one rotten apple. You try something else. And there's no perfect church on earth. But we need to know what we God wants us to be so we can move towards that.

## Health vs. Outward Success

Right? And the thing is many times many churches have replaced health with success or an outward appearance of success. And you know it's possible to look successful and not be healthy. So remember when as a young boy they used to advertise cigarette companies in the movies when you go watch a film before the film starts they'll be advertising cigarettes you know and there's this famous company Malbor the Malbor man and he looks very tough and strong and rugged and he's advertising the cigarettes looks very strong but guess what you take an extra of his lungs not very healthy probably be black. All right.

And so you can have companies in the world, secular companies that are very successful, but they have a very unhealthy corporate culture, work culture, what some may call a toxic work culture, right? Where everyone steps on everybody to get to the top. It's like everyone fighting for themselves. And yet they can be successful. And sometimes I have to say sometimes organizations labeled as Christian or church or ministry can become like that because you don't need to be a Christian to do great things, right? You don't need to be safe to go to the moon, to build a plane, to rockets. You can do a lot in your own strength, but it won't have any eternal value. And so God is saying, the Lord is saying, look, unless the Lord builds the house, the labor main who build it.

## We Are the House: Living Stones

So what is the house that God is looking for and the house is you and me, we are the living stones as we heard last week, right? So the house is how God builds us together in

relationship with each other. Okay? Christianity is not meant to be in isolation, right? Jesus was never in isolation. He was always with the crowds, with the people, with the multitudes. He would withdraw for a short while to pray but he would come back to the people right he didn't stay in isolation and say don't disturb me I'm holy you know leave me alone so I can be at peace he was always walking with all kinds of people right.

## Characteristics of God's House: Rest and Peace

So the word of God gives us a clue as to what house God is looking for in Isaiah 66 verse one it says thus says the Lord heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool where is the house that you will build me and where is the place of my rest. So God is looking for a people that will be at rest. So his spirit, his presence can rest upon us. Peace is crucial to what God is building, a house of rest. You know interesting that what defines a house from any other place is your bed, right? You can stay all day out of your house doing whatever in a restaurant, in a cafe, in your office, but at the end of the day, you go home to sleep, right? Home is where the bed is. Right? Because not everyone has a family to go back to, but you go back to sleep because hopefully you don't sleep in your office, right?

## The Pillow as a Symbol of God's House

So rest defines a house. And sometimes, no matter what you're going through in life, there's no place you get home, okay, you're at rest, you're at peace, you can put aside all the stress outside the house, especially when you're young, maybe you're a student, you got family in the house, and it's a good atmosphere. So God even that's a picture of heaven because one of the names of Jesus is Jehovah Shalom, the Lord our peace. And you know this In the very first mention of the house of God in Genesis 28, the first time in the Bible you see house of God mentioned. Guess what it's represented by or defined by? Not a cross, not a fish. Now you get some of you may get shocked when I say what what represents the house of God a pillow. Yes, pillow. You put your head and sleep.

You don't believe me? I'll read the few verses. Genesis 28. This is when Jacob was asleep under a tree at night. He was kind of afraid of his brother Esau. And it says In Genesis 28:11, he came to a certain place and stayed there all night because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it under his head and lay down at a place to sleep. Come down 7:18. Then Jacob rose early in the morning. He took the stone that he had put at his head. He set it up as a pillar and poured oil on it. Come down verse 22 and it says, "And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house. And all of and all that you give me, I will give a tent to you. So the stone, the pillow, the place of rest represents the house of God. See the house that God is building, you and me, your family, your house, you as an individual is meant to be a person at peace, at rest, no matter what is happening around us. And that's the difference between what God is building and what he's not.

## Peace from Presence, Not Circumstances

Cuz if God if God is not building you and me, often times our peace comes from our circumstances, right? That's where we we get the word happy from from happenings. When happenings are going well, we're happy. When when circumstances not so good, we're not so happy. But it's possible to experience the peace and joy in the midst of chaos. It's possible because God, the design of God to make us is that we get it from the awareness of his presence, he being in us and with us and upon us and not having per perfect circumstances because none of us will have perfect circumstances. There will always be something in our lives around us to rob your peace, to rob your joy, to get you upset, offended, afraid, fearful. So God wants us to be a house of rest. He wants build this to be a house of rest, right?

