

PostExilicProphets 21-04-29b

As we continue our study now, we're figuring out how to get this house built. I want to be this house. You want to be this house.

We want to be this house. So when we consider our ways, what do we consider? Well, first of all, have I allowed a root of bitterness to spring up somewhere in my ways, somewhere in my relationships, in the realm of fellowship of believers that is starting to cause division or fissure or separation or lack of harmony, lack of unity. This is exactly what we are told not to let happen.

This is what went radically wrong in Corinth. Do you remember that study? So how can I ensure that I am the result of God's artisan work, that I am fitted together and put together and thoroughly furnished unto all good works? Well, I just gave you a clue. That's the second part, that the man of God may be complete, mature, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

What does he do? Study, i.e., be diligent. This is not like book study. This is like make every effort, bend every faculty toward, be diligent to be approved by God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The word of God that we rightly divide is profitable for doctrine to reprove us. It's one thing to correct. It's something else to reprove.

If your course begins to veer because of wind or wave or current, you can correct your course. You say, well, two points to port there. We'll get back on track.

That's a correction. But the word of God is profitable for doctrine, which is revealing to us the truth, the reality. It's not a narrative.

Anybody can make up a narrative. Turn on your TV. Turn on your social media.

In these days, there's narratives running every which way. It's like a Medusa head. It's just snakes in every direction.

Everybody's got a story. This is right. This is wrong.

This is what you can say. This is what you can't. And, you know, let's take little kids who think they're a boy trapped in a girl's body and put surgery on them and stunt their puberty and all of this.

I read a scientific study on children to whom this has been done. It's been going on long enough now that they're growing up. And there's great numbers of them that are saying, how did you let me as a child make this stupid decision? I had a double mastectomy when I was in my early teens.

I took drugs and had the scalpel put on all of my gender-defining parts, and now I can't go back. And it didn't take care of my, what was it called, gender dysphoria. It's not euphoria.

You know what euphoria is, right? That's phoria that is good. It's good phoria. Well, dysphoria is like dysfunctional.

And dysphoria means I don't feel right, that something's out of kilter. Well, gender reassignment surgery and all the other things that people try to do is not the answer any more than if somebody wakes up one morning and thinks they're a duck, that you start sewing feathers on them and creating a bill for them. You don't think you're a duck and so somebody tries to turn you into a duck.

If you think you're a duck, you need help. You need some assistance to get you back on course. So there is correction.

There is course correction. We've tried a thing and we found out it doesn't work. So we need to do something different.

Rebuke. The Word of God is profitable for doctrine, for what is true, not somebody's narrative that they just make up out of whole cloth and have a fantasy of how it's going to turn out. There's no science.

There's no experience. There's no history. There is no reason.

There is no substance to it at all. It's just, I think everybody ought to be ducks and we'll all swim in a pond and, well, good for you. We've got a nice little rubber room over here and you can paint all the ducks on the wall you want.

But for the rest of us who have to live real life, that's not going to work and it's not going to fly. So doctrine, reproof, this is correction with some motivation attached to it. If you are reproofed, this is something you really should have known better.

And in order that you remember it, see there's two different things that can happen. Let's say something goes wrong. You've got a little child and they've got a sippy cup and they just refuse.

You've told them over and over again, you've got to set that thing down top up. One of the first two English words our girls learned was top up. You've got the little sippy cup.

It's got a weighted bottom. If you get anywhere near vertical, it'll stay upright and not spill. But if they just flop it down upside down, it can't right itself.

So top up. Look, top up. Top up.

You teach them that. Well, if they look at you with a, not a mischievous, but an evil twinkle in their eye and set it down upside down, testing you, and you say no, top up and you turn it right side up and they look at you and they turn it upside down. Or they throw it in the floor.

Or they scoop the food out of their plate and throw it on the floor and look at you like what are you going to do? Simple correction is not enough. If a desired outcome doesn't happen and after a few instances of correction it is not happening because there's no motivation, this is where rebuke comes in. Rebuke attaches negative consequences to the lesson.

Because you have done this wrong thing, it's going to cost you something. I need to impress upon you the importance of doing this right. Just repetitious correction without rebuke sometimes does not work.

And when stronger measures are necessary, you move from correction to rebuke. Rebuke makes it memorable that next time you better do this right. Doctrine, reproof, correction, this is the right way to do it, and instruction in righteousness.

