

In Exodus 25. What is the building for? What is the building for? For God to dwell in. That's a little. Let's hear some more. For the priests to dwell in? Fine. Now, you've got one plus one. All you need now is the equivalent of what? That God and man might live together as one. Why? Tell me why. Why does he want it? Praise the Lord, that from Thy house He might express his image and have dominion upon the earth. We'll find out dominion even in other places, but anyway, that He might mingle Himself with man and the two might be one, to express the image of God through man upon the earth by the Life of God in Christ, put into man by the Spirit, to express God upon the earth and to have His authority.

Now, brothers and sisters, for God to have this, he has got to have a corporate building. He has got to have a corporate building together. His children must give themselves to a practical corporate building together; otherwise, you will never know the life of the tent, the life of the house, the life of the tabernacle, the life of the temple. The Lord Jesus Christ came to earth and presented himself as the tabernacle. The tabernacle was the life of man, and God mingled together. And having presented Himself as the tabernacle, He went back to that Old Testament time when the house of God was first mentioned, and he said, you shall see the angels of God ascending and descending upon me, at the gate of heaven, down to the earth. This is the house of God, the gates of heaven to the very earth. God and man mingled together. You are seeing the tabernacle expressed upon the earth, and when they looked at Jesus Christ, they saw God. And when He went out into the midst of the sea, and He said, "be still," and it shut up. It became like a spring evening on the water. He expressed the dominion of God and the authority of God upon the earth.

Then He said, I must fall into the earth and die, that I might bring first out of this many grains, grains that will become a loaf: one loaf. Now, listen. This is what the Lord said, just as He gave the pattern. "And let them make me a house, that I may dwell among them. Not in them, not mingled and blended yet, but that I might live among them, according to all that I show you, after the pattern of this tabernacle and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall you make it.

Now, will you turn with me to Exodus 26? Exodus 26:15. *And thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle of acacia wood standing up. Ten cubits shall be the length of the board, and a cubit and a half shall be the breadth of one board, and two tenons shall there be in one board, set in order one against the other: thus, thou shalt make for all the boards of the tabernacle.*

Now then, here is the fixture of the tabernacle itself. The mingling of God with man. Outside is the boundary line that separates the world from the building of God. God expressing Himself upon this earth and having authority; God in the midst of his creation. Man, in order to enter the tabernacle, must go through totally and completely the altar of judgment to deal with the world. Then he must come and be willing to be exposed, completely, that he might be washed. All that is brass.

Now, then, you come into the tabernacle and see the gold and the silver and the fine twined linen, and this is a picture now of the building itself. God says for the temple to be raised up, man must eat the bread, light the lamp, and offer up the incense that he might work in the

gold, that he might work in the pearl, that he might work in the silver and the stone, that he might raise up among his people a building: a building that is God and man mingled together to show their God on this earth. And when he came to picture the tabernacle itself, he came to something so mysterious, I'm not sure the Lord can give me utterance for it.

Brothers and sisters, this is a picture. This is a picture, and the picture grows. The temple... when we see the temple... it grows. When you see the Lord, it's even more expanded. You see the church, it's even more expanded. And then there's the final consummation of the age when it's all stones. But brothers and sisters, those boards...what will those boards be when the tabernacle comes in and takes the land and the temple is done? What will the board be? What will the boards be? They will be...say it real loud and boldly, Brother Bob. Stones. What stones, brother? Which stones? Any particular stones? Alright, it's the stones that are the very wall of the building. What those boards are now - those boards will be torn down. The temple will be built, and what is a board now will be the stone then. But that's still a picture, isn't it? Is that right? That's still a picture. Okay, Praise the Lord.