## Proclaiming Peace

And and we see this in Luke chapter 10, okay? When when he sent the disciples two by two, what did he tell them to do when they enter a home? Luke 10:5. He said, "Whatever house you enter, first say peace to this house." That's what the disciples were asked to say when they entered the home. And that's what Today the Middle East easterners the Jews the the those from Palestine area even the Muslims how do they greet one another peace be with you it comes from here it originates from the prince of peace that's what started with that's the first blessing cuz that's the foundation of everything else because we're not at peace we'll be in pieces a mind a heart a spirit not at peace we will be in pieces and that's why people are trying to replace that go God-shaped void with so many other things to try to find peace. Whether it's being workaholics, whether it's turning to alcohol or or whatever it is, some addiction, it's like to try and distract themselves from their lack of peace.

## The Dove and Olive Branch

But just as as uh Noah, remember what he did when the the rain dried up? How did he find out whether it was safe to leave? He released a dove. Now, before he released the dove, he released the raven that well, I think it came back, right? There was couldn't settle anywhere. But the second time the dove was released, it came back with an olive branch. And that today is the universal sign, universal sign of peace, right? The dove with the olive branch in his mouth coming from Noah in the ark, right? So, we're going to find out later on why peace is so important. But that's should mark you and me, the house that God is building. God expects and wants us to be at peace. Not because everything is going good, everything is fine, we have no problems, no, but because we're in right relationship with him. because we're experiencing his supernatural peace, right?

## Characteristics of God's House: Prayer

So God wants to build a house of peace and he wants to build us make us a house of prayer. So you can't separate the two to experience God's presence to experience his peace and his

joy which is twothirds of his kingdom. Right? The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy. We need to be a people of prayer. Right? This is what Jesus said when he remember Palm Sunday. He rode the donkey. He went to the the temple and he saw that the money changes and all kinds of um illegal business going on kind of, you know, not being very honest. And he said in Mark 11:17, he said, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you have made it a den of thieves."

## Prayer for All Nations: Unity in Diversity

So God has called us, you and me, to be a house of prayer for all nations. In other words, not just for people just like us. God is into diversity. Unity really is built on diversity. Unity is not the same as uniformity. which is based on conformity, right? It's amazing that we can have all wear such different clothing and look great. Thank God we don't have to wear uniform to church. Some have to wear uniforms to work, right? But there's create there's this there's be beauty in harmony and the essence of harmony is diversity. A rainbow is so pretty because you're different colors in the right place. Music is beautiful. The right instrument playing at the right time. Food is delicious with different ingredients, the right quantity, the right ingredients. Right? So the key is in the right order in the right quantity in the right timing. So beauty is really the essence is diversity, unity of diversity.

And that's why God has made us all different. Thank God there's only one of you. Even identical twins have different thumb prints. You realize that you can look, you can be an identical twin and your thumb prints are not the same. You're all unique and that shows your value. Value is in your uniqueness, right? The more copies there are something, the cheaper it becomes, right? You want to buy cheap clothes, you find 10 on the rack. Exactly the same. You want expensive clothes, one of a kind. Go to a boutique high-end store, there's only one or two of that particular outfit. Right? So, your value is in your uniqueness. And we've all been made in the image of God. Right? So, he says, "Look, my house shall be called a house of prayer for all kinds of people, not just the people who look and sound like you, who speak like you." His the his heart is for all. In fact, when the church was birthed in the day of Pentecost, 3,000 came from different nations, different languages, right?

## Why Prayer Is Essential: Dependence on God

So why why is prayer so important? You know, God could have said my house should be called a house of love and love is important. He could have said, "My house shall be called a house of power and power is important." Could have said, "My house should be called a house of evangelism or or training, whatever." It's all good. But here's the thing. Jesus said, "My house will be called a house of prayer." Because the prayer is the foundation of everything. And people say, "Well, if God is love and God is good, why must we pray? He knows what I need. Why why should we bother praying? He should just give me what I need." No. You know why we need to pray not because God doesn't love us or is not loved because prayer reveals two things when you pray you are acknowledging we are acknowledging that

we have a need that only he can meet number one number two when we pray we're saying God I believe that you are willing and able to come through right so prayer really reveals our dependence upon God the person who does not pray is basically saying by his lack of prayer God I don't need you I'm fine without you I can do things myself I'm smart enough my have enough gifts and talents and abilities. That's what we communicate when we don't pray. Right?

