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### The Foundation of the Church

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*Adrian* → Dispensation of Gentiles — Abraham — 2000 yrs  
 Abraham → Jews to Christ — Age of Israel  
 Christ → Church — ~~Transition~~ *Transition*  
 THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF <sup>1000 yrs</sup> EPHESIANS  
 NUMBER 23  
 EPHESIANS 2:18-22

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EPHESIANS 2:18-22 "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit"

These verses bring us to the transition point in this book. Thus far we have studied the scar tissue in the soul and how this hinders us in our relationship with God and with others. In chapter three we will see the categories of the human spirit. The soul is made up of the following characteristics--

- Self-Consciousness
- Mentality
- Volition
- Conscience
- Emotion
- The Old Sin Nature

When we feed Bible doctrine into the soul, it passes through these categories and stores resources in the spirit. Then we are able to draw on these resources in the Spirit and we thereby have adequate power for living the Christian life.

In the last four verses of this chapter we move into the Church Age concept. In the next chapter we will encounter what is called "The mystery." The mystery was hidden in Old Testament times and the idea of the church was never mentioned once in the Old Testament. It was quite a shock to Satan when he learned for the first time that Christ was going to form a body in the earth called "The Church." All of this hinged on the glorification of Jesus Christ. After Christ's spiritual and physical deaths on the cross, then his burial in the grave, followed by his resurrection and many appearances over a period of forty days, he ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. After being seated there in glory, ten days later the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost and God started forming "The body" which we know as the church. The enemies of the church are the Devil, all fallen angels and all demons. When Christ ascended, God the Father said to him, "Sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." In order to have an instrument with which to make his enemies his footstool there was the formation of the body of Christ, the church. Starting at the resurrection of Christ, this forming of the church will continue until the time of the rapture, at which time all Church Age believers will be taken out of the world. So the Church Age is the period of the intensification of the angelic conflict.

In Old Testament times only some were in full-time Christian service. In the Church Age every believer is in full-time Christian service. A partial explanation of this is found in JOHN 7:39. "(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

This means that when Christ was glorified and sat down at the right hand of God, the Holy Spirit was given and entered every believer and at that point the angelic conflict moved into an intensified stage. The last four chapters of Ephesians are designed to present the intensification of that angelic conflict. In Old Testament times Christ was the target of Satan, and the line that would produce Christ's physical birth was the target. When Christ sat down at the right hand of God and the Holy Spirit was sent at Pentecost, for the first time in history every believer had the Holy Spirit within him. This was never true before. This means that now, in the Church Age, every believer is a priest. Every believer is in full-time Christian service. Every believer in the Church Age is indwelt by Christ and is in union with Christ, and this was never true before. For the believer in the Church Age a supernatural way of life is demanded and these spiritual assets are provided to make this possible. We live in the intensification of the angelic conflict and our life and body and soul and spirit is a battleground, an unseen but intense battleground. This is the time of the most intense battle in all history, and Satan is trying to hinder and obstruct the growing of the body of Christ, which we call the church. Satan can't stop the growing of the body of Christ. At the end of the Church Age the body will be taken to heaven, then during the seven year Tribulation period, which will be the most terrible time in world history, the body in heaven will be changed into the bride of Christ and prepared to return to the earth with Christ at his second coming. The bride will rule and reign with Christ forever.

This passage before us deals with the body of Christ, and for the first time in history, this contest is intensified to the maximum. This is why something extra was provided for every Christian. He provided for every Christian in the church age the indwelling Holy Spirit, and he provided grace and inner happiness and a relaxed mental attitude so Christians could be prepared to meet every problem which will come to them. God has a plan for every life, but if we go on negative volition then we will never know what that plan is, and we will create a vacuum in the soul and into that vacuum will be drawn mental attitude sins and a false emphasis on the details of life. Also into that vacuum will be drawn all kinds of false doctrine and the entire life becomes confusion and disaster.

Here then is a transitional passage. The first two chapters of Ephesians present the introduction, and the last four chapters present the interpretation of the angelic conflict. The plan of God calls for your life to have a relaxed mental attitude, and a moment by moment inner peace and a full operation of the soul in such a way that a marvelous inner happiness results. But one can miss the boat entirely by having a negative volition toward Bible doctrine.

This is a very technical transitional passage and behind it is your inner happiness and your relaxed mental attitude. In this passage we go to the collective concept from the personal concept. In this passage before us we are going to study about the church. A church is designed to give each individual member maximum privacy while in that atmosphere he can learn maximum doctrine. We are therefore going to study here a very technical paragraph.

EPHESIANS 2:18 "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." This speaks of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Too often we have left this doctrine to a wild-eyed group and in recent years they have given themselves a very dignified name, and they call it the Charismatic Movement. They have been given many names, such as Pentecostals, Holiness groups or the Glossalalia groups. They all talk about getting the Holy Spirit and at the same time they talk about some ecstatic experience which has nothing to do with the plain teaching of the Word of God. No one has spoken legitimately in a tongue since 70 A.D. Many of these things are actually evil and has absolutely nothing to do with the Holy Spirit. Wild ecstasies has no legitimate place in Christianity. It doesn't matter how many fall for such things nor how many may succumb to such false propaganda. All of that is a false baptism of the Holy Spirit. In this verse the words "by one spirit" is the baptism of the Holy Spirit and it is one of the many things that happens to an individual at the moment of salvation. God takes the new believer and enters him into union with Christ. That is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and is so called in 1 Cor. 12:13.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

Also in Acts 1:5. "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

The true church isn't the church roll, or those who make up the organizations in the church, or the choir, or any other group in the church. The true church isn't a building with a cross on it. Then what is the true church, the real body of Christ? The true church is composed of all those who believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour. The body of Christ is made up of believers. Anyone who has fulfilled Acts 16:31 is a member of the true church. Being a member of the true body of Christ doesn't mean the wearing of a certain kind of uniform or a certain makeup or a certain hair do or anything like that. The Bible says you are a true member of the body of Christ when you believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour. The Holy Spirit accomplishes this for us the moment we believe.