Here's the tabernacle, and it's movable. It's portable, and the tabernacle is surrounded by a wall of curtains that is not the tabernacle. You come to the tabernacle, and above it is the headship of Christ. Then the tabernacle is built of boards all around, all the way around. Forty and forty and six, and we'll talk about the front later. Now, here are boards and here are boards and here are boards, and the boards are strong acacia wood that had been overlaid with gold. Now then, later we shall come into the city of Jerusalem, and we shall build a temple. The temple will look very, very much like the tabernacle. There will be the ark inside. The ark will stay the same. Then there will be a room built called the Holy of Holies around the ark. Then, in front of that will be the Holy Place. Each one of the things of the tabernacle will be put aside, and something new will be built: solid to stand there. And as you expand the temple, the very temple itself is the same as the boards were for the tabernacle. The tabernacle, the outward, all around the four sides, are gold boards of acacia wood, made of gold, all the way around like this. See? Then, when they build a city, instead of gold boards, they build with stones. Now, you have it. Praise the Lord, brother, and it's enlarged. That's correct.

Why was it portable? They were not in the land. They did not have the proper ground upon which to pitch that thing. There was no floor. Brother, there was no floor in the tabernacle. It was a dirt floor. They had not yet the proper ground to put it on. But when they came to build the temple, gold was now represented and pictured by stone. Now, this is still a great mystery. The stones still represent something. What do they represent? What are they? Nobody knows. Gene is going to spiritualize again. What are the stones? This is exactly... you'll say, oh, I can't take this. My mind can't comprehend it. Alright, here we go.

Do you know that in the Old Testament, even those gold boards represented the priest? All these things...the Lord has a little picture here, a little picture there, a little picture there, all of them to picture one thing. He had a priesthood. He said, " Alright, I shall have people who do nothing but minister to me." Those priests lived together. Where was their home? Where did they sleep at night? They slept in the tent, the tabernacle. And what did they eat? Their

food was the offerings, offered to God. That's all they lived on. So, they slept in the tabernacle, they drank in the tabernacle, and they lived in the tabernacle, and they were built together under the headship of Christ. They were all hooded. The instructions they got came from where? It came from the ark. God spoke to the priests out of the ark. They even got their direction for themselves and for the whole nation in there...

(Parenthesis) Well, don't worry. We've got a week to spend on the tabernacle, on the priesthood. The Holy of Holies was entered once a year for atonements. It's not clear... But let me say two things. One of them is that, in times of urgency, they went into the ark's room to get the instructions from God, and there were times they even brought the ark out to fight battles. So, it wasn't like that room could only be entered once a year, but I'll give you a little secret. There was something of the ark borne upon the priest, a symbol of the ark on the priest themselves. Here is how they came to the Lord and learned from Him. There were also times the Lord spoke out of the tabernacle; the tabernacle itself. They got their instructions from within. Deep within. Okay.

Now, the priests are still a picture just like the rest of the tabernacle. They were living there, walking around there, but those priests were not separated from the tabernacle. When God looked down upon them in the picture that they were, he did not see priests serving in the tabernacle and ministering to the Lord, for God saw a living city being pictured. And those priests were part and parcel. They were warped and roofed...that's a scriptural term. They were intermingled with, and they were pulled into, and they were one with that tabernacle. What part of the tabernacle were they? The stone. Can you prove that? Why, we've been leading it for years. The priests are under the head of Jesus Christ, have been built together as one, and are the very building of the temple itself.

Listen to this. Listen carefully. If you want to read it with me, it is 1 Peter 2. If some of you are worried about whether or not you can have the life of the church and the body life of Christ because you're new babies and you're new Christians, you listen to this. If someone says to you, "You can't be a church," you quote them this. *Wherefore, laying aside all malice and all guile and all hypocrisy and all envy and all evil speaking. Brethren, laying aside that last step, laying aside the self, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby, eat the bread, light the lamp, and offer the incense. If so be that you have tasted, that's the bread. You taste the Lord. To whom is it coming?* Now, who is the whom? That's Jesus. We come to Jesus. What is he? He is a... What's the rest of the verse? He is a *living stone*. Which living stone? The rejected stone. That's what it says right here—rejected indeed by men. And which stone was rejected, brothers? The head of the corner.