If I'm doing it wrong, I'm correct that I'm not going to do it wrong anymore. I'm motivated to not do it wrong anymore. What is the right thing? So what are we doing right now? Let's say that in some part of our life, in some area, in some way, we are not yet a perfect habitation for God.

And Haggai and Zechariah are telling us this dwelling has got to be built. It is pertinent. These things are written for our instruction upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

It is critical that we be ready for the presence of God. If we are prepared now, if we build this house now, when the Lord Jesus does come back, we will get to go and be with him because he already knows us having been with us. You see the connection here? I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Why? Because I was the house that the Lord dwelt in on this earth. One attaches to the other. No house for the Lord here.

No New Jerusalem dwelling in the kingdom of the Father. It is just that simple. If we don't care enough to prepare ourselves to be qadartizod, if you will, be prepared and furnished and do the things that are necessary so that God can build us up as living stones into a house.

Remember Peter talking about this? You as living stones, Christ the cornerstone. He's what makes the whole thing have a purpose. We have to do this.

This is not optional unless you want to be out over the dark horizon from the New Jerusalem waiting for somebody to bring a rickety cart full of ever more wilting leaves from the tree of life. And can you tell me a little bit about what you saw in the city? I haven't even been close enough to see the wall or the gate or the I can see the glow on the horizon. If you don't believe me, read Revelation chapter one and 22.

There are those who are outside disqualified, did not respond to rebuke, did not respond to correction, did not learn instruction and righteousness. Did not become a dwelling place for God. Knock on the door, Lord, Lord, in your name.

Didn't I do this and that? I never knew you depart from me. And when Jesus says depart, it's not like, well, go stand, you know, four feet away. Depart means get the hence gone, cut into outside a portion of your lot with the hypocrites.

Read the New Testament. I don't know why believers in this age do not read their Bible and get sufficiently nervous about the future. God's not kidding.

He's not fooling around. And there are going to be severe and eternal consequences. There's no do over.

There's no book of Mulligan in the New Testament that, well, if you fouled up, you'll have the whole millennium to try to get it right. No, we won't. We've got what remains to us in this life.

My heart can stop beating at any moment, and all of my options to get this right will be over. It is now or never. Now is the appointed time.

Now is the day of salvation. And it's not hard. God has provided everything.

He has given us his spirit, not by might nor by power, by my spirit, says the Lord. We're going to be seeing that here pretty soon. So how do we get this house built? First of all, get rid of disunity.

You can't build something if the bricks keep falling off of the wall. If the boards keep coming unscrewed and unnailed, if it's not level, if it's not plumb, if it's not on a solid foundation, if it's not built according to proper code, there is a code. There's a right way and a wrong way to put in electricity or plumbing or framing or finish out.

There are right and wrong ways. One way is time tested, proven, durable, safe. Others are the opposite of all of those things.

How do we know? Go to the word and ensure that we are Katartizo and that we are Katartizmenoi. We are those who are fitted together and we are not the cause of disunity. We are not the cause of division.

If somebody is going to divide, let them divide. If somebody is going to disunite, let them disunite. If someone is going to be in the wrong on this, if the Lord is going to look out the door when he's sitting down at the table with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all of those who came from the North, East, South, and West, don't let it be our face on the other side of the door.

Let it be somebody else that Jesus says, I never knew you. Depart from me, you worker of iniquity. Can't be us.

Won't be us. So pay attention to 1 Corinthians 1, verse 13. Pay attention to Galatians 6, verse 1. If a man is overtaken in a trespass, you who are spiritual, hopefully that's us.

If we're not, we need to back up and get spiritual. Then we will know how to katartizo our fellow

believers and they will be able to catartizo us. What a wonderful mutual blessing it is when spiritual gifts and the desire for spiritual unity and harmony meets and works together for the glory of the Lord and the presence of God in our midst.

Cannot have division. Figure out a way to fix it or get so far away that there's no clue that that was ever an attempt to unite. Things that are of Christ will unite.

Things that are not of Christ, if you're not for us, you're against us. Touch not the unclean thing. What fellowship has light with darkness? If something has chosen to be dark and chosen other priorities and other values, get away.

Because by trying to maintain a connection, what you're maintaining is disunity and disharmony within a structure that is supposed to be united and harmonious. So those things that don't fit, those boards that are unsuitable, those stones that are unsuitable, those parts and pieces that will not fit and refuse to unite, you've got to cast them well away. You can't keep trying to shove square pegs into round holes.

