

GOD'S MAGNIFICENT IDEA
Part VIII
Ephesians 2:1-10

Introduction: The prodigious and influential sleeping giant, which is God's magnificent idea, has been aroused from its sleep and is ready for its inviolable mission to apprehend the planet for God. The world has been waiting for this for a long time. *Romans 8:19-21*. Jesus has invested heavily in the church, and He is solicitous of us to bring forth a harvest. The Great Commission has become more vivid than ever before. It is evident that the coming of the Lord is at hand. *Matthew 24:32-35, 42-44*. Evangelicals, people who are born again, can once again demonstrate the force which God has intended us to be by rising to the task of evangelizing the world with the gospel of Christ. The issues of abortion, same sex marriage, feeding the poor, and praying for jobs for the unemployed, are at the top of the church's agenda. We are praying for the economy, for our security, and for other pertinent issues of our day.

I. God's magnificent idea

A. The materials. Every building has to have materials from which it is constructed.

1. Materials come to us in raw form. They must be tooled upon before they are fit to put into a building (blocks, cement, etc.). So it is with the material that God is using for His building.
2. The temple that God is building is to be made up of stones, living stones. *1st Peter 2:5*. These stones have to be dug up out of the quarry of the world (*Isaiah 51:1-2*) and then cut and shaped by the hand of the Lord before they are ready to be built into the house of the Lord. *1st Kings 5:17-18* serves as an analogy of this very point.
3. When the preparatory work is done, the stones can be laid on the proper foundation and fitly framed together with other stones in the building of God. *Ephesians 2:21-22*.
4. The temple of God is built out of solid materials. *1st Corinthians 3:12-17*. We are shaped by the Master Builder Himself.
5. The temple that God is building is going to have to stand the test of fire. *Numbers 31:21-23; 1st Peter 1:7*. Each individual building block must be composed of materials that can pass through the fire and not be consumed.
6. The flip side of the coin is that our lives can be built of hay and stubble. That is, depending on our own merits, on riches, fame, good looks, or a desirable body to look at. Fire reduces all of this to ashes. God wants our lives to be composed of gold, silver, and precious stones. These are things produced by God under pressure, and they will not only go through the fire unharmed, but will actually become more pure when they do. *1st Peter 1:7*.
7. God wants to take all these building blocks or stones, tool them, and build them into a building suitable for His habitation. The New Testament word to describe this process is "edification." God wants the stones to be edified or built up. While God wants multiplication in the church, edification comes first. Note the instruction by the apostle Paul to the church. *1st Corinthians 14:3*. (To build up, to enlighten.)
8. The following things will bring edification to the church.
 - a. The Word of God. *Acts 20:32*.
 - b. The five-fold ministry. *Ephesians 4:11-12*.
 - c. Body ministry. *1st Corinthians 14:26*.
 - d. Spiritual sacrifices. *1st Peter 2:5*.
 - e. Being rooted in Christ. *Colossians 2:7*.
 - f. Praying in the Spirit. *Jude 20*.
 - g. Love. *1st Corinthians 8:1*.
 - h. Right communication. *Ephesians 4:29*.
 - i. Harmony and peace. *Romans 14:19*.
 - j. Seeking to please our neighbor. *Romans 15:2*.

Conclusion: Let us believe God for the last day outpouring of the Holy Spirit. *Joel 2:28*. The greatest days of the church lie before us. Get ready for something great!