

“You Have Built, They Have Remodeled”

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A few years back, there was a movie that came out called, “Field of Dreams”. The lead character heard a voice that said, “If you build it, they will come”. So, he built a baseball field in the middle of no-where U.S.A. , sure enough, the legendary baseball players came and played on the field. I love baseball! Recently I watched this movie again (re-run), and thought to myself, “God has built, why haven't they come?” Well, Bible history has answered this question for me, long before I asked. However, let me share some things with you, and I think you will appreciate the thought process!

God Built = Marriage Between a Man and a Woman: (A time sensitive point)

Genesis 1:27 “So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

He told them, “**Be fruitful and multiply**” and “**fill the earth and have dominion over it**” . As God built it, this could only be accomplished by the man and the woman together.

Genesis 2:24 “**Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**”

This was the design of God for the beginning of the family unit! This family unit would be the building block for all of man's social interaction, and cooperative interaction.

Man Remodeled = Men with Men, Women with Women:

Judges 19:22 “As they were enjoying themselves, suddenly certain men of the city, perverted men , surrounded the house *and* beat on the door. They spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, “Bring out the man who came to your house, that we may know him *carnally!*”

Romans 1:26-27 “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. **27** Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.”

Unsatisfied with the original design of God and to satisfy their lusts, men and women have left the design of their creator in order to pervert their own nature.

God Built = The Church as His Eternal Purpose:

Ephesians 3:10-11 “to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*, **11** according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,”

The manifestation of God's wisdom had remained a mystery from eternity is now made known in the preaching of the Gospel of Christ and in every existence of the church as a part of God's plan. Such was the purpose and plan of God from eternity. God then is the supreme architect of the church. The pattern is divine, the result of divine wisdom and planning. The design represents not only divine planning but divine will which cannot be disregarded.

The church was built by Christ in harmony with God's purpose and plan (**Matthew 16:18**). Finally, His church is ruled by divine authority (**Matthew 28:18-20** ; **Ephesians 1:18 -23**).

Man Remodeled = Changed the Pattern and Source of Authority:

Unsatisfied with the design of the New Testament church as found in the scriptures, shortly after the last of the Apostolic influence faded, men began to remodel. It started with mono-elder rule of congregations; it then distorted into mono-elder rule over several congregations and multiple congregation cooperative efforts (apart from the autonomous design of God). Until man removed completely the rule of scripture within the church and placed the churches authority on the appointed clergymen, to supercede God's word. Attempts were made in history to reform this apostasy and attempt to return to scripture rule within the church.

However, in virtually every case each and every attempt fell short of restoration, and has malformed into the hundreds of denominations that exist today.

God Built = The Churches Divine Work and Activity:

Ephesians 4:12 “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,”

God established the work of the church to be accomplished in three distinct categories. First; is the edifying of the body, or the work of educating and training Christians in right living and acceptable service to God. Second; is the ministering to the needy saints. This includes any service rendered on behalf of needy saints whether in a physical or spiritual matter. Third; is the building up of the body of Christ. In this sense it describes a planting, establishing of the church where ever it is known. Simply, it is the spread of the kingdom.

Man Remodeled = He Created a Social Religion:

Man re-wrote these three directives to include a social purpose and launched the collective work of the church into human waters (instead of the spiritual it was built for). The church has since that time become a social institution; while the Gospel and it's principles of everlasting truth, which creates reform in the hearts of men, have been placed in a secondary role in the work of the church.

God Built = The Sufficiency of Scriptural Rule for the Church and its Saints:

Acts 20:32 “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

2 Peter 1:19-21 “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; **20** knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, **21** for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.”

It is this word of God, given to man, to enable him to be complete in the righteousness that God has established him to walk in.

Ephesians 2:10 “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

It was the word of God that the Lord expected His workers to approve themselves through, by diligently studying and rightly dividing its teaching.

2 Timothy 2:15 “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

And finally, it will be this word, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which He will judge those whom refuse the power of salvation, the plan for His church, and the warnings contained within its pages.

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 “in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,”

Man Remodeled = Heeded Their Own Desires over the Words:

In the end, after their destructive practices have ended and they stand before their Lord, the result will be a terrifying one.

God has planned from the beginning of time His great plan of salvation in Christ Jesus, and the building of the great spiritual kingdom of Christ . This was the message that was brought forth by His chosen spokesmen to the world and the instruction was easy:

Mark 16:15-16 “And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. **16** He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”

God has built, won't you come?