It just creates disunity, disharmony, and prevents us from being built together. So there is a lot of application when we consider our ways. Unity is one of the strongest, highest priorities in the entire New Testament.

Be of one heart and one mind over and over and over again. Look it up. So that's number one.

Now back to 2 Corinthians chapter 13, verse 11. 13, 11. What is our next exhortation? Become complete.

Cut our teeds, though, so much more than just being complete. Be of good comfort. This is interesting.

This is a passive form of paraclete. Jesus has said in John 14, I'm going away, but I will send you the comforter, the paracletos, para alongside, kaleo to call. Kletos is one who is called.

This is similar to paramedic. You get the medic alongside. He works alongside medical doctors and such, provides triage and trauma care and first response and so on.

And it's the first point of response. So paracletos, to call alongside. So does this mean, if it's in the passive, does it mean be called alongside? What is it that the Holy Spirit does for us at our side? When you look this word up and it's found in many places, but let's start in Acts.

You can go to Acts chapter 2, verse 40. You remember Acts chapter 2? That's your Pentecost chapter. They were all gathered in one place.

Holy Spirit comes down like tongues of fire. Everybody hears the good news in their own language. When you get down to verse 40, this is Peter's sermon.

He's explaining what's happening. He's explaining the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

And when they hear it in verse 37, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? I love this.

This is the right question to ask. Now that I've heard the word of truth, I believe it. I'm compelled by it.

How should we then live? What should we do? So Peter answers the question. He says to them in verse 38, change your mind. Let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ with a view toward remission of sins, because you don't have a New Testament.

You don't have the full orb'd theological revelation of the 26 books, 27 books to count Jude. You have rituals and symbols and sign gifts functioning. So be baptized.

Baptism was a picture of what the epistles would later describe in terms of what salvation is and what it means and what it does. So be baptized with a view toward. In more recent days, you would say, get into some Bible class and understand what salvation is.

Redemption, reconciliation, propitiation out with the old and with the new. If any man be in Christ, he's a new creation. Old things are passed away.

All things have become new. You have been cleansed from your sins. Don't fall back into them and so on.

And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit. What's the Holy Spirit's name? According to Jesus, he is the paraclete.

Change your mind. Understand what salvation is. You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit for the promise is to you and your children and to all who are far off.

You Jews and the far off Gentiles, as many as the Lord our God will call. Many are called. Few are chosen.

Now look at verse 40. And with many other words, he testified and exhorted them, saying, be delivered from this perverse generation. Just as true right here, right now.

Peter preaches across the ages. Peter could stand in the middle of this room and say these very same words. Be delivered from this perverse generation.

Don't be caught up in it. Don't be swept along by it. Don't be cowed or intimidated by it.

Don't be silenced. Don't be led by the nose. Be delivered.

The Holy Spirit will do that. But our word is right in the middle. He testified and paraclete them.

So in our verse, you can easily see the meaning. Be exhorted, be crafted together into a unity. Both individually, have your mind, body and spirit unified.

Let the whole body be light. The light of the body is the eye. What you see and what you hear ought to come right back out in what you think and what you do.

The light of the body is the eye, Jesus said. When you look at the word of truth, go to James. Behold your face in the mirror.

Don't forget what you saw. Application, interpretation, application. Consider your ways, Haggai said.

And when you consider your ways, let the power of God in his word and his spirit make us whole, united, fitted for purpose, a finished work by an artisan, not just functional, but beautiful. They talk about, you know, artisan furniture and artisan decor and so on. It's not just a vase that holds a flower.

It's a beautiful vase. It's a gorgeous chair. It's a wonderful window treatment because an artisan did it.

It's it's functional and it's artistic both. And when God works his will innocent through us, we become artisan work. Inner beauty, inner strength.

Functional and reflecting God's glory. That's first. The second one is be exhorted.

Don't just hear the exhortation. Be an exhorted one. Well, looky there.

You can tell he got the message. Look at what he's doing now. He fell asleep at the wheel.

You don't see him driving tired anymore, do you? Got a got a ticket for DUI. He's off the sauce. He's not touching that anytime he has to drive.

He's warned. He's learned. He's better than he was running a band saw and cut off the end of his finger.

Look at him now. He's Mr. Safety. He's got goggles.

