

GOD THE BUILDER HIS FOREMEN

“See That Thou Make
All Things According
To The Pattern”

WHAT IS GOD NOW BUILDING?

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MAKE ALL THINGS ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN

God is and always has been a great Builder. In ages past God has permitted men to help Him build. There are four buildings in the Bible that we shall mention and consider:

1. “THE TABERNACLE”
2. “THE TEMPLE”
3. “THE BODY OF CHRIST”
4. “THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID”

When we think of the Tabernacle we think of Moses as God’s foreman. When we think of the Temple we think of Solomon as God’s foreman. The Tabernacle of David certainly speaks of King David, the twelve apostles and the kingdom of heaven. There is a sense in which all of these buildings speak of the Lord Jesus Christ. But when we think of the Church, as the body of Christ, surely we cannot think of that Body without thinking much of Christ.

Note:

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.” I Corinthians 12:12.

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” Ephesians 1:22 and 23

Here we learn that the Church is called “Christ” and “the fulness of Christ.” Concerning the building of this Church, we read these interesting facts:

“Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and

some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:" Ephesians 4:9 to 13.

Here we learn that God permitted His Son to elect some very special workmen to help build up the Body of Christ. This Building is now in the course of construction. It is being fitly framed together. (Ephesians 2:19 to 22). Let us see how the Building is going to look when God and His human co-laborers get through with the Building:

"That he (Christ) might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:26 and 27.

As we look at this building today, it is rather difficult, without great faith, to believe that it will ever turn out as it is described in these verses. In choosing men to help build this Church there was a special man appointed by God's Son for a very special position. It is interesting to read concerning this special man and his special work:

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." I Corinthians 3:10.

"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." I Corinthians 15:10.

"Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." I Timothy 1:16.

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." Philippians 3:17.

These statements are most interesting and if we are to be intelligent and successful workmen, we must not only believe that Christ appointed the apostle Paul to be His masterbuilder (architect) and a pattern, but we must take heed how we build together with Paul on the foundation which he laid. In this sense we must play "follow the leader." This means we must follow Paul as he followed Christ (I Corinthians 11:1). If we were interested in building the tabernacle of David, we could all get some valuable help from the twelve apostles; but that tabernacle will remain fallen down until God completes the Building (Body) now under construction. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Ephesians 4:13.

There is to be a Perfect Man at the close of age and economy of grace.

Note what the Building is called in Ephesians 2:15; "for to make in Himself of twain One New Man, so making peace"

So God is making a New Man, one New Man.

You will remember what God said in Genesis 1:26 and in Genesis 5:2:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

"Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."

God made man in His own image and likeness. The eternal Christ worked with His Father to make this masterpiece and God called the male and female “Adam.” They two were one flesh.

God was truly a great Builder when He made the heavens and the earth. In that wonderful work His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ was more than the chief Foreman. All things were created by Him.

Adam and Eve were called “Adam” Now again two shall be one flesh. “I speak a mystery concerning Christ and the Church.” (Ephesians 5:31 and 32). God calls their name “Christ.” Adam was a figure of Christ. (I Corinthians 12:12 and Romans 5:14)

MOSES—SOLOMON—PAUL

So let us think of God and His leader Moses and His people Israel building the tabernacle. Then of God and His leader Solomon and his people building that wonderful temple at Jerusalem. Then think of the Prince of Peace and King David in the building of the Tabernacle of David after God has accomplished His eternal purpose in this present age. (Amos 9:11 to 15; Isaiah 9:6 and 7).

Then we think of God in His present work, by Christ and Paul and the evangelists and pastors and teachers and the perfected saints, making the One New Man of Ephesians 2:15. Let us remember that Paul tells us that he is the pattern and the wise masterbuilder and that he laid the foundation.

In this connection let us note carefully Hebrews 8:5 and I Corinthians 3:10:

“Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.”

“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.”

“Make everything according to the pattern.” Let every member of the Body of Christ take heed how he builds together with Paul on the foundation he has laid, as the Lord’s “architect.”

Christ, in heaven, by revelation, appointed the apostle Paul to be the “general foreman” of His Building during this present age and dispensation and reign of grace.

