

“God Builds” – Pr Jim Sprenkle – Pentecost Day June 5, 2022 (8:30am Service)

- I. **Genesis 11:1-9** previously read
- II. **Kids love to build stuff...**
 - a. When I was spending time with the grandkids, at least once a day the building blocks got dragged out and dumped all over the floor.
 - i. Sometimes the idea was the adults built a tower and the little guys crushed it like Godzilla...
 - ii. Other times, Theo or Evie built the tower themselves.
 - b. When I was a kid we had Legos, erector sets, Lincoln Logs, and regular old building blocks.
 - i. Not only that, but we were always building a fort of some kind.
 - ii. A clubhouse, a treehouse, or a snow cave were always worth an afternoon of fun.
 - c. I'm not sure if it's built in our brains or what, but humans always want to build something bigger and better – from state-of-the-art stadiums to sky rise buildings that push the limits of gravity.
 - d. Whether we are two years old or an adult, we show off our creation and proudly say, “Look what I built!”
 - e. In Genesis 11, we have one of the first stories of people playing with building blocks.
 - i. Evil and brokenness were so bad that God used a flood to cleanse the earth of everyone except Noah and his family.
 - ii. God instructed them to go forth into all the world and multiply (Genesis 9:1)
 - iii. Instead, they stayed together and over time began building a city... and a tower as children do... I mean adults.
 - iv. Unfortunately, the thing driving all this work was pride and glorifying self rather than glorifying God and doing what He wanted.
 - f. In His infinite wisdom, God intervened and put a stop to the plans of His sinful children... by mixing up their languages.
 - i. Isn't that just like us human beings though?
 - 1. From the very beginning, we have rebelled against God's plan so that we can build our own thing
 - 2. God gives us all the building blocks for the perfect tower in His name and with His plan, and we do our own thing... like we know better!
- III. **Whatever we build without God will fail us.**
 - a. It isn't that we can't build things... or that it might not make a difference in God's kingdom.

- i. For example, many scientists and others who don't believe in God have given the world medical breakthroughs, along with advancements in everything from transportation to communication.
 - ii. Others who don't believe in God take care of us through their jobs – like first responders, doctors, construction workers, or anyone else who supports our daily needs
 - b. So yes, we can build things... and we can even benefit from those things.
 - c. The failure comes when we put our trust in ourselves or the world.
 - i. How long does a great job resumé or education last?
 - 1. As long as you can maintain your health – or when you die
 - ii. How long does your money last?
 - 1. However long it takes you to spend it or when you die
 - iii. How long can you live in a home you build?
 - 1. However long you can stay there with your health, finances, or when you die
 - iv. How long will your business last?
 - 1. As long as the economy allows it, and if you are the only one who knows how to run it, until you retire... or when you die.
 - d. Hopefully you get my point that the world cannot be where we place our trust – as if it could save us – and certainly we cannot save ourselves.
 - e. God knows our sinful condition... the same sins of selfishness, self-seeking, and trying to do everything on our own has plagued us since our distant ancestors Adam and Eve.
 - i. The sad thing is that we fool ourselves into thinking that we don't need God, or that we can build a life that matters with Him as an afterthought.
 - ii. As I said before, whatever we do can only last so long, but with God as the reason and focus, we can count on our lives making a kingdom difference... an eternal difference.

IV. **Jesus is the answer to our building problems.**

- a. Again, in God's great wisdom, He intervened to bring us back together after confusing our language and sending us all throughout the world.
- b. It took thousands of years after the languages were confused at the Tower of Babel, but God sent His Son to become the cure for our selfish endeavors, our misplaced trust... our sin.
- c. It seems a little strange that the way God saved us came by the death of His Son, but rather than destroying us and starting over again, He gave Himself... God the Son came to pay our sin debt.
 - i. For each time we pushed God out to the margins of our lives – Jesus died.
 - ii. In our plans and designs to get ahead at the expense of our relationship with God – Jesus died.

- iii. For all the misplaced trust in worldly things, people, and ourselves – Jesus died.
- d. He died to offer us something totally different than the typical human being experiences – a life that is geared outward in love for our neighbor and upward in love for God.
 - i. As Jesus transforms and builds up our lives in the Word, the Sacraments, and the other believers around us, we begin to see how God is the Master Builder.

V. **Yet, God doesn't do this with Jesus here to lead in person.**

- a. There will come a time when Jesus leads us all in the glory of heaven – but until then we have the Holy Spirit.
- b. In a great reversal of the Tower of Babel and confusing the languages, God the Holy Spirit came just as Jesus said He would... in Jerusalem and in great power.
- c. All the people could understand one language, and it opened the door for the language of our Savior – the Gospel message of salvation to be understood no matter what dialect they spoke.
- d. From the starting point of those who believed in Jerusalem (around 3000 followers), God the Holy Spirit has been building the Church for over 2000 years and has around 2.5 billion believers in the world today.
 - i. Do they speak the same language?
 - 1. Far from it... but they all have the same God... Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
 - 2. The God the Father who sent God the Son... who together sent God the Holy Spirit.
- e. The Holy Spirit has an incredibly important job to do as He works through the Word to call, gather, enlighten and sanctify believers...
 - i. In other words... He points us to Jesus and His saving work...
 - ii. The Holy Spirit creates a new heart in us by the power of Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the Word to see Jesus as our salvation and to love outward and upward.
 - iii. The Holy Spirit is working through our lives as followers of Christ to show the world that there is more to life than trusting in ourselves and trying to build things without God.

VI. **Today is an example of the Holy Spirit at work in building the Church.**

- a. In a short time, 7 confirmands will share their faith with us... telling us all what they believe in Jesus and why God is important to them.
- b. These young people were Baptized – most as babies – and the Holy Spirit began the work of pointing them to Jesus until this day of their Confirmation and first communion.

- c. As they trust in God's promises to be with them and forgive them, and instead of doing everything on their own and selfishly... they will follow the great Builder with a life that serves and loves.
- d. That is the Holy Spirit at work – building the Church by bringing us into the grace of God – the salvation Jesus won.
- e. By all means go out and build!
 - i. Build for the kingdom – build for eternity – build with God in the lead.
Amen