



Day One: A Singular House

The House that God is building cannot be built by man. Over the past two weeks, we've been looking at how we can recognise what God is doing, and we've discovered that God's house is a spiritual building which is built by love, HE is building it, and WE are His house. Today we'll see the next key, which is this: The house God is building is a singular house.

It's a Singular House

Just think about the other words that God has used in the Bible to describe us, His temple. Yes, we're the house He's building. But we're also described as the Bride of Christ, and the Church. These references are both absolutely singular. There's no description of 'Brides' in the Bible. And though there are places where it says 'the churches' this is more a translation issue than anything else. The Greek word translated 'churches' is actually 'Ekklesia', and we've already looked at what this means. The Bible is absolutely clear that there is one church, under Him, and the New Testament church lived this in every conceivable way. There were times they assembled together geographically, but they were one.

It's also very clear in Ephesians 2:20 – 22 where He describes His temple, that He's talking about one building, not multiple buildings. It says, *This entire building is under construction and is continually growing under his supervision until it rises up completed as the holy temple of the Lord himself.*

No plural references in there! There's only ONE temple... one house that He is building. There is absolutely no mention of multiple houses in this scripture or any other scripture in the New Testament. Funny that – there's also no mention of the over 30 000 different denominations we currently have in the world, nor is there any instruction to divide His singular temple up into them.

In 1 Corinthians, He also describes us as a singular garden, an analogy for the singular house He's building.

1 Corinthians 3:9 (TPT) We are coworkers with God and you are God's cultivated garden, the house he is building.

He is not in any way, shape or form describing a multiple. And why would He? Paul understood the dangers of not being unified and he warned against



division around theology (human perspective, not God's), which is in essence what denominationalism is. Paul said, *But let me ask you, is Christ divided up into groups? (1 Cor 1:13 TPT).*

In 1 Corinthians 1:10 (TPT), He says, *I urge you, my brothers and sisters, for the sake of the name of our Lord Jesus, to agree to live in unity with one another and put to rest any division that attempts to tear you apart. Be restored as one united body living in perfect harmony.*

The Passion Translation footnote in this section, titled 'Paul Addresses Divisions in the Church' says:

Or "that you all speak the same thing" that is, to have a united testimony. The Aramaic is "that you may all be of one word." The congregation of believers in Corinth was sorely divided. They were divided over which leader or apostle they followed, over the limits of their freedom, over their socio-economic status, and over spiritual gifts. Division among believers grossly hinders our message and ministry to the world of unbelievers. Paul is pleading with them to unite around the love of God for one another.

And just in case we missed it, he also says in 1 Corinthians 3:3 – 4 (TPT) *...for you are living your lives dominated by the mind-set of the flesh...Do you compare yourself with others? Do you quarrel like children and end up taking sides? If so, this proves that you are living your lives centred on yourselves, dominated by the mind-set of the flesh, and behaving like unbelievers. For when you divided yourselves up in groups – a "Paul group" and an "Apollos group" – you're acting like people without the Spirit's influence.*

Is that who we want to be? People acting without the Spirit's influence? Because we can be sure that if we're dividing ourselves up and centering around anything other than Jesus Christ, we're doing exactly that.



Is there any area in the church, in which you're taking sides or dividing into groups?



Day Two: Gathering Around People

I believe as I've been writing this that the Lord has shown me that our tendency to divide up into groups to gather around people is one of the reasons why there is no hierarchy in the Kingdom of God. It's also why He is so centred on opening the treasure chests of Glory embedded in each of our hearts, as described in Colossians 1:26 – 27 (TPT).

Christ lives in each one of us and He is a treasure chest of glory within us. However, when there is hierarchy and only some of the 'leaders' get to have their treasure chests opened, the spotlight goes on them, and the rest of the people (who have no idea they have their own treasure chest because they've been told to 'come in here under my vision' instead of opening it) find the most glorious looking person or 'vision' to gather around. Then we have exactly what Paul described: A 'Paul' group and an 'Apollos' group.