Read what Paul told Timothy in II Timothy 2:2 and 2:15:

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” II Timothy 2:2.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” II Timothy 2:15.

Only as we learn about building up the Body of Christ through Paul, or from Christ through Paul, only as we go to the masterbuilder to read the blue-prints and specifications, shall we be intelligent, accepted and successful labourers together with God (I Corinthians 3:6 to 9)

PETER AND PAUL

Let us remember that the twelve apostles shall have a very important work in the building again of the Tabernacle of David (Amos 9:11 to 15); for they are going to sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matthew 19:27 and 28).

But hear the masterbuilder's testimony:

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Galatians 1:11 and 12.

"But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do. But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." Galatians 2:6 to 13.

Paul did not ask Peter for his "kingdom of heaven" blueprints and specifications. Paul did not confer with flesh and blood (apostles or others) for his message, ministry or program. He received it somewhat as Moses received the blueprints and specifications for the Tabernacle when Jehovah said, "see that ye make all things according to the pattern." Paul received it from heaven. Peter was an apostle before Paul but he "added nothing in conference" to Paul. But, contrariwise, Peter learned that Paul had a message and program which not only supplemented much of what Christ had given him but a gospel program and dispensation that superseded what Christ had given to Peter and the Eleven. (Ephesians 3:1 to 4 and 8; Colossians 1:25 and 26; Ephesians 6:18 and 19; Colossians 4:3 and 4). Peter and his fellow-apostles went to the Jews. (Galatians 2:9). When Paul took a stand, in grace, against James and Peter and others, his own traveling companion, Barnabas, was carried away in the dissimulation. Well, Paul had Titus and Timothy and a few other outstanding prophets who stood with him. Demas stood for a while, but when Paul got in jail for preaching the mystery, Demas forsook him, also "all they that be in Asia be turned away from me." II Timothy 1:15.

Think of these sad words, as you consider obeying Philippians 3:17 and Ephesians 3:9. Those who build intelligently and successfully with Christ and Paul will be sufferers with both of them:

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;" II Timothy 1:8.

"Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound." Timothy 2:9.

Or course, if you try to build some of Moses' tabernacle and Solomon's temple, the twelve apostles' tabernacle of David in with the Body of Christ, you will be an ashamed workman but Satan will see to it that you shall not have to do much suffering for God's truth.

But let's take heed how we build together with Paul, the wise architect.

MOSES—ISRAEL—THE TABERNACLE

“Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.” Hebrews 8:5.

Carefully read the twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus and see how many details there were in the construction of that Tabernacle and all that pertained to it. And the chapter closes with these words, “after the pattern which was showed thee in the mount.”

Now note in chapter 35 and 36 what the people did under Moses who was their “foreman” with the Divine pattern:

“And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the LORD commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, And oil for the light, and spices for anointing oil, and for the sweet incense, And onyx stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate. And every wise hearted among you shall come, and make all that the LORD hath commanded;” Exodus 35:4 to 10.

“And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the LORD hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; And to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,” Exodus 35:30 to 32.

“And all the wise men, that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made; For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.” Exodus 36:4 and 7.

“And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the LORD had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them.” Exodus 39:43.

“Thus did Moses: according to all that the LORD commanded him, so did he. And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up.” Exodus 40:16 and 17.

There were some men with special gifts under Moses and over the people. But each and every man and woman had a part in the building of the Tabernacle where God was to meet His people in a very special way. They did their work cheerfully and strictly according to the pattern that the infallible God gave to His “general foreman.” Certainly every man did not do that which was right in his own eyes as Israel did later and they got into plenty of trouble.

In building the Tabernacle the Israelites were not divided into sects and denominations, although they were grouped in different tribes. What kind of a tabernacle would have been built, if each leader of the different tribes had directed his followers to ignore the orders of Moses and substitute their own ideas? Surely if the people had not done every single thing according to God's pattern given to Moses, the statement of Exodus 40:34 would not have been made: “Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle.”