Alright, now, are you ready? Listen to this. Ye also as what? As living stones are what? Are what? Read it, brother. Are being built up...into what? The real house. The tabernacle's not real. The temple's not real. You are being built up into the real house as living stones. Wait a minute; what are the living stones? *A holy priesthood*. I'm not even sure the priests of the Old Testament saw this. They walked around those stones built so neatly and perfectly together, and they were in perfect coordination around that place. In that place, as they worked together under the voice of God, living, eating, drinking only what was inside the

house, and God was saying of them, they are the real stones of the real house. They have been built together into a holy priesthood, and that holy priesthood has become living stones, and those living stones are the real house of God. In that house, together mingled, together we are one to show forth the image of God and to have the authority. Brothers and sisters, you are to be built up into one living house. Say praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Because this is going to be the last praise the Lord you have for quite a while.

Let's go back and look at those boards. What are those boards? They're what? But what are they really? Priests, who tasted the Lord and have been built up as a holy priesthood. Those boards are stones. Those stones are the priesthood built up together to become what? A spiritual house. God wants a single one, only one, unified spiritual built-up house, built of flesh and bone, that is spiritual, but that is built. Brothers, this is the line of God's building. This is his purpose in and for you. This is why God created you.

Each board is made of gold that overlaps wood. Down here, separating the dirt is the silver socket for each board. How many sockets, brothers? Socket here and socket here. One and a half and one and a half, and they are to be joined one to the other. And then, at the top, and between the middle and the top, and then at the middle, and between the middle and the bottom, and at the bottom, there are golden rungs. What holds these boards up? Two things. They are joined to one another. At the bottom is a rod. Now, you remember there was a verse I read you couldn't understand. The rod runs halfway through the entire length of the wall from one end to the middle. There's another one coming this way that also comes. Then another rod comes through, and another one, and they end in the middle. Then there are two more rods here, and two more rods here, but there is a solid rod that runs from end to end in the middle. All of this is rods of wood overlaid with gold. Brothers and sisters, this is so deep, and it is so borne out in the New Testament as to what the church really was. So unlike man and so unlike religion. This is the building up of a geographical, practical, visible church. This is the daily living, the practical outliving of the church. This is God's eternal purpose for and in the church.

Okay, the rod that goes from end to end is something of the unity of the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to make this very clear to you, because you have not had much experience to know this. You remember in January when you dropped it, and you decided to come together? You remember? Nod your head. This is my understanding. Brothers, could you have made it? I'm going to tell you something. I'm not going to say it because this is sovereign. I don't feel that any group of brothers and sisters can come together and long keep unity without one of two things. They'll either split or get organized. It's just impossible. Why? Because it's only the wood and not the gold. It's only the wood and not the gold. God has to overlay the wood with gold. I have said it before; I will say it again. Man cannot be in unity. There is no way for human life to be unified. You will split and divide, unless you get under human authority, and eventually God will step in and divide that to break its power.

Now, there is a rod that runs from one end to the other, holding those forged together in unity, but brothers and sisters, that's half of it. That is the life of the Lord himself in you, by which you must live for unity. This, you think, well, praise the Lord...no, brother, it's so

much more than that. The Lord...this is the center and the heart of the Lord. There has never been a denomination that has not split and fractured. If you went to the churches in this city, the denominational churches, you would find out one of two things. Every church in this town has probably split, or it is under an absolute crown. The denominational headquarters came in, bought the land, built the building, set up the finances, put the preacher in there, and he went out and got the people. Or the church split. The Plymouth Brethren got started in the 1880s. I was told that in the early 1900s, they had split 500 times. They had 500 different sects, not churches. 500 different splits, and I was told that the recent estimate is that the Plymouth Brethren by 1967 or 68 had had 1,500. By 1915 or 1920, 500. By 1968, 1,500. By the year 2000, who knows? The Roman Catholic Church has divided on numerous occasions, but it has kept its unity through absolute human oligarchy. Put a group of people in a city, and you will either glue them together with cement or they will divide.

God had a church upon this earth that knew no division. When that church lost its love and left Christ as Life, it began to pick up teaching and to defend itself, and it began to have relations with the world under Constantine, and it gave up the only source in the universe for unity, the Life of God; it began to fraction and die. Satan knows this and rejoices in it. He is the one who would scatter the brethren, and God wrote upon this earth a group of people who live in unity. Who are under the oil poured down from heaven on Aaron and from the head of Aaron down upon the full body. That alone is the one who can live in unity and say, oh, how blessed it is when brothers live together in unity. This is what Satan will seek to destroy. Then he has a testimony: "You can't do it. You can't do it. You can't do it."