Paul here is introducing something new, something that had never happened in Old Testament times. In the next chapter he will call it "A mystery." The glorification of Jesus Christ caused the angelic conflict to shift gears.

This is why Christianity is not a religion. Christianity is a relationship with God through Christ. A religion is man's attempt by human effort to reach God. God reached down for man through Christ and that's Christianity. Once you believe in Jesus Christ you have a policy that cannot be cancelled, it is called the eternal life policy. It is a perfect policy and no sin that you can commit can cancel out eternal life. God is greater and stronger and smarter than any individual. So there is no way an individual can do something so terrible that his salvation will be cancelled out. God is greater than all of our sins, and stronger. There is no way you can lose your salvation after you

get it, for God is stronger than your sin. At the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit takes the believer and puts him into union with Christ. We are in Christ forever, and he is a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Paul, in these verses, is establishing the foundation for the last four chapters. Through him we have access to the Father by means of the Holy Spirit. So here is a beautiful picture of the Trinity at work. All three members of the Trinity are involved in this verse. This is something no unbeliever can duplicate. Grace doesn't stop at the cross, it just goes into operation at the cross, but it continues throughout life and gets more wonderful all the time. We keep on having this access by the Holy Spirit and we never lose it. This is present linear action and it means the results go on forever.

EPHESIANS 2:19 "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;" The word "Now" refers to the church age. So he says, "Therefore" and he means on the basis of what we have studied in these previous chapters. "Ye are" should be translated "You keep on being." You keep on being no longer a stranger or foreigner. The word for stranger is "Zenos." It means one who is not a citizen. When you accept Christ you become a citizen of the kingdom of God and you will always be a citizen. The word for foreigner is "paroikos" and it means to dwell in a place but not be relaxed or feel at home.

Then who are the saints? Is a saint some super kind of believer? No. A saint means one separated to God and in God's sight every single believer is a saint. Saint is just a technical word for believer. "Fellow citizens" and this means brethren. If you are born again, you are just as much a saint as Peter or Paul or John. We are all members of the household, and this is a technical word which refers to someone born into the home. This body has a real foundation and we will study the foundation in the next verse.

EPHESIANS 2:20 "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;" Here is the historical foundation of the church. The historical foundation is verse 20a and the real foundation is verse 20b. The church got started by the doctrinal teaching of the apostles and prophets. But in a real sense, Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church.

The words "Are built" come from "ep oikodomeo" and it means a structure which is planned in detail, and then built. The whole grace structure was planned, then built, and the building is still going on. Apostles and prophets communicated doctrine and that is the historical foundation of the church. But the real foundation is Jesus Christ himself. He is called here "The chief corner stone." Jesus Christ was the son of David and the true King of the Jews. But we have another group called the church and these two walls come together and Jesus Christ is the meeting place of both, so he is called the chief corner stone. The Jews and the church share the same ruler, the same king, the same Saviour.

EPHESIANS 2:21 "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:" Here is the structure, the real planning of the church. "In whom" literally means "in Christ." So every believer is in Christ, and that is the structure of the church.

The church is unique and different from anything ever built before. "Fitly framed together" is from "sun armologeio" and really means fitting all the joints together. To do this you have to have a plan. This means fitting things together according to a plan. This also calls for a certain number of people. The number will be equal to the number of demons operating under Satan. This will be made plain when you study other passages, like Colossians 2 and Zechariah 13 and 1 Thess. 3. When the body of Christ is completed it will be taken out of the world. Now no believer can be Satan possessed. Therefore we have only two sons of perdition, Judas and the Anti-Christ. At the moment the church was started, God knew the precise number of individuals that would make up the church. We have no way to compute this, but God does. He knows the exact number of members, the exact number of pastor-teachers, etc. Here is what we call divine symmetry. Every second of the existence of the church was planned in detail. God has the right number of spiritual gifts functioning at all times.

These words "fitly framed together" are a present, passive, participle and this means there is perfect symmetry in the structure of the church. The word "groweth" is a present, active, indicative of "auzo" and it means to increase, to expand. If you will compare Colossians 2:15 with Revelation 19 and with Zechariah 13:2 and 1 Thess. 3:13, you will discover that when the number in the church is complete it will be equal to the number of demons. God said, "Sit down until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Who are the enemies? The enemies are Satan and demons. So the body is removed and in the middle of the Tribulation Satan is cast to the earth and all the demons are eventually cast off the earth with him. All the believers form the holy temple of the Lord.

EPHESIANS 2:22 "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." "In whom" refers to our positional sanctification. All believers are in Christ. "Builded together" is "sun oikodomeo" and this means planning and construction. This is the concept of team work. The word "habitation" means a permanent dwelling. This is what makes the whole thing hang together.

This is the church, the mystery, the thing that was hidden from the ages past, but now made plain to us in the New Testament. This we will study in the next chapter.