SOLOMON AND THE TEMPLE

Now concerning the building of the temple at Jerusalem, note the words of Solomon in I Kings 5:5:

“And, behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name.”

Now note I Kings 5:12:

“And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together.”

I Kings 5:15,17 and 18:

“And Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains;”

“And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.”

“And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them, and the stonesquarers: so they prepared timber and stones to build the house.”

I Kings 6:22:

“And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house: also the whole altar that was by the oracle he overlaid with gold.”

I Kings 6:38:

“And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which is the eighth month, was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it.”

Only a man with wisdom from God could have built a building as the temple at Jerusalem. It was all done according to the fashion of it, just as God had ordered. In every detail the temple was constructed according to the pattern that God gave to His “general foreman” King Solomon. It was the house of God and God met His people in that House.

Note again in I Kings 6:7:

“And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.”

Now just imagine what would have happened if God's servants and Solomon's helpers had been as ignorant and indifferent and disobedience concerning Solomon's instructions as Christian workers and preachers are concerning the Lord's instruction concerning the building of the Church as recorded in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians and the Colossians.

THE CHURCH BUILDING

In Ephesians 1:23 the church is called the Body of Christ, the filling up of Christ. Now note:

“Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.” Ephesians 3:5 and 6.

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:13.

“Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;” Ephesians 2:15.

“In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Ephesians 2:21 and 22.

“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” Ephesians 4:15 and 16.

“Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given me for you, to fulfill the word of God. Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:” Colossians 1:25 and 26.

“And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.” Colossians 2:19.

The word “Church,” referring to the Body of Christ, is used many times in Paul’s recorded ministry and in every instance refers to a company of people and never to a meeting-place. And although there are references to local assemblies of redeemed people, there is no truth more clearly and definitely, emphatically and dogmatically taught in Paul’s Epistles than the Divine truth that there is one and only one Bible Church during this present dispensation and age of grace, the Joint-body of Ephesians 3:6, the fulness of Christ of Ephesians 1:22 and 23.

Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. There is one Body. (Ephesians 4:4 and 5).

We do not read that Christ loved the “churches” and gave Himself for them, and that Christ will present the “churches” unto Himself, glorious “churches.” No, the singular is used, “the Church.” (Ephesians 5:25 to 28). We do not read that the mystery is Christ and the churches are one flesh, but Christ and the Church. (Ephesians 5:31 and 32). In Ephesians 4:3 to 6 we do not read there is one Father, one Son, one Holy Spirit, one hope, and one faith, and several baptisms, and many churches. No, one baptism and one Body.

God’s program now is to make one New Man. (Ephesians 2:15). That one New Man will be the Perfect Man, the filling up of Christ; and therefore, “Christ.” (Ephesians 4:13, 1:23, I Corinthians 12:12). According to Ephesians and Colossians and Romans, there is not a Roman Catholic New Man, or a Methodist New Man, or a Presbyterian or Baptist or Pentecostal or Nazarine or Lutheran New Man. All of the saved people in these various sectarian groups will be a part of the New Man; and they have been baptized with a Divine baptism into the One Body.

Just as definitely as God intended to build one Tabernacle and gave Moses His one Divine pattern for that one Tabernacle, and just as definitely as God intended to build one Temple and gave Solomon the one Divine pattern for that one Temple, even so God’s purpose in this age is to build one and only one Body (Church), one spiritual Temple of living saints. The Father had His Son give that pattern, not to Peter and the Eleven, but to the apostle Paul the wise masterbuilder, who calls himself the believers pattern. (I Timothy 1:16).

To every Christian the Lord is saying, “see that ye make all things according to the pattern which I gave Paul by revelation.” (Ephesians 3:1 to 6 and Colossians 1:25 and 26). The Church of this “grace” dispensation is called in Ephesians 3:6, not the “same Body” but the “Joint-Body.” It is a Temple being fitly framed (joined) together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. The members with Christ, the Head, are seated in the heavenlies in Christ, and with Him being fitly joined together and compacted, growing up into the Head. (Ephesians 2:22; 2:6; 4:15; and 16). All of this is called “the eternal purpose of God,” “hid in God from the beginning of the world,” “the mystery of God’s will,” “God’s purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus

before the world began,” “the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations.” (Ephesians 3:11; 3:9; 1:9; I Timothy 1:9; Colossians 1:26).