He's got ear protection. He's got safety straps and plastic guards over the blade. He's an exhorted one.

He has learned. And you can tell by looking at him that he's learned. You look at somebody who is well trained.

You see this. I see it sometimes in in wait staff. You can tell when there's new waitresses and waiters, people working in a restaurant because they're still kind of learning the ropes or looking around at what other people are doing.

But you can really tell when somebody has hit their stride and they are just grace in motion. They're cleaning a table with one hand and bringing somebody their coke with the other and they're refilling the ketchup bottles. And and, you know, it's mundane work, but you see

somebody doing it with knowledge, with experience, with efficiency, with enthusiasm.

And you look at him and you say, you know, I'm putting an extra four bucks in the tip for that one. That's that's a keeper right there. Look at the the wonderful beauty and function combined in that piece of work right there.

And you see this in every different area of life. You see it in your family, you see it in your circle of workers, people who do a thing right and well for the sake of doing it right and well, and us even more so doing it heartily as under the Lord. Be exhorted when we learn something, when we see it, when we figure it out, get it done.

You can't be the temple of God if you're not exhorted. You can't be the temple of God if you're not complete, if you're leaking air, leaking light, leaking water, leaking plumbing. So those first two things back to second Corinthians, chapter 13, verse 11.

What is the third element here? Paul is giving us the instruction, be complete, be, it says of good comfort. This is not comfort. Kaleo is to call to someone.

I don't want somebody to say they're there and pat my forehead when I'm by the side of the road with, you know, a sucking chest wound and arterial bleeding. I want somebody called alongside who can fix me, who can tell me to take regular deep breaths, who can tell me to elevate my feet, who can tell me what to do to minimize the trauma and maximize the success of recovery, right? Have you ever seen, you see this all the time in poorly written entertainment where disaster is imminent, nobody knows what's going to happen. And somebody comes in and says, oh, there, Johnny, it's all going to be fine.

It'll be okay. Based on what? You don't know anything. You can't do anything.

You're just spitting in the wind, telling somebody you're trying to comfort them. Oh, it's all going to be okay. And your authority for this bold pronouncement is what? Do you know something? I don't know.

Are you about to do? Are you a superhero? You're going to pop out with your cape and your lasso of truth or something. How can you say it's all going to be okay when you know nothing? You have no power. If the Lord Jesus tells you it's going to be okay now, that's a whole different thing.

Be not comforted, be exhorted and look like you know what to do now that you've been exhorted and encouraged. You've been patched up. You've been brought back and corrected, maybe rebuked.

But I got that message. I am treading the straight and narrow. You don't see me falling asleep on watch anymore.

You don't see me forgetting to unload my weapon before I start cleaning it. Send around into

the ceiling. I can happily say I've never done that, but I know people who have.

And I'll tell you what, somebody that's accidentally discharged a firearm, thought it was unloaded and it wasn't. They are absolutely the most scrupulously careful person about checking, double checking, triple checking. Is the chamber empty? Is the magazine out? You know, one round into the overhead and you're permanently exhorting.

But I don't want to have to shoot myself in the foot or injure somebody else to be exhorted. Let's be exhorted by looking at the examples of others in scripture and, you know, make new, fresh, creative, interesting mistakes instead of the same ones that have already been made, recorded and that we should be exhorted by. So be complete, be exhorted.

The third one is be of one mind. Be of one mind. This is from Froneo, which means to have the same judgment.

You will see it translated as opinion or as something milder than that. But this is judgment when you look at it. It means it actually comes from phren, which is inside your chest.

The parts around your heart. So it has the idea of insight. Of knowledge gained from experience and training and knowing a thing, not just academically or not just conceptually, but really knowing it.

It's it's close in concept to epinosis. So when Jesus is rebuking Peter, Jesus says, I'm going to go to Jerusalem, I'm going to be arrested and tried. And Peter says, oh, Lord, may it not be so.

And remember, we're about to see it in Matthew chapter 16. Jesus says, get thee behind me, Satan, for you are not froneoing the things of God, but the things of man. And they translate it setting your mind or your judgment.

But in Matthew 16, 23 and Mark 8, 33, both. Jesus says to Peter, you are a stumbling block to me because you are not froneoing the things of God. You don't have your head inside the plan and purpose of God.

