

BUILDING BACK BETTER (2)

Sunday Morning – 17th July 2022

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(Sermon Summary)

Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:1-23 (vv10-11)

We have been looking at the expression ‘building back.’ It is used a lot in politics but there is perhaps something we need to think about as Christians. We have seen that the apostle Paul described his work as being a master builder. There are not apostles today but we are to follow the design for churches as laid down by the apostles. Ours is therefore a building work, an apostolic work. The Lord Himself promised that He would build His church. We are part of that greater enterprise, all the more important because of the challenges that we face as Christians in this present culture.

1. Building is work.

Building is work that involves toil. When we have builders in attendance there is noise, dust and a lot of manual labour, but the end product is good. Building work can unearth unexpected things, some of which need attention. There are issues like material shortages and there might be opposition (See Nehemiah 2:10, 19-20).

Mainstream culture is not sympathetic to the Christian message. People may not be violently opposed but they are apathetic and show no urgency about the needs of their souls. The ruling culture, as seen in the media and wider politics, is more overtly hostile. This is before we have looked at church culture which can be very confusing with such a wide range of belief and practice. There are so many books with so many points of view. Liberals deny the supernaturalism of the Bible and void the message of the church by taking away the gospel. Those of a Pentecostal/Charismatic persuasion hope to see some supernatural power at work, as they would define it, and try to teach the church how to find this. Others would have us to return to the church’s Hebrew origins, or follow a programme like ‘Purpose Driven’, or seek to take over society and culture.

Our work has to reflect on these challenges and be very deliberate in what we are not as well as what we are. We have to be robust and capable of withstanding some of the pressures that come.

2. Christ – the only foundation.

That Christ is the only foundation at the centre of all building is vitally important for us to believe. It proves the unique place of the Lord in what the church is to believe and the message she is to preach. He is to exercise His authority as head over the church. It is to be His doctrine that is at the heart of all we do and all we are. This we can see in, for example, John 3:16; John 14:6; and Acts 4:12. We are to come to the Father through the Son. He is the One appointed for our salvation and whose glory is attested to everywhere (Hebrews 1:1-4). We are to believe on Him to be saved. He is the subject of our preaching, our practice, our hope and the whole of our life. The confession of Him is the rock that the Lord builds His church on.

We are to ensure that is the true Christ who is at the heart of our beliefs and confession. We always need to know who the Christ people believe in is, and what He does. The right Christ is the only foundation we can have.