The truth pertaining to the building of this spiritual Temple is called “the unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles.” (Ephesians 3:8). This word “unsearchable” is from the Greek word “track” or “step” and means that “Body” truth cannot be traced through Israel’s Scriptures. It was not disclosed by or to Israel’s prophets or to or by the twelve apostles. It was by special revelation from Christ to and through the apostle Paul. Only Paul referred to “the Church of the mystery” as “the Body of Christ.” By “the Church of the mystery,” we mean that the Church of this dispensation was not contemplated in the prophetic writings and utterances of Israel’s prophets and apostles; but was God’s own unrevealed secret until Christ made it known to God’s wise masterbuilder. However a secret revealed to members of the Body of Christ should no longer be a secret. Now every Christian should obey Ephesians 3:9—“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God.” Let us carefully read again Ephesians 4:10 to 13.

“He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:”

Here we have what has been called “the masterpiece of God.” Christ ascended far above Satan’s heavens, far above his principalities and powers (Ephesians 1:19 to 21, 6:11 to 13, 2:2; Colossians 2:15). He gave gifts unto men. “Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:7). “We are labourers together with God” (I Corinthians 3:9). Let every man take heed how he buildeth together upon the foundation Paul laid, under the instructions of the chosen vessel who laid the foundation, and who was appointed by Christ to be His wise masterbuilder. This is another way of saying, “See that we make all things after the pattern.” In no other way can we be fully accepted and approved workmen.

As the Lord selected special men, with extraordinary gifts, to work under the foreman (Moses) in building the Tabernacle, and to work under the foreman (Solomon) in building the Temple, so the Lord selected special men with extraordinary gifts, to work under Christ and Paul, the foreman, in building up (edifying) the Body of Christ. This building is to continue until we come to the unity of the faith and the Perfect Man, Christ Jesus; and the finished Building will be a glorious spotless Church, without blemish.

We today have some workmen who are called “Postmillenarians.” They do not know the difference between the House of Jacob over which Christ will reign on the throne of David (Luke 1:28 to 33), and the House of God (the mystery) over which Christ reigns as Head on His Father’s throne far above all heavens. They are trying to help God do something that God is not doing; for God is not now building the Tabernacle of David.

There is a great difference between Christ on David’s throne and Christ in the believer, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27). Some are indeed workmen who need to be ashamed, because they do not rightly divide the Word of truth. Just to think of the religious Christian, who claims to be the servant of Christ, and a faithful steward of the mysteries of God (I Corinthians 4:1 to 4), who knows not the difference between building again the Tabernacle of David, as described in Amos 9:11 to 15 and Acts 15:13 to 18, and building up the Body of Christ while the Tabernacle of David is broken down. (Romans 11:25 and 26). God has not chosen a foreman to build the Tabernacle of David, during this parenthetical age; nor has He asked any of his

labourers to do anything on that building except as faithful stewards of the mysteries of God, to teach Christians that the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform that after the Perfect Man is complete. (Isaiah 9:6 and 7).

CHRISTIAN UNITY

Because of God's one definite program in this present dispensation of grace, He has instructed every workman and every member of Christ's Body in this plain language:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." I Corinthians 1:10.

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Ephesians 4:1 to 6.

Christ delivered this message to His foreman, who has the blue-prints and specifications for God's "Church" Building in this age. Do all members think and speak the same thing and work together with the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit and Paul, the masterbuilder, in building up just one Church, the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6, the filling up of Christ of Ephesians 1:23 and 4:13? Such intelligent, Scriptural united action would cause Christians to obey Ephesians 4:14: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

Do all Christians recognize the seven-fold unity of Ephesians 4:3 to 6 and endeavor to keep that unity that demands one Body and one baptism?