You've got your head inside the plans and dreams of man. Human viewpoint, not divine viewpoint. So kind of makes sense, doesn't it? If you think Haggai and Zachariah are talking about just building the physical building.

Oh, boy, the point has sailed at an astronomical altitude over our head. That sonic boom you heard is God's point way up in the stratosphere. It's not about the building.

This is about the presence of God. We are leading up to the horrifically tragic fact that when Zerubbabel and Joshua finally whipped the people into enough effort to get this building done, the glory of God does not come. How horrific would it be for you and me to listen to this exhortation and not be exhorted to listen to this call for unity and for structural cohesion and not be cohesive and not be unified and not be furnished and not be beautiful artisan work

ready for a purpose to be called to think the thoughts of God and pursue the purposes of God and flat out miss it.

And I will tell you from the word of God that nearly everybody claiming the name of Christ in this day and in this time, in this age and on this frightful swamp of media has missed it. If you think not, show me somebody who hasn't missed it. There are a few, but when you want to talk majority, when you want to talk about trend, when you want to talk about the overall weight, were there a few that understood who Jesus was when he went down the hill into Jerusalem on the quote unquote triumphal entry? Were there a few that understood? Were there a few that got it when the Bible says he came into his own and his own received him? There were a few, just not nearly enough.

And I will tell you today, there are a few, but not nearly enough. Most believers in this age are consumed with the earthly, the physical, the short term, the material. It is emblematic that most churches codify material rituals into their church constitution.

These ordinances are a must when it's Israel that are the people of material ordinances. We are the people of spiritual reality. Should you be baptized? Absolutely.

With the real baptism, should you share in the body and blood of the Lord and eat his flesh and drink his blood? Absolutely. In the genuine, real spiritual sense, not a cracker and Kool-Aid, not a dip in some water. Peter talks about this before you even get out of the age of Pentecost, that baptism is not the washing away of dirt on the flesh.

It's the answer of your conscience toward God. That's baptism, your conscience, the reality inside. You are a spiritual house of God.

Jesus Christ is not a stone, and yet he's the cornerstone. He's not a rock, but he is the rock on which all surviving houses are built. Don't make the phylactery mistake and strap the Word of God onto your hand, wag it around like a talisman, have a notebook and some scribbling in the margins of your Bible and miss the reality.

We have got to build this house. This is precise, detailed instruction on how to build it. Ensure that your Christian fellowship is unified.

Weed out what doesn't belong. Eschew that which is evil, hold fast to that which is good. What fellowship has light with darkness? Touch not the unclean thing.

If you're going to pluck somebody out of the fire, you can save a few. Hate the garment spotted by the flesh. Don't try to save the garment along with the flesh.

Garment's got to go. That person is going to have to be humble enough to be briefly unclothed. If you're going to save the person and eschew the garment, what's that person going to be dressed in? Nothing.

What does that require? Humility. Ever been to the doctor for a full physical? That's humiliating. It's humbling, right? But sometimes necessary.

Hate the garment spotted by the flesh. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. So there is no excuse for me.

And there is no excuse for us to not ensure that we are ready, sanctified, and an opportune place for the presence of God to dwell. We're being told in detail exactly how to do it. Paul is telling us here.

So be well put together, both individually and collectively, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. Be an exhorted one. Respond when you hear an exhortation.

Do something. When you get a rebuke, do something. When you see a correction, do something.

Make a change. Carve out the time. You got an appointment with a doctor or a mechanic or a service person.

Are you ready? If we can make time and meet a schedule, keep an appointment, and make a deadline for earthly things, why can we not make time, keep appointments, and set aside a priority for these far more lasting and important things? Do you really care more about getting your tires rotated than you do being a dwelling place for God? Do you really care more about making sure that these little things get checked off the task list than being exhorted, being complete, being of one mind? What kind of mind? Philippians chapter 2, let this mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus. That's easy. Philippians chapter 2 describes the exact one mind we should all be partaking of.

It's the mind of Christ. We have the mind of Christ, Peter says, Paul says, and Paul says in Philippians, here's a description of that mind. Form of a servant, likeness of men, humble, obedient.

For this reason, God has highly exalted him. And where is Jesus now? At the right hand of the presence. He is in the presence of his father because he qualified himself by doing the very same things that Paul says here.

Be of one mind, live in peace. We can unite and we can separate without rancor, without anger, without backbiting, without gossip, maligning, judging, bitterness, implacability, envy, hatred