See the groups he described were actually not around theological groups - a 'circumcision' group and a 'non-circumcision' group'. It wasn't actually theology so much that they gathered around, but people. And I think if we were to study out the formation of denominations around the world, this is actually what has happened. Each person has started their 'group' or their 'denomination' with their own set of theology, their own perspective. But essentially it's been the fact that there was a person with the spotlight on them... many times a person who genuinely loved the Lord and who was walking with their treasure chest wide open. But the people around them looked on in amazement at the beauty of that opened treasure chest. People were looking for a leader to lead them instead of going themselves, and when they found that leader, they actually took on that leader's theology as their own.

Denominations aren't so much about separate theology as the hierarchy of 'the celebrity ones'. Oh, is that too harsh? I don't think so. What I see when I look around me at the church these days saddens me greatly. I call it 'celebrity pastor syndrome'. Where the church thinks it's OK, or even normal, to put the spotlight on and herald and gather around and applaud a revered 'leader' that is most certainly higher on the hierarchical ladder than they are. And while I believe very strongly that every 'leader' has a treasure chests which should be opened and celebrated, it's dangerous where we're going. Because so too does



every other person, but they're not being given permission or space to open them!

I recently sat in a great, big conference where there were thousands of women in the seats – and one woman on the spotlight on the stage. And I just felt so heartbroken. I knew the woman on the stage had beautiful treasure and it was wonderful that she was sharing it with everyone. But when would the thousands of women sitting in their seats ever get to open and share their treasure with others? When would we begin to celebrate what was contained in the hearts of each person represented instead of sit there, applauding the one on show? Because we need the treasure contained in the whole body, not just a few!

As we were sitting there and I was struggling with these things in my heart, my friend saw a 1961 prophecy by Tommy Hicks on her facebook feed and showed me. It talked of the end time army of God – the nameless, faceless, powerful, anointed Army of God... the unknowns and the unqualified... the nobodies stretching forth their hands in the Name of Jesus. No one was higher than anyone else, His same power flowed through them all.

The entire prophecy is important for every believer to read, and it has been attached to this devotional. But here is part of it:

"...the anointing of God was upon these people as they went forward in the name of the Lord. I saw these men and women as they went forth. They were ditch diggers, they were washerwomen, they were rich men, they were poor men. I saw people who were bound with paralysis and sickness and blindness and deafness. As the Lord stretched forth to give them this anointing they became well, they became healed, and they went forth!..."

God is going to give to the world a demonstration in this last hour as the world has never known. These men and women are of all walks of life, degrees will mean nothing. I saw these workers as they were going over the face of the earth. When one would stumble and fall, another would come and pick him up. There were no "big I" and "little you" but every mountain was brought low and every valley was exalted, and they seemed to have one thing in common — there was a divine love, a divine love that seemed to flow forth from these people as they worked together, and as they lived together. It was the most



glorious sight that I have ever know, Jesus Christ was the theme of their life. They continued and it seemed the days went by as I stood and beheld this sight. I could only cry, and sometimes I laughed. It was so wonderful as these people went throughout the face of the whole earth, bringing forth in this last end time...

Angry mobs came to them with swords and with guns. And like Jesus, they passed through the multitudes and they could not find them, but they went forth in the name of the Lord, and everywhere they stretched forth their hands, the sick were healed, the blind eyes were opened. There was not a long prayer, and after I had reviewed the vision many times in my mind, and I thought about it many times, I realized that I never saw a church, and I never saw or heard a denomination, but these people were going in the name of the Lord of Hosts. Hallelujah!"