Can Christians believe that they are pleasing God when they sprinkle people into the Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist and Reform Churches, and immerse them into the Baptist and Plymouth Brethren Churches, and then refuse to obey the "unity" command of the Lord because the meaning of their baptismal ceremonies are as different as black and white, and because they simply will not believe that in the dispensation of grace the Lord's one Divine baptism is wholly adequate and efficacious without man's religious water ceremony?

According to the Scriptures, is God building up a Roman Catholic Church, a Lutheran Church, a Methodist Church, a Baptist Church, a Presbyterian Church, a Pentecostal Church, a Reformed Church? God is not the author of confusion. God is not building a Roman Catholic New Man, a Lutheran New Man, a Baptist New Man. Christ is the Head of the New Man. Christ is neither a Catholic, a Lutheran, a Baptist nor any one of the two hundred names given the sectarian churches. Paul most assuredly was not a Roman Catholic, as any one can learn by reading Galatians and Romans. He was certainly not a Lutheran; for he did not believe in water baptism regeneration. And he believed what he wrote in Romans 8:28 to 38. Surely Paul was one hundred per cent against a Church being named after any other man than Christ. One has only to read I Corinthians 1:14 to 17 and Ephesians 4:5 to know that Paul was not a Baptist. If Paul should make a return trip to earth today, none of the preachers, in any of these denominations, would permit him to stand in their pulpits and preach the whole truth of Ephesians and Colossians. The Plymouth Brethren would not permit Paul to break bread with

them, for Paul would expose the fallacy of their “watery grave witness,” and condemn them for excluding other members of the Body of Christ from the Table.

According to Colossians 1:27, Christ is in the believer, the hope of glory. Think of the folly of burying Christ and the believer’s new man in water! Christ had two baptisms, Jordan and Calvary. At the time of his second baptism He said: “finished.” His baptism is the believers baptism.

Ephesians 3:9 and 4:1 to 14 is God’s death-blow to all sectarian Christianity or Churchianity and to any of the various religious water ceremonies which is dividing the Body of Christ as is no one other religious practice or “undispensational” teaching.

Any intelligent, spiritual student of the Scriptures, who will carefully study I Corinthians 12:8 to 11 and 13:8 to 13 with Ephesians and Colossians, will learn that God readjusted His saints and altered His spiritual program after His pronouncement in Acts 28:25 to 28. In Acts 28:28 the Lord had Paul say to Israel, that God had blinded them, and that salvation would be sent to the Gentiles. It had been sent to the Gentiles for some years; but it would now be sent to them in a manner never before known. How true this is in Paul’s prison Epistles.

Read carefully God’s judgment and radical changes in Acts 28:25 to 28 and compare these other Scriptures in the Book of Acts:

“And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.” Acts 28:25 to 28.

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Acts 2:36.

“And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel,” Acts 3:12.

“And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.” Acts 3:15.

“But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.” Acts 3:18.

“Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” Acts 3:26.

“Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.” Acts 5:29 to 32.

“And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” Acts 10:28.

“Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” Acts 13:46.

“And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.” Acts 18:5 and 6.

We learn from these Scriptures that God’s order in the Book of Acts, was first “to the Jews only” and then “to the Jews first and also to the Gentiles.” Christ was raised from the dead to be Israel’s Saviour as He was raised in incarnation to be Israel’s Saviour. (Read Matthew 15:24; Acts 5:29 to 32; Acts 13:23 and 30 to 36).

Now we can better understand John 1:11 and 12 and Romans 11:30:

“He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

“For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief.”

Most carefully and prayerfully meditate upon this all-important truth. Why and when did the Gentiles obtain mercy? You can never begin to know the pattern until you know the answer to this question. Also note Galatians 2:6 to 13:

“But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man’s person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do. But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.”

PETER AND PAUL

In the verses quoted from chapters two, three, and five of the Book of Acts we learn that God was dealing with Israel and her rulers, and presenting to them the same kingdom salvation offered to them by John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth in His incarnation. Christ was raised up in resurrection to be Israel’s Saviour. (Acts 5:29 to 32; Acts 13:30 to 35). That is why it was necessary to continue God’s program with twelve apostles, instead of eleven, after Israel killed the Prince of Life. So a successor (Matthias) was chosen take the place of Judas (Acts 1:15 to 26). Twelve speaks of Israel, not of the One Body and the unity of believing Israelites and Gentiles in the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6, the One New Man of Ephesians 2:15.

