



LESSON 60

Foundations Curriculum

A Building for the Holy Spirit

By João Bium

Introduction

A Building for the Holy Spirit

In this sixtieth lesson of the Foundations Curriculum, we will conclude this cycle. In the previous lessons, we spoke about a family for the Father and a bride for the Son. Because the Father wants a family, and the Son wants a bride.

In order to conclude this teaching, which has helped us understand more fully God's Eternal Purpose, today we will learn that the Holy Spirit wants a building.

1) A Building for the Holy Spirit — Because the Holy Spirit Wants a Building

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. [...] Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

1 Corinthians 3:9, 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 (NKJV)

This is one of several figures attributed to the church in the New Testament. Each of them expresses an aspect of what the church is to God.

Building expresses what the church is to the Holy Spirit. He is building a dwelling place for Himself. We know that this desire comes from eternity.

There is a story recorded in the book of Genesis that reveals this intention of God to join Himself to man. It is the story of Jacob's dream, in which he sees a vision of a ladder connecting earth to heaven. On it, angels of God went up and down.

When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he had a striking reaction. It shows us clearly that he understood the will of God. And it was not only by his reaction, but especially by the declaration he made. He said:

Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. So 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 at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: "I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you." Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously.

Genesis 28:10–19 (NKJV)

The next day, when he arose, he changed the name of that city to Bethel, which means "the house of God."

In the book of the prophet Ezekiel we find another record, this time in the form of a promise from God the Father. In it, we can observe the full greatness of His purpose to be manifested in man.

He says: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you" (Ezekiel 36:26–27). However, He establishes criteria for the fulfillment of this prophecy. History shows that the sins of Israel violated the honor and holiness of God.

Restoring them from that condition meant, first of all, restoring the holiness of His name. And this was His only motivation. This is why He declares that He will not do this for Israel's sake, but for the sake of His holy name, which had been profaned by them.

It is worth noting that we have already studied this truth in another lesson, but it is always very important to remember, so that no doubt or confusion remains, that the center of God's eternal purpose is not man.

He is not moved by man's needs, but by the preservation of the holiness of His name. To rescue His holiness, He decides to purify His people from the sins they committed. He does this because He wants the other nations to know how He deals with His people.

My brothers and sisters, this action of God is very significant, for it reveals that being God's dwelling place necessarily implies a decision to break with sin and live a life of holiness and purity.

As we have already seen that, more than our salvation, God wants us to reflect His character. He wants to be seen and known through His church. And this work begins when He Himself comes to dwell in us through the Holy Spirit, transforming us into His dwelling place, His building, and His sanctuary.

Just as the emphasis on the family points to character, and the emphasis on the bride points to expectation, the emphasis on the building points to holiness and purity.

The church, as God's sanctuary, is holy.

This agrees with the fact that we are God's own special possession:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV)

We cannot allow the church to be defiled by anything foreign to its nature.

Let us remember that the sins of Israel were related to the influence they received from other peoples. Therefore, as prudent builders who cooperate with its building, we must work to preserve the church's purity.

We must guard ourselves from any and every influence that could defile the purity of the church. When correcting the church in Corinth, Paul warns: "Evil company corrupts good habits" (1 Corinthians 15:33).

The word "company" is related to companionship, relationship, fellowship. The Jerusalem Bible translated this text well when it renders it: "Bad company corrupts good character."

The apostle's concern was about the influence of people who were in the midst of the church and used false arguments to spread the heresies of Greek philosophy.

Their aim was none other than to corrupt the faith of some. This warning of Paul is extremely necessary for the church today. Zeal for the purity of the church should lead us to ask ourselves some questions:

How are your relationships?

Can you say that you are living in submission to someone? (*To submit means to willingly receive another person's encouragement, correction, instruction, and counsel.*)

Remember, it is impossible—or at least very difficult—to build up someone who is unwilling to submit. Why? Because that person never truly "fits" with anyone. He is not teachable. He resists correction. He gives the impression that there is no one in the church from whom he can learn.

That is why the Word of God lovingly challenges us:

"...submitting to one another in the fear of God."
(*Ephesians 5:21, NKJV*)

Take a moment to ask yourself:

- **Do you have a specific discipleship relationship in your local church, or are you trying to walk alone?**
- **Has that relationship, though valuable and intentional, become exclusive?**

- **Do you recognize that you are also connected to others who are part of God's household, or does only your discipler have meaningful access to your life?**
- **When you gather together, are your conversations shaped more by the Word of God or by the latest discussions on social media?**

When you are together, do you let yourselves be influenced by the Word of God, or by the latest comments on social media?

having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:20–22 (NKJV)

In this building, Christ is the foundation. We are being built up in Him. This means that being part of the church is being “on” or “in” Christ. It is not enough to be with the church, or even to relate to it.

