

Cut to Fit: How God Is Building His Church Today

Ephesians 2:19-22

Key Thoughts

1. **One word changes everything.** "Therefore," because of what God accomplished by grace through faith, those who were once strangers and foreigners are now fellow citizens and members of the household of God.
2. **The Church is not a fresh start; it is a continuation.** We are fellow citizens with the saints of old and members of a family that has stood through the millennia.
3. **Everything is laid true in reference to Christ.** Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the Church rests on Jesus as the chief cornerstone, who sets the line, level, and square for every stone after Him.
4. **You are being cut to fit.** We come to Christ raw and unshaped, and through a process that is often far from gentle He shapes each of us uniquely for a role no one else can fill.
5. **We are His dwelling place.** Regardless of how others who claim Christ may live, those who are truly His walk in the Spirit and are being built together into the very dwelling place of God.

Discussion Questions

1. Paul says believers are "no longer strangers and foreigners" but "fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19, NKJV). The word for foreigner pictures someone alongside the house but not inside it. Before Christ, in what ways were you alongside the house rather than within it?
2. The Church is built on "the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:20, NKJV). Why does it matter that God built the Church on this foundation rather than starting something entirely separate from His work in the Old Testament?
3. A cornerstone sets the line, level, and square for every stone after it, and a stone laid even slightly off yields a building off everywhere. Where do you find yourself measuring your life by something other than Christ, and what would it look like to realign?
4. The sermon described the shaping of each believer as a process of hammer and chisel. Where is God currently reshaping you, and how have you responded to the discomfort of being made to fit?
5. The message warned that church can become something we attend rather than something we invest in. Be honest: are you serving as a fitted member of this body, or are you primarily a visitor? What is one role you sense God shaping you for?
6. Growth of a church is not always growth of THE Church. Using the message's measures (loving God and people, living out the Great Commission, bearing the fruit of the Spirit), how would you assess the health of your own walk this week?

Applications

1. **Take your place.** Identify one specific role in this body that fits how God has shaped you (serving, teaching, hospitality, prayer, sound, worship, caring for a member) and take one step toward it this week.
2. **Submit to the chisel.** Name one area where God is currently shaping you that you have been resisting, and choose obedience there before next Sunday.
3. **Measure by the right standard.** Take your spiritual pulse the way the message did: are you loving God and loving people, and are you going and making disciples? Pick the mark you have let slide and take one concrete step in it this week, asking the Spirit to bear His fruit through you as you go.

Closing Prayer

Father, we were once strangers and foreigners, alongside the house but never within it, without hope and without You in the world. But You, rich in mercy, brought us near by the blood of Your Son and made us members of Your household. Thank You for setting us on the one foundation, with Christ as our cornerstone. Take the hammer and chisel to our lives and shape us into the people You need us to be for Your church. Forgive us for treating Your house as something to attend rather than something to invest in. Make us faithful members who love You and love people, who go and make disciples, and who walk in the Spirit. And let it be true of us that we are Your dwelling place, a holy temple being built together for Your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.