I was so excited by this prophecy, but at the same time I was also challenged by it because I knew I would have to settle something in my heart once and for all. I went out into the foyer with this word and I have to admit, I was surprised at what I found in my heart. This word described an army of nobodies, who functioned as one and carried the glory of the Lord over the world. No one was higher or lower than anyone else, and each one who said yes was equally valuable and life-carrying. I realised that I had to be willing to be a nothing for Him. Though I knew I would always mean everything to Jesus and my value is without measure (as is yours), I knew there could be no pride, no spotlight, no climbing the ladder for me. My traditional mindset had to go. I had spent my life thus far with huge vision, wanting to 'make a difference to the world'... I wanted people know that I had lived and to leave a mark which impacted people long after I was gone. But really, deep down I wanted a spotlight. I wanted to succeed and I wanted to be on the top of the hierarchy. Though my motive was genuinely to help people and make the world a better place, I wanted to do it the way I'd seen it done. And it wasn't kingdom.

And so I struggled within myself, until I could truthfully say, 'Yes Lord, I'll be a nobody for you.' And I knew I was OK with that, because it's the only answer for the world, it's the only answer for the church and most of all, it's what His heart wants.



Are you willing to be a nobody for Him?



Day Three: Houses of Bondage

Rather than big, flashy conferences where we herald one person above the others, and flex the power of 'this house', He just wants us to each be submitted to Him, be in fellowship with one another, and step out and do what He has whispered to each one of us in the secret place.

Church 'Leaders' who won't value the treasure that surrounds them, not only miss out greatly on the revelation that the Lord wants to bring to them through other people, but they become guilty of overseeing houses of bondage. I know, my jaw dropped too when God used this phrase to describe the traditional church structure we see (and Pentecostal churches are just as guilty, if not more so). This is the scripture He gave me:

Isaiah 42:22 (NKJV) *But this is a people robbed and plundered; they are all of them snared in holes and hidden in houses of bondage. They have become a prey, with no one to say, Restore them!*

Why? How? Because they sit in the pews week after week, year after year, with nobody giving them permission to open their treasure chests, and no one else in the church knowing just what is contained inside of them. If they happen to be willing to volunteer for something the 'celebrity pastor' has deemed is part of the vision of 'this house', then they might get to use a small portion of their treasure chest. But hear from the Lord for themselves and simply obey it – that's OK if they're talking to the neighbour next door, but if they're to preach or gather people, unify His body or minister to the community... if they're to do something which doesn't 'fit' the vision of the church, what happens then? These people are immediately labelled 'rebellious', and the 'leaders' warn others not to be led astray by them.

If you haven't experienced this before, you may well not believe me. But I've experienced it and I've seen it happen over and over and over again, to 'lay people' (not a term I see anywhere in the Bible) who get a hold of the revelation of Christ in them and come into intimacy with Christ Jesus. He opens their treasure chest and they are submitted and simply obey Him, at which point we should be celebrating because heaven certainly is. But oh, the angst it causes in the hearts of those who are the 'leaders' in the spotlight!



I've seen and experienced church pastors intentionally tell people not to go to a weekend gathering that Holy Spirit had clearly directed a 'nobody' believer to run (and which was confirmed through other men and women of God). I've seen moves towards the unifying of His body and the transformation of His towns be viewed with suspicion and threat. The suspicion has been towards people whose hearts are to bring the body of Christ together in unity and oneness and who despise division. And yet the most frequent fear of the pastors has been that these same people are going to 'start another church', take 'their' people and be in competition with them. How far have we fallen! And this fear is especially laughable when the people they've been suspicious of have such a sense of the oneness of the church that they don't even have a frame of reference for 'starting a church'. How can you start something that already exists in singular form?

And when something happens in the body of Christ that is of benefit to the body and lifts high the name of Jesus, why is it that the immediate reaction is not joy, but rather division and competition? Because if we truly saw ourselves as one body, we would be excited for others to build His Kingdom. But sadly, it seems as though the only kingdom that it's OK for people to build is our own. This is a serious indictment on the church and we need to come back to a place where others building His kingdom becomes about completion, not competition.

Soak Time

Have you ever experienced the sense of being 'hidden and snared' in houses of bondage? Have you seen others as competition instead of completion?



