

Sunday, August 4, 2019—Body Building: Some Assembly Required

Introduction

- Nearly a year ago on September 16, 2018 I began our current series on Body Building or building up the body of Christ.
- I Timothy 4:7-8—was a key verse in stabling the concept for the series.
- Philippians 2:12—in order to build the body of Christ we are going to need to work out. To take the life that is in us and work it out or manifest it in our mortal flesh.
- Our series on Body Building has been divided up into two parts:
 - Romans 12:4-5—a study of one-anothering and the mutually reciprocating relationships we have with each other as members of the body of Christ.
 - Ephesians 4:16—study of how the body of Christ is designed to edify itself.
 - Romans 14:19—a consideration of thoughts, attitude, and actions that don't make for peace and don't edify the body of Christ.
 - Ephesians 4:29—consideration of various forms of corrupt communication.
- For a while I was struggling to figure out how to wrap up this series. Then in speaking with a pastor friend of mine (Ted Fellows) he mentioned an illustration regarding the building of the tabernacle in the book of Exodus that piqued my interest.
- I want to share some of that with you this morning under the titled of Some Assembly Required.

Three Verses in Colossians

- Colossians 1:1-2—who is Paul writing to? The saints at Colossi. In other words, Paul is writings to believers.
- Colossians 2:10—the saints at Colossi “are complete” in Christ.
 - The phrase “ye are” is in the indicative mood. In other words, it is stating the present fact that the Colossians “are complete in him.”
- Colossians 4:12—Epaphras is praying that the Colossians “may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.”

- The phrase “may stand” is in the subjective mood meaning that their standing perfect and complete in all the will of God is subject or depending upon their circumstances.
- Is Epaphras praying that the individual saints at Colossi would somehow become more complete in Christ than they were in chapter 2? No, he is praying that they collectively as a local church would “stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” The individual saints can’t get any more complete than they already are, but they can improve their corporate situation as they seek to do the will of God and stand for the truth.

The Illustration of the Tabernacle

- Exodus 35:4-11—God commands Israel to build/construct the tabernacle.
- Exodus 36:1, 4—they begin the work of building the tabernacle.
- Exodus 39:32-43—all the individual pieces were finished and complete. Moses blessed them for their work. But was the tabernacle finished yet? No, it needed to be assembled.
- Exodus 40:1, 17-33—Moses took the complete pieces that the children of Israel had constructed and assembled the tabernacle.
- Exodus 40:34-35—God came and dwelt in the tabernacle.
- The individual pieces were complete, yet some assembly was required for God to come and dwell in the tabernacle and fully manifest himself to and through Israel.
- This is an illustration of the body of Christ. Individual members of the body of Christ are complete in Christ. Nothing can improve upon our complete standing in Christ, yet we need to assemble ourselves together in the local church to do the work of the ministry.

Application of Illustration

- Colossians 4:12—“ye” is referring to the corporate activity of the church in Colossi.
- Ephesians 2:20-22—“ye also” i.e., the saints at Ephesus are the habitation of God through the Spirit. This is both individual and corporate.
- II Corinthians 6:16—the local church is the temple of the living God. Personally, the Holy Spirit indwells and resides within each individual saint. Corporately, God desires to build those individual members together into a temple through which he can manifest himself in a geographic area.
- I Corinthians 11:17-18, 20, 33-34—God desires for the body of Christ to come together i.e., to assemble with each other.

- I Corinthians 14:23—God’s desire is for the whole church to come together. Why?
- I Corinthians 12:17-18—missing members limit function. What would have happened if Moses has been missing individual pieces necessary to construct the tabernacle? It would not have been built.
- Ephesians 4:16—they local church is where we go to be edified. The local church is where be practice one-anothering.
- Personal thoughts about GLBC.