

Cornerstone [The Foundation Of God's Living Temple]

Discussion Guide

Summary

This sermon wraps up a series on Jesus as our cornerstone by exploring what it truly means to belong to God's family and be built into His spiritual temple. Drawing from Ephesians 2:11-22 and 1 Corinthians 3:9-17, Jonathan walks through Paul's powerful progression of identity: from strangers and foreigners, to citizens, to family members, to living stones being fitted together as the holy temple where God's Spirit dwells. The central message is that the barrier between God and humanity has been broken through Christ, and every believer now has full access, full belonging, and a vital role in what God is building.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today as a family, grateful that You have made a way for us to belong to You. As we open Your Word together, we ask that You quiet our minds and soften our hearts. Help us to set aside any distractions or preconceived ideas, and give us fresh eyes to see what You want us to receive from this time together. Remind us that we are not just attending a gathering. We are Your temple, Your people, and Your family. Speak to each of us in the way we need to hear it most, and let this discussion draw us closer to You and to one another. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one place where you have always felt completely at home and comfortable, and what made it feel that way?

Key Verses

- 1 Corinthians 3:9-17
- Ephesians 2:11-22
- 1 Corinthians 6:19

Questions

- Jonathan described a progression in Ephesians 2 that moves from strangers and foreigners, to citizens, to family members, to living stones in God's temple. Which stage of that progression resonates most with where you feel you are in your relationship with God right now, and why?
- Paul explains that Jesus broke down the literal wall in the temple that separated Jews and Gentiles, making them one family. Are there any walls of division in your own life, whether between you and other people or between you and God, that you sense Jesus is calling you to let Him tear down?
- The sermon emphasized that the church is not a building you attend, but a family you belong to. How has your personal understanding of what church is shifted over time, and how does this passage challenge or confirm that understanding?
- Paul warns in 1 Corinthians 3 that we can build with gold, silver, and precious jewels or with wood, hay, and straw. What are some practical examples of each in

everyday life, and how can we tell the difference in the moment?

- Jonathan said that the way we handle conflict, serve others, and extend forgiveness are not just personal matters but structural ones that either reinforce or fracture the temple. How does thinking of your relationships within the church as structural rather than optional change the way you approach them?
- The sermon pointed out that the very people who were once barred from the temple in Jerusalem have now become the temple where God's Spirit lives. How does that reality shape the way you see yourself and your value to God and to the church community?
- Jonathan mentioned that sometimes we build with straw, choosing ourselves over others, neglecting community, or holding onto anger. What is one area in your life where you sense the Holy Spirit is calling you to repent and allow Him to reshape how you are building?
- If you truly believed every day that your body and your community together are the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, what is one specific thing that would change about how you show up for the people around you?

Life Application

This week, choose one intentional act of building with gold. It could be sitting with someone who is struggling and truly listening, serving in a way that no one will notice, speaking an honest and loving word to a fellow believer, forgiving someone you have been holding a grudge against, or giving generously out of joy rather than obligation. Before you do it, pause and remind yourself that you are not just doing a kind thing. You are contributing to the holy temple where God's Spirit lives.

At the end of the week, reflect on how that perspective changed the way the act felt and what it meant to you.

Key Takeaways

- Jesus is the cornerstone who holds everything together, and every believer is a living stone being carefully fitted into God's spiritual temple on that foundation.
- Through Christ, the barrier between God and humanity has been permanently broken. Every believer has moved from being a stranger and foreigner to a citizen, a family member, and the very dwelling place of God's Spirit.
- The church is not a building you attend. It is a family you belong to, and God is actively building you into it alongside every other believer.
- The choices we make in how we treat others, handle conflict, serve, forgive, and live with integrity are not just personal. They either strengthen or damage the temple of God, because we together are that temple.
- Christ is the firm foundation, and when we fall short and build with straw, we return to Him. We repent, allow the Holy Spirit to reshape us, and keep allowing ourselves to be fitted more truly into what God is building.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for this time together and for the truth of Your Word that reminds us who we really are. We are not outsiders looking in. We are not strangers or foreigners. We are citizens, family members, and living stones being built into Your holy temple. Help us to carry that identity with us when we leave today. Give us the courage to build with things that last, to protect the unity

of Your church, to make space for the hurting and the excluded, and to treat every person we encounter as someone in whom Your Spirit may dwell. Where we have built carelessly or caused harm, we ask for Your forgiveness and the grace to do better. Keep shaping us, sanding us down, and fitting us together in the way only You can. You are our cornerstone, and everything we are and everything we build only makes sense in relation to You. We love You, Lord, and we are grateful to belong to You and to each other. In Your precious and holy name we pray, Amen.