There was a great difference between Peter’s keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:18 and 19) used for Israel on the day of Pentecost, and with the household of Cornelius several years later (Acts 10:1 to 46), and the dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles given to Paul. (Ephesians 3:1 to 4). The keys were given and used before Israel was set aside. The dispensation of the grace of God was given when and because Israel was set aside after they rejected Christ in resurrection. Because of Israel’s unbelief the Gentiles obtained mercy (Romans 11:30). Peter and the Eleven, during the first eleven chapters of Acts, did not do what Paul did

after His pronouncement in Acts 13:46; that is, preach the gospel to the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy. The “kingdom” program recorded in the first eleven chapters of Acts was in fulfillment of prophecy and, therefore was not concerning the unprophesied Church of the mystery.

God chose one mouth of the twelve apostles to preach to the household of Cornelius. Then Peter and James declared, in Acts 15:13 to 18, that the program of Acts, chapters one to eleven, was a prophesied kingdom program. The Twelve mentioned Gentile salvation in Acts 11:18, but they certainly did not say what Paul said, in Acts 14:27, after the radical change of Acts 13:46. Note Paul’s statement: “And when they were come and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.” Acts 14:27.

Peter’s “kingdom” keys did not open the doors into the Body of Christ either on the day or Pentecost or when he preached to Cornelius.

But the Christians, who insist that this present dispensation of grace began with twelve apostles, who are yet to sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:27 and 28), do not understand Galatians 2:6 to 13. They twist Paul’s statement in Galatians 2:7 to read, “the gospel TO the uncircumcision” instead of “the gospel OF the uncircumcision” because they know not the difference between the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the dispensation of the Grace of God.

We learn by reading the first three chapters of Galatians that it was fourteen years after Paul was converted before the twelve apostles understood the difference between the gospel of the uncircumcision and the gospel of the circumcision (Galatians 2:7).

The apostle Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles yet no man was better qualified to deal with the Jews. (Romans 11:13; Philippians 3:4 to 10; Galatians 1:11 to 18).

The character of Paul’s ministry is told in Acts 13:46 and in Acts 20:24, the gospel of the grace of God because Israel would not believe Paul’s message that God had raised Christ from the dead to give Israel the sure mercies of David (Acts 13:30 to 36). In Romans 11:15 and II Corinthians 5:16 to 21, we learn more of Paul’s ministry; that Christ sent him with a message of reconciliation to the nations when and because Israel was set aside. Then we learn in Ephesians 3:1 to 4 and in 3:8 that God gave to Paul the dispensation of the grace of God and the unsearchable riches of Christ.

It would seem that any Christian reading Colossians 1:24 and 25 and Colossians 4:3 and 4 would begin to do some thinking concerning Paul’s distinctive ministry and build according to the pattern.

Note the truth of these four verses:

Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Colossians 1:24 and 25.

Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Colossians 4:3 and 4.

Surely the only thing that any of the twelve apostles knew concerning these revelations, which ushered in God’s program which Paul called “the dispensation of the mystery,” they learned from the same source that you and I must learn it. It was first deposited with Paul and them made known by him and the Holy Spirit to other saints.

If it were not for Satan's hatred for the glorious truth for which Paul suffered as a criminal in the Roman jail (II Timothy 2:8) and for Satan's wiles, it would seem that every Christian would be so eager to understand what Paul referred to in Colossians 1:24 and 25, that they would pray the prayer of Ephesians 1:16 to 18 and have the eyes of their understanding enlightened and know the difference between the message and program given to Peter and the eternal purpose of God given to Paul. But alas most Christians care little or nothing for the most glorious truth in all the Bible for saints.