If you are not in Christ, you are like a brick that has been set down around the house, on the property of the house, but is not part of the house, of the work. It does not yet belong to the construction; it is not built in. Loose, you neither bear weight nor are you held up in the wall.

Another important truth that stands out in this passage from Paul's letter to the Ephesians is that being built up into a dwelling place for God is not static; it is a dynamic development. It grows into a holy temple dedicated to the Lord. This shows that this work is not yet finished; we are being built up, joined to one another by love, which is the bond of perfection.

But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

Colossians 3:14 (NKJV)

Although the word *bond* originally refers to the ligaments that connect the members of the human body, the same idea applies to the construction of a building. To bond is to join together, and only what is properly joined can be built up.

Love is the gracious "mortar" that binds us to one another, making us into a spiritual house where the Holy Spirit dwells. In this sense, to build up the Church is to build it together—one life joined to another under Christ.

In practical terms, building consists of joining many different materials according to a carefully designed plan, fitting each one into its proper place.

The parallel with the Church is striking. We are many living stones, yet together we form one building.

Though each of us is unique, in Christ we are being fitted together into one spiritual house.

The Master Builder has already established the design. Throughout these lessons, we have been reflecting on His plan and learning how each of us finds our place within it.

you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:5 (NKJV)

When inspiring this sacred text, the Holy Spirit was not being poetic. This is how He sees the church. By describing it this way, He is showing us how we must live.

When we submit to one another, bear with one another, love one another, and forgive one another, we are offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Just as any builder trims the edges of bricks so that they fit together, so also each one of us, as living stones, is being shaped by the Holy Spirit, trimmed by Him, so that we fit into His building, which is the Church.

Throughout Scripture, we find this truth proclaimed. One such occasion is recorded in the book of Acts, when Paul stands in the midst of the Areopagus in Athens and declares:

God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.

Acts 17:24 (NKJV)

It is for this reason that Scripture says the Church is the house of God, and as a house, it is the pillar and ground of the truth.

but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

1 Timothy 3:15 (NKJV)

My brothers and sisters, this word inspires us, but it also challenges us. Being built up in this way, we are like a wall that upholds the truth. We have been enabled by the Holy Spirit, and therefore we need to resist everything that could defile the purity and holiness of the church.

And as we conclude this lesson, we cannot forget the tremendous work proclaimed throughout Scripture, when it says: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

The Greek word translated “dwelt” in this verse is a kind of neologism created by John. He applies another kind of meaning to it. The translation “dwelt” does not exactly express the meaning of the original text. The correct approach would be to use transliteration, in which the word is carried over exactly as it is.

So the best translation, able to reveal what was in the heart of God, is this: “And the Word became flesh, and ‘tabernacled’ among us.” We can understand it even better when we compare it with the word John himself uses in the vision in Revelation:

Now I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with

them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God."

Revelation 21:2–3 (NKJV)

In this vision, John has the privilege of beholding the fulfillment of God's Eternal Purpose.

Today, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, we have been transformed into a dwelling place of God. But this tabernacle, as the apostle Paul says, referring to our bodies, is still subject to destruction.

However, the day will come when these corruptible bodies, these living stones, these holy bricks, will be transformed. John's vision describes the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. The Lord will make new heavens and a new earth.

We will be, while here on this new earth, a building, an eternal dwelling place, a work of God not made with human hands:

For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven.

2 Corinthians 5:1–2 (NKJV)

The church will be the tabernacle of God with men for all eternity. We will be a family for the Father, a bride for the Son, and a building for the Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION

In this sixtieth lesson of the Foundations Curriculum, we learned about being a building for the Holy Spirit. The analogy of the building is precisely so that we can understand that we need to be joined together in a single work, a single wall, so as to remain fixed, fitted together, and secure. It is like the analogy of the body, joined by joints and ligaments.

Yes, the church will be the tabernacle of God with men for all eternity. Precisely because of this, we cannot live however we please. Purity and submission to God are necessary — submitting to direct relational bonds and to the body of Christ, which is the church. No one can walk alone.

As the conclusion of this teaching, we will be a family for the Father, a bride for the Son, and a building for the Holy Spirit.

CONSIDER CAREFULLY

- 01** More broadly, how can we understand God's Eternal Purpose?
- 02** Why is it so difficult to build up someone who does not submit?
- 03** In light of what we have learned, can you say that you are well bonded?
- 04** In practical terms, what does it mean to be built up?

*having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.*

Ephesians 2:20 (NKJV)

Foundations Curriculum — Lesson 60

contato@fundamentos.me | fundamentos.me