Day Four: A Divided House Will Fall

Look how far removed we are from His vision of the singular church! God is going to have to do some exposing of hearts and I believe it's coming soon. The church may look messy for a while, because some of the kingdoms which have been built will either need to change, come down, or they will starve as the Presence of the Lord leaves those places. But God is going to restore the church. Even in the midst of the mess, it's going to be glorious.

And God has to bring restoration, because it's for the sake of His body. It's for the sake of our lives. When we are in competition with one another, rather than completion, this is what we look like and what we're doing:

Galatians 5:15 (TPT) *But if you continue to criticize and come against each other over minor issues, you're acting like wild beasts trying to destroy one another!*

Luke 11:17 (NIV) *Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall.*

In other words, division makes us enemies instead of brothers and sisters. Any division between us is in effect a deliberate act to destroy the house He's building. Imagine what the house looks like when we're separated and we're not built together. What do we have? Not a house, but mere walls. Walls divide! They keep us apart. Walls that are unjoined let the enemy in, and we find ourselves without protection.

Worst of all, there's no cornerstone! A cornerstone is described as *...a stone that forms the base of a corner of a building, joining two walls*. Jesus Himself is described as the Chief Cornerstone (Isaiah 28:16), and He is called this because it is He that joins us together. Without Christ, we are nothing but separate walls, divided against one another. But with Christ, we are united together.

Believe it or not, we need one another. We need the believers around us to have their treasure chests wide open, because they carry facets of the Lord that we won't see any other way. He wants us to receive from one another. If we will honour the Lord and come into agreement with what He is building, we have no frame of reference for the blueprint that He is working off, but it will absolutely amaze us!



Soak Time

Do you have a new respect for the power of being unified? Where have you seen the painful reality of Luke 11:17 manifest – the destruction of a divided house?



Day Five: Bridging the Gaps

God's blueprint for His house will amaze us, but for us to see this house, we can be sure that we need to allow Jesus to bridge the gaps between us – if we don't, He'll have to wait for another generation who will, but He will have His way.

He's always been working towards this. Jesus was building this house when He sent Paul to preach salvation to the Gentiles. Prior to that, salvation had only been recognised by the Jewish people, but Jesus gave Paul a picture of the house He was building, and it was being built with one body of people.

Ephesians 2:12 – 17 (NLT) *In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope. But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.*

For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us...He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups. Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to 'god by means of his death on the cross and our hostility toward each other was put to death.

He brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near. Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.

V15 (NKJV) *...so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace...*

Though both the Jews and Gentiles are still learning how to walk in the reality of this one new man, in Christ the gap has been bridged. No longer are Jews and Gentiles separate, but we are all one in Christ Jesus. And this is just the first gap Christ has bridged.

There are other gaps He is bridging in order to build this house. He's bridged the gap between male and female. He's also bridged the gap between slaves



and free, which I believe in this present day to be the abolition of hierarchical authority, 'under cover' and anything which sets one person above another. It also refers to financial hierarchy.

Galatians 3:28 (NLT) *There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

And just to confirm that His heart is to bridge every single gap between us, He says:

Ephesians 4:4 – 6 (NLT) *For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all.*

If Christ is living through us all, why do we think we've got it all together on our own? There is much lip service paid to unity within the body of Christ. We think that because we don't hate believers from another church, that we're in unity with them. Really? Yet, we'll forge forward with our own plan and strategy for transforming our towns and cities, without even once coming together to pray and hear what is in the heart of the other believers (from other denominations or 'churches'). What would happen if our Army did this? If one corp or one unit came up with their own strategy and moved forward with it, without consulting with the other corps or units around them? It would be anarchy – and almost certain death! Yet the church has been functioning this way for generations.

And why don't we seek the Lord and His strategies together, and then walk them out in partnership? Because we think we've got more of the Spirit of God or that they won't understand our powerful revelation... we want to build our own kingdom... we want the glory of being the ones who did it!

It's time to be honest with ourselves and each other. When Christ is in each one of us, there really is no room for division of any kind.

Where there is a gap, Christ died to bridge it.



Being honest with yourself, are there any gaps Christ has bridged, yet you've resisted them? Why?