Sinners have always been saved on the grounds of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter and Paul and all of the Lord's evangelists preached to sinners that Christ died for our sins and was buried and was raised. This was all in fulfillment of the Scriptures (Acts 13:29 and 30). But Paul was in jail for "the mystery of the gospel" which was not in fulfillment of the Scriptures but by a special revelation from Christ to Paul (Ephesians 6:19 and 20)

Certainly when servants of the Lord, who are supposed to be stewards of the mysteries of God (I Corinthians 4:1 to 3), say that "the gospel of the circumcision" and "the gospel of the uncircumcision" were one and the same gospel, to two different groups, you would not expect them to know the difference between the saving gospel for sinners and the "mystery of the gospel" for saints, or what Paul was writing about in Colossians 1:24 to 26. Read carefully Ephesians 1:16 to 18 and Ephesians 3:13 to 20, those two great "mystery" prayers.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old his name was changed to Abraham and at that time God established the covenant of circumcision (Acts 7) (Genesis 17:3 to 17). For centuries Gentiles, who wanted to come into covenant relation with God, were not only to come under the covenant of circumcision but under subjection to the nation Israel. This continued until Christ sent Paul out to the heathen with the gospel of the uncircumcision, with the revelation of Romans 4:7 to 10 and Galatians 3:8. Paul told the other apostles that when God called Abram his name was not Abraham, but Abram; that Abram was called and justified in uncircumcision so that he might also be the father of the uncircumcision. Paul said that at the time that God justified that one uncircumcised heathen (Abram), the Scriptures foresaw that the gospel of the uncircumcision would be sent to many heathen who also would be declared righteous by faith, without circumcision, without Israel's law or religion (Galatians 3:8), without coming under the covenant of circumcision or in subjection to God's covenant nation. Therefore we have the "countrariwise" of Galatians 2:7 and the truth stated in that chapter and in the third chapter.

Read carefully Peter's message to Israel in Acts 3:19 to 26. This message has to do with Israel's repentance and restitution, with their prophesied kingdom program. "All of Israel's prophets spoke of these days." Acts 3:24. Of what days? Of the days that Israel's Messiah and King would return and restore the kingdom to Israel, and build again the Tabernacle of David.

None of this has anything to do with the message in Ephesians concerning the position and blessings of members of the Body of Christ seated in the heavenlies. It was never even hinted at by Israel's prophets. They knew nothing of these (Body) days. Compare Acts 3:24 with Colossians 1:24 to 26.

We are reminded of this question in a pamphlet which the Moody Bible Institute has published and distributed for about twenty-five years.(Bishop's pamphlet).

Note this question:

"Is it the Spirit of God or Satan, who turns the eyes of sincere Christians back to Pentecost and away from the goal placed before them in Ephesians, Phillipians and Colossians?"

This is an important question. It is one of many important questions and statements in the pamphlet entitled "Tongues, Signs and Visions, Not God's Order For Today" (by A. E. Bishop).

Note a very important true statement in this same pamphlet:

“A careful study of the Epistles, especially of the latest Epistles of Paul, which give the normal course of the Church during the present dispensation, would dismount all from their hobbies, eliminate the last vestige of Judaism from their lives and teachings.”

Let us not make the great mistake being made by the Postmillenarians and others, who think they are helping to build at the same time both the body of Christ and the Tabernacle of David.

The culmination, consummation or climax of this present economy and program of grace is Ephesians 4:13:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID

When God has completed this Masterpiece and Christ has presented the Church unto Himself in the same manner described in Ephesians 5:25 to 28, then the Son of man will come in the clouds with power and great glory.

“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” Luke 21:27.

“So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.” Luke 21:31 to 33.

Then there will be the fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6 and 7:

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

Note Gabriel’s message in Luke 1:29 to 33:

“And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

Note Peters message in Acts 2:27 to 32:

“Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.”

Christ was born to take David's throne. Israel would not receive Him. Christ was raised from the dead to take David's throne. Israel would not receive Him. Christ will return for David's throne. Israel will receive Him. Peter and James and the other ten apostles will sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached to the nations.

Note the words of Peter and James:

“And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” Acts 15:15 to 18.

All of this is a different pattern for a different Building. Let us not be workmen who need to be ashamed. The Tabernacle of David is as different from the Body of Christ as the Temple of Jerusalem was from the Temple of Ephesians 2:19 to 22.