The early church was a testimony to the unity of the Lord's body. It had not been chopped up and dismembered. It was built together in each city as one. Many people have accused the early church of having divisions in it. No, it had strife within it...even in 1 Corinthians, some of you follow Apollo, some of you follow Paul, some of you follow Peter, and some of you are the most sectarian of all. You're going to be the Jesus-only group. But the letter starts out being addressed to *the* church in Corinth, and not to the churches. When you have real insight into that letter, you see that the problem of the strife within it was the carnality of the brothers and sisters. They were living...and Paul, in the first half of that letter, is speaking of soul life. That they were living by self-life. That letter is an appeal to return to living in the Spirit, by living by the life of the Lord.

Now, shall we just come together and say, praise God, we shall be in unity? No, I'll tell you, we have to eat the bread and let the gold come in, that God might have a bar all the way through us. A bar that starts here, goes here, and goes here. A bar of gold mingled with wood. A bar that goes through every member. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus—the mind of the Spirit in you. You have got to live by the bread, the light, and the incense, that you might live inside the deepest part of you, that you might draw from the living spring of another life, that you might dwell together in unity. You must live under the headship of the Lord and let the oil pour down, and then, brothers and sisters, you've got to be built up together practically, as practical as the twelve, as practical as the early church.

Down here, each board sat on how many sockets? Two. Two sockets. Not one. Brother Bob, would you come stand up here? Now, I understand that. Come over here, brother. Brother Bob is a great athlete and very strong. I'm not ever going to pick on him. Brother Bob, you look strong, brother. Would you do me a favor, brother? Just stand there on one foot, would you? Stand there on one foot. No, pick it up. Pick it up. You may sit down, brother.

Brother Bob lost all his balance, power, and everything else when he stood on one foot. He was so easily pushed and so easily turned. Brothers and sisters, you have come to the day that you have got to turn back from the church or built up in it. Today is that day. If you have dealt with the altar (if not, you'll just have to wait and catch up later), if you have dealt with the laver, if you have come to begin to eat, be enlightened and offer the incense, all that the veil might be ripped, then today, the Lord wants to begin building up the tabernacle. Your days of independence are over. Utterly, completely, totally over. You are going to have to be built up with brothers and sisters.

Now, what do we mean by this in a practical way? In a really practical way, that God might have a living testimony of men and women unified together without a human head, and yet living in unity? Receiving instruction and direction from God. A tabernacle moving through the wilderness into the land until it's solidly built on the ground as a temple. It means all that we have said until now, plus it means being built up together. Being built up together. Brothers, you're going to have to be built up with another brother.

The best way I can describe this is to say: here is a stone, and under the stone is another stone, over the stone is another stone, and beside the stone is another stone, and beside the stone is a stone. There's one above, two beside, and one underneath. Alright? Every one of us has got to find...you come to the Lord about it...and find you a stone, brother, to be built with. A stone here and a stone here. You're going to give up your old life and be built together with the brothers and sisters. You'll need to find a stone here and here. If there's a stone there, get under a stone. If there's one that comes to you, fine, but most of all, you've got to have a stone.

Brother, there have to be two legs of the board, firmly planted, and that leg and that leg have to be joined to another board and another board, practically, practically, just like a wheelbarrow is practical. God is practical in his church. It may kill some of your collegiate ways, it may kill all of us in our doings in religion, but the Lord says that we have to be a living temple built up together, built up together as one.

Well, what do we mean by this in a practical way? Brother, I will only say to you, come to the Lord and sense something within, and the Lord will show you. A brother to be built up with. Sisters, a sister to be built up with. Someone to really be built up with. Who? Oh, someone's looking across the room and saying, oh boy. Well, okay, here I am. What kind of person am I? Well, let's say that I am the quiet kind of brother. Easy going. Don't say much. Have very little to say. So, I found a brother like me. Today, all day long, we never said a word to one another. We are really built! I don't snore, and he doesn't snore. I don't ask him for anything. He never asks me for anything. We go from day to day. We're really built up.

We tend to seek those of our own disposition...it hurts less. I'm a really quiet brother, and I am really, really sweet. I never have anything to say. I'm always just very quiet, very patient. Here is the brother I've got to get built up with. Right here. Brother Jeff: he is so loud and so noisy. He is so impatient, and praise the Lord, we're going to get built up together.

What's going to happen when it's through? Praise the Lord. I'm going to be a little bit more alert, alive, and impatient, just like the Lord wants me to be, and Brother Jeff is going to be a little quieter and a little more subdued. You know, I don't have to tell you. What is this? This is the hewing part of the building. This is the fitting together of different-shaped stones. This is the "being built." Alright, Brother Jeff, you know who to look for now.

Brothers and sisters, you have to find someone. It'd be best if you find two people. I would even say it's better if it were someone you do not live with, if at all possible, but sometimes it has to be that way. Don't sweat it, brothers. I am going to speak as much as possible in principle. Someone to turn to, to pray with, someone to fellowship with. Find somebody you don't like very much. Now, I'm not going to say around here that the two enemies should definitely get together, but don't go get your friend. Don't go get your friend, but someone the Lord will draw you to. It'll just be sort of a natural thing. But brother, don't be independent.

What's going to happen? What's going to happen? There'll be the hewing, but little by little, there'll be the building together. When two or three are built together and come together to offer up the Lord Jesus to the Father, the whole body will be built up more and more. Those boards get linked. You have to get linked with someone practically. Practically. And you have to be so absolutely practical. Really practical.

Now, I'm going to present to you the way it should be, but not the way it's going to be. Okay? The way it should be, but if it turns out this way, I will come back to you, and I will say, "Brothers, something is wrong." If it works out this way, there is something wrong. Now, did you hear that? You'll need to quote this to one another later, maybe.

This dear brother and I...we are going to pray together, and we are going to fellowship together, and we're going to be built together—a couple of boards. We've got two feet. Well planted. We're balanced. We're not going to be easily turned, but my brother has a problem. Maybe he's even got some gossip. If he has gossip, it goes to the cross...that is, it goes nowhere. It doesn't even come to me. It might go back to the person there and say, Brother, may I have a word with you? But it doesn't go anywhere, brother. It doesn't go anywhere, but you come, and you have a burden, and we begin to pray. And you say, Brother Gene, what should I do about this? And then I say to you, Brother, you've got to go to so and so. Now then, brother... If I'm to really be built with you, I shouldn't do that, should I? I should fellowship with you and pray with you before the Lord, and, if I'm really clear, give you a little impression, but I'm not here as a counselor. It's not for me to do that, but what if I do you that? And what should you do?

No, let's forget the gossip. You have a problem within your own life. You want to go fishing on Sunday, and you come and talk to me. And I say to you, now listen, you went fishing last Sunday and the Sunday before that. You just ought not to go fishing anymore. Alright, what are you going to do? What are you going to do right now? Go along. Let's say "go along", not "follow", because this isn't a following, because tomorrow, brother, I got my problems. Tomorrow. I want to go fishing, but I want to go fishing in the Atlantic Ocean. It's going to take three weeks. I want to go fishing so bad. And he prays with me. And he fellowships with me, and he doesn't say a thing. He says, Brother, I'm standing with you. And he goes. And he goes. Then he leaves, and I know good and well what he's thinking. He thinks I ought not go fishing in the Atlantic Ocean. I tell you, I don't know why in the world I got stuck with him. I think this whole church is full of a bunch of hypocrites and legalists. I'm not going to go to the meeting tomorrow either. If I do go, I'm not going to sing.

Okay, two brothers come together, and they have some fellowship. They're being built together, and one brother has a real sense that he should go along with another brother, and so he does...praise the Lord. Or the brother doesn't go along with him, and the other brother has a real sense that this is what the Lord is saying, but this brother is rebellious.

Now, oh brothers, I want to stop and nail this down and nail it down good. The proper thing for you to do with the one or the two with whom you're being built is to go along with them. Go along with them, but if you can't, you just absolutely come down to it; if you cannot do it, then you just cannot. Then go out and be in the flesh. Go ahead and be rebellious. Just go on and do it. Don't be afraid of God, and don't be afraid of your brothers...