So prayer makes sure reminds us that we are not standing on our own strengths but on his on him. I think God because you notice when Jesus ministered on earth he did not pray or heal or deliver anyone who basically did not ask him to do it and he never turned anyone down. But they had to initiate Lord help me. Why? Because it takes humility technology you have a need and it takes faith to believe that he can meet the need. So prayer reveals because not everybody's willing to acknowledge they have a need. They're too proud to say I have a need. Right? It's like no I'm fine. I'm okay. I don't need God. I don't need anything. And secondly, even if you acknowledge a need, it takes humility to acknowledge that only Jesus can do what no man can. Doctors can treat symptoms and manage symptoms, but only Jesus is a great physician who heals the root. And many times physical ailments are outward symptom of a spiritual root. Right? So some all medicine basically does is to make sure you stay comfortable with your condition. Right? It may heal temporary. We don't know. Sometimes it's in remission whatever it is. But Jesus is the healer, the physician. Because he made us. He created us. Right? And because of sin, we have all the problems and sicknesses that there are in the world. But that's why one of the reasons Jesus died on the cross, rose again, not just to give us eternal life, but so we can be healed. Because it is written by his stripes that he was whipped on his back. He took the punishment for for our peace to be healthy. Right? So God wants us to be a house of prayer because it it tells them that we are dependent upon him.

## Personal vs. Corporate Prayer

So every church, every believer needs to root, needs to to make their foundation prayer. So every morning, morning and evening is the best time of the day. Why? Every morning they're saying how are we going to come to this? There's two things that God tells us to do all the times. Pray. But before prayer, there's something else that and it goes hand in hand. But what does it mean to be a house of prayer? It's like don't just pray by yourself. Pray with somebody else. Pray with others. And these are the two blessings of prayer. We have personal prayer. Jesus said in Matthew 6, go to the secret place and pray in secret. Your God who sees your prayer in secret will reward you openly. But then in Matthew 18, he says when two or three come together. So you have family prayer, corporate prayer. And there's a different blessing of each.

You know on the day of Pentecost, there were 120 who were gathered together. 10 days when Jesus was about to go up to heaven, he didn't say, "I want all of you to wait in your own house and get filled in your own house." No, each one was filled by the Holy Spirit, not by themselves in their house, but together. A personal blessing was released as they prayed



together. So many times corporate prayer leads to corporate blessing. Personal prayer sometimes for personal transformation, but there is the place for both. Right? In Matthew 18, Jesus says, "If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that ask it will be done for them by my father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of us. That's one reason to encourage you to join our prayer on Wednesday night. You don't have to say a word. You don't have to have your camera on. You don't have to be seen. That's fine, right? You can still communicate. You can share your challenges, your prayer needs. We can pray together with you. You can encourage us with something good God is doing. Right? And in Acts chapter 2 verse one, it says, "And the day of Pentecost had fully come, They were all with one accord in one place. Not just together in one place, but a one accord. In other words, they were in unity. Accords of a unity or diversity, right? They all came together one accord. And God moved. God delights in unity.

## The Challenge of Prayer and the Power of Gratitude

So God called us to be a house of rest. How do we become the house of rest? How do we come to the place of peace and being a people of prayer? But how to pray? It's not easy, right? That's why it's the least popular meeting. Prayer meetings. Hal anyone comes. Prophecies, yes, everybody comes. Healing, everybody comes. But sometimes, you know, prayer is not prayer is meant to be exciting when you know that God hears. When you pray with faith, he may not always respond immediately. But when you believe and you pray, it is impossible for God to do nothing. You know, we always say without faith, it is impossible to please God and and we walk by faith and not by sight. But you know what? When we pray with faith, it is impossible for God to do nothing. He may not do what you expect when you expect but he's doing something and sometimes we don't always connect what he does with our prayers because he doesn't say hello I'm this is an answer to your prayer things happen and he expects you to make the connection you remember what you prayed right but sad to say many of us when good things happen we forget that we prayed and we say oh I'm so lucky oh I'm so blessed oh coincidence no no it's a response to your prayer don't forget what you prayed right don't drop the glory from him so how do we come to the a place of being a people of prayer.

What's the challenge of prayer? You know what the challenge of prayer is? For most Christians, prayer is driven by need. The greater the need, the greater the more we pray, the longer we pray, the less problems we have, the less issues. Everything's going well. We are all of a sudden too busy to pray. I have no time to pray. So sad to say that we often motivated to pray based on issues and problems and and challenges. Why? Because we we kind of assume that the the whole purpose of prayer is to tell God our problems, right? God, I have this need. Please answer me. But that's not the only purpose of prayer. God wants us to pray to acknowledge his favor upon our lives in every blessing. It's a language of gratitude. We don't take anything for granted.

## Start with Thanksgiving

So why do we pray in the morning? Why do I pray in the morning? In fact, David prayed in the morning. Lots of people in the Bible prayed in the morning. Number one, thank God that you woke up. You're not one of the stats that died in your sleep. Thank God that you could get out of bed. You don't have to be carried out of bed. strong and healthy. You know, I always say every day is a great day because everything could be worse. That keeps us humble and grateful. So, we wake up in the morning, say, "Thank God you sustain me in my sleep. Thank God I can wake up this day. It's a new day. There's no bombs dropping. There's no plague or pestilence or whatever." You know, I don't know if you read the story. The worst time in history to be born in recent history is 1900. Cuz the people born in 1900s and if they lived to at least 80s to 90s, they would have gone through World War I, the bubonic plague. World War II, the Great Depression, the Vietnam War. Can you imagine in their lifetime? And we're complaining today. Oh god, life is so hard. Thank God you weren't born in 1900, right? They went through hell if they lived a long life. So, as I always say, things could be worse. So, prayer is must be first rooted in gratitude. Don't come to God just based on your problems. Come to God based on what he has done, what he's doing, the good things in your life, cuz everything could be worse. What's working? for you. What's going well for you? God, I thank you. It's by your grace. I acknowledge you that despite my imperfection, despite my my issues, you still bless me. I'm so blessed. It's not luck. It's his favor because if not for him, anybody could anything bad could happen anytime, right? That's what news is all about, right? The news that sells this bad suddenies. Everybody is so curious to find out what bad thing happened to somebody or this tragedy happened. That thing so and so got robbed, got stolen, got beat up, whatever. Bad news sells. But we want to thank God. Prayer is begins by thanking God for his goodness.

## Rejoice Always, Pray with Thanksgiving

That's why the two key scriptures on praying always. Guess what comes before praying always? Rejoice always. Before you pray, rejoice. Now, we're meant to be always in an attitude of prayer. We first got to also be in an attitude of thanksgiving. For us to rejoice, got to be an attitude of thanksgiving. In Philippians 4:4, it says, "Rejoice in the Lord always." Not just when you have something to rejoice about, but always. says again I would say rejoice and then two verses down verse six it says be anxious for nothing in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God but before you let your requests be made known don't be anxious you don't want to be anxious begin by rejoicing always so verse four talks about rejoicing verse 6 talks about not being anxious but praying giving God your issues having begun with rejoicing and then again in 1 Thessalonians 5 16 it says, "Rejoice always." Verse 17, "Pray without ceasing. First rejoice, then praise." First give thanks and then pray. Why? Don't come to God with your needs with ungrateful spirit. Because when you begin with thanksgiving, rehearsing what he's done gives you faith for your present need. That's what David did when he faced Goliath. He remembered what God had done. He said, "Lord," he said, he said when he was talking to Saul, "Hey, you're a young guy.



How can you face Goliath? God has delivered me from the lion and the bear. He will deliver me from this giant. Rehearsing a testimonies and living in in thanksgiving and praise gives you faith for the test that you're in that it becomes a testimony.

## **The Danger of Complaining & Distraction**

Rehearse. Rejoice always. Always stay the attitude of thanksgiving. Right? You know what happened with the Israelites? You know why the generation that came out died. All those who were delivered from Egypt. 1 Corinthians 10:10 says, "Nor complained as some of those guys, Israelites also complained and they were destroyed by the destroyer." Wow. severe judgment man. They weren't destroyed by Pharaoh. They were destroyed by their complaining attitude. Rather than thank God for the amazing miracles and power, he divided the Red Sea. He destroyed the armies of Egypt. He fed them mana, the pillar of fire. What did they do? Complain. I miss the food of Egypt. I miss the onions and the garlic. Moses, you're a terrible leader. Why are you leading us through this? And this is the challenge we all have in life. We have to be so intentional with our focus. One of the greatest thieves of time is distraction the uh technology, right? The screen is based on distraction, right? Pop-ups, pop-ups. It's so hard to focus. Before the screens was all there was was books and pages. There's nothing to distract you. You could focus in your book in your page. Now, you look at the screen, especially online, things pop up all the time. Stop what you're doing. Do this. Click this link. Click that link. And we're always distracted. In fact, I like to pray the Lord's Prayer by adding something in between. You know, when it says, "And lead us not into temptation." You know what I add? And lead me not to temptation. to be distracted and deliver me from evil distractions. Right? Because before you can do anything wrong, you first got to be tempted. Before you can be tempted, you got to be distracted. Distraction leads to temptation which leads to sin. So get to the root of distraction. So say, "Okay, God, if I think I'm getting distracted now, I'm going to redistract myself with what is good." Okay? So if if something bad pops on the screen, don't turn off the TV. Change the channel. So the last thing on your mind is good read. distract yourself to what is good.

## **Thanksgiving Attracts God's Presence and Rest**

But so God says, "Hey, my house shall be called a house of prayer. But for you to be a person, a people of prayer, you need to live in thanksgiving." Why? Because thanksgiving is the key to his presence. And that's the other purpose of his house. A house of his presence and rest. Right? Remember we started with this this morning. Isaiah 66. Where is the house you build me? And where is the place of my rest? This is the prayer that Moses prayed. And the Lord replied Moses in Exodus 33. Moses said, "God, show me your glory." And God replied to Moses, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest. I will give you rest." You see, the key to answered prayer is not a change of circumstances as the first step, but a restoration of peace from his presence so that you have authority to overcome your circumstances. You see, the key to Jesus stopping the storm when he was asleep in the boat and all his disciples were stressed out. They thought they going to drown. They were waiting for the storms to

stop to have peace. But Jesus was asleep in the storm. And because of that peace in the storm, he had authority to speak peace to the storm. But many of us, we're looking to a change of our circumstances to bring us peace. When God says, "Hey, the source and root of peace is in me, not in your circumstances." Cuz life will not be perfect. There'll always be something for you to lose your peace about. But you can't be a slave to your circumstances. You can't be a slave to everything going just right because that's not what life is, right?

So that's why The kingdom of God is Jesus said, "Hey, seek first my kingdom and my righteousness, which is what? Seek to be anchored in the pres in my presence, in my peace and my joy. So that you will not be a slave like a boat tossed to and fro by every circumstance that happens." So that when you're at peace, you now have authority in your prayers. Because when you live in rejoicing and thanksgiving, now you can pray with faith. Now you can pray because you remember what God has done. Right? So God wants us to be a house of prayer, a house of his presence through thanksgiving because He thanksgiving always attracts his presence. Gratitude does right. I mean as you know right sometimes you do a lot for for people and instead of being thankful to you they complain they find something you haven't done right it's like hey I don't need thanks but don't come against me after all I've done for you. How God you know God does so much but many times we don't connect what he's done for us and then when he doesn't meet our expectations we get mad with him. Is that fair? It's like it's like the question some people ask you know why does God allowed bad things to happen to good people. I think that's a false premise because that assumes good things only happen to good people. Right? For you to think that God should only that bad things should not happen to good people, that means whatever good in your life is because you're good. No, whatever goods on my life is far more than I deserve. I deserve a lot less. Right? Thank God he doesn't bless me according to what I deserve, but because of his grace and mercy. So whatever bad things happen, I'm not going to blame him. Right? When you have an accident, you blame the minister of transport. No, someone broke the law and innocent person in the wrong place in the wrong time gets hit. Right? So the innocent did not suffer because of the minister of transport. But sin is has consequences and many times the innocent suffer just like wars, right? Walls are a conflict of heads of garment, but innocent civilians suffer. They're caught in the middle.

## Transitioning to a New Season

And so we got to say, God, this is why God says, "Hey, I am building my house because the devil has robbed many of healthy households. He's broken up many families. The church is meant to be a safe place. Not a perfect place, but a safe place. A place where we are willing and able and allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us so that we can host his presence, host his peace. Right? So when we when we enter the new place, whatever change that's happening, we got to make sure that our focus is right. Because you know what? You don't need discernment to see dirt, but you need to be discerning to find the gold beneath the dirt. Dirt's on the surface. You don't need a gift to see dirt. But guess what? Gold is always hidden behind and the dead. And there's gold in each one of you. Thank God he doesn't deal with us

according to our dead, right? He sees the gold in you because we're made in his image. He's put strengths. He's put gifts and talents in each one of you to be a blessing. Don't see one another or define others by what's wrong with them. Rehearse the blessing. God is in your life that the people is used in your life. Imperfect people. Look for the gold. Look for the good. Guard your heart and say, "Lord, I thank you for every blessing upon my life. I want to be a person, a grateful person, rejoicing always and a person of prayer, praying always. Rejoicing because you remember what God has done. Rejoicing because he says, "My plans for you are good and not of evil." I said, "Oh, why does bad things happen?" Okay, next step. He's able to make all things work together for good because you love him and are called according to his purpose. Right? All the promises are yes and amen.

So, this is a challenge as we're going to new season. God wants to build us. You know, one Corinthians 15 talks about first the natural, then the spiritual. And so, in the natural, there's a lot of things in preparing the new place. It used to be a clinic. It was had rooms, walls had to be broken, things had to be torn down. And Jeremiah 1 mentions something like that. Before you can build and plant in Jeremiah chapter 1, it says you got to pull down, tear down. You to clear the ground to raise up. So, for God to build us, we got to get rid of what's in the way. You can't build on top of rubbish that needs to be thrown. Now you got to clean the slate. Have a clean firm foundation to build what is healthy. And sometimes we keep things that are not healthy because it's just tradition. It's just tradition. No, tradition is not always good. We got to discern is this tradition of God or just man that is hindering what God wants to do. Maybe it's our Asian culture, but it's not kingdom culture.

## Conclusion: Living in His Kingdom

So, so just as in a nutshell, we got to remove things. Hebrews, I think it's Hebrews that says, "Lay aside every weight and sin that hinders you. so that you can run the race that God has set before us. So I'm excited that God is going to do is doing something new. He wants you to carry his presence. He wants you to be full of peace and joy. Somebody said I think there's a book I forget it's famous or used to be famous for those who are old enough. Um is it Robert Schuler or somebody else that says the happiest people I think it's Dimash Shakarian the happiest people on earth are meant to be the church. The happiest place on earth not Disneyland but the church. Why is it because they have no problems? No. Because They have with them the source of all joy. The joy of the Lord is your strength. He is your peace. So when we are really living in his kingdom, hey, the church should be the happiest place when you're your people, you know, because you're focused on the goodness of God. You're a people of praise. You're a people of prayer. You're very intentional with your focus. You're not distracted by what the enemy is doing. You're distracted in the goodness of God. And guess what? That attitude attracts his presence. That attitude attracts his favor. That attitude attracts every good and perfect gift.

Right? So, this is a challenge especially for those who are you who are not alone. You're staying with someone else in your house. You have family members who rub you the wrong

way. You know, it's more likely to for that to happen at home than outside the house. Because outside the house, you can pick and choose your friends, right? That's why a lot of people say, "Pastor, why my non-Christian friends are seem to be much better than my Christian friends?" You know why? Because you can choose your non-Christian friends. You can't choose your relatives. You can't choose the people in your house, right? So, you're kind of stuck with them. But if you can Choose your friends. You can choose to be with the people who just are like you, right? But Noah couldn't pick the animals. I don't know how you survive that ark full of smell. I mean, have you been to a zoo? Before you get to the zoo, you can smell the zoo. You've been to animal farm, you can smell the cows. And here he's stuck in a zoo for floating zoo with no sewage, right? No plumbing, right? Wow. Amazing. So, in a way, that's a picture of, hey, we all have issues. We all have dirt. We all got problems. But don't define one another by our issues. Don't define God by what he hasn't done. To be a people of grace, to be a people of his presence, to host his presence, we got to be a thankful people. Focus on God. You're a good God. I recognize the goodness upon my life. I'm thankful that every good and perfect gift comes from you. It's not luck. It's not coincidence. It's intentional. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Amen.

So live in thanksgiving. And and and I want us to set and and I believe that the Holy Spirit can set you free from being a slave to your circumstances. that in the midst of crisis and trauma, you pray with hope. Say, "God, I thank you that you love this person more than I do." You know, sometimes I allow fear to come in. Oh, God, watch over my girls in another end of the world. And it says, "Hey, I give them to you. I love them more than you do. Trust me with them." It takes faith, right? Your hands are tied. You can't do nothing. You can't control your family somewhere else. And I got to trust God. Yes. Yes. God, thank you for reminding me. You love our kids more than we do. I trust you with them. He loves your loved ones more than you do. Trust him. You know, sometimes the answer to our problems is not the material thing, but the word of the Lord. Stand on the word. So Jesus, give me a word for the situation. Quicken a scripture, a verse for the situation. So that when I pray the scripture, when I speak it, faith rises, peace comes in. Every breakthrough begins with the word. That's why the word is called the seed. When you water the seed with faith, you water the seed with praise with thanksgiving, a harvest comes, right? It doesn't sometimes be you're looking for God I need I need something. Pray. So God give me a word on how to pray in the situation and he will help you.

## Pillars of the House

So God is building you and me. And we're going to come back to the pillars of the foundation of the house of building. We started with faith. Working through love. Remember that humility and the fear of the Lord. Okay. So how do you develop faith? Live in thanksgiving and praise. Then you start to pray in faith. Right? Working through agape. How do what does it mean to you can't love each other if you don't know how much you're loved by God. And let his Cast out fear, right? Humility. It takes humility to acknowledge your need to turn to him, not leave him with the last resort. Don't wait till all options are finished and then okay God, I'm forced to

you know come before you need to say God I look to you first. Give me your solutions, your wisdom solutions every day. Just pray this what I pray. I pray God give me wisdom to see as you see to ask the right questions to make the right connections for every challenge and problem. I we need a wisdom solution. Not our own intelligence is nothing. Okay? Man's wisdom is like foolishness to God. We need the mind of Christ. We need to hear him speak to do what he would do. And so every day you're showing him you depend upon him. Not not your own ability. And that attracts his favor. He gives grace to the humble. He gives grace to those who believe. Okay? He gives grace to those who are thankful. And this is how he's going to build you and me. So when people enter in our fellowship, they're going to sense his presence. Not because The building is wonderful or the stained glass or whatever. Hey, it's what we host together. Two or three come together, he's there in our midst. Amen. His peace is there. His presence is there. His joy is there. His power is there. Amen.

## Benediction

Let's stand together. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Father. I just pray Lord for each one here this morning. I thank you Lord for your faithfulness to us, to our families, to as a church, Lord, even for making this this hall possible Lord for your provision even for the church office. We thank you Jesus for all the ministers we've been able to host who've been a blessing Lord through the gifts you've given them. And we thank you Jesus for every good and perfect gift that comes from you. We thank you Lord for all the things that you have done, all the prayers you have answered and the prayers you are answering. We thank you Lord for the promises in your word that you have fulfilled and are fulfilling. And so from this place of gratitude Lord we pray in faith for the needs we have. And we thank you Lord that in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, we can let our requests be made known to you. We don't have to be anxious for anything. So we thank you Jesus for your peace, your shalom, your wholeness. You speak peace to our lives, to our families, to our loved ones, the situations that we're experiencing. We thank you, Holy Spirit, for revealing yourself to us. Reveal your love to us, Lord, that we will experience, we will taste and see that you are good. Deliver us from every um um baggage or stronghold of religion, Father, or trying to being works focused apart from relationship. We thank you Jesus for your grace upon our lives. I thank you Jesus for your increasing presence that you heal those who need healing, peace of mind from your presence. Lord, we thank you Lord for breakthroughs in areas who've been standing in faith for a long time. We thank you for grace upon each one of us and and all those involved in the um transition Lord. Even the workers, the contractors, Lord, even the move on us today that everything we need will come in good time. Lord Jesus, we give you the praise and the glory. Father, may you bless us and keep us. You make your face shine upon us and be gracious to us. You lift up your countenance upon us and give us peace. May the love of the father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and always. And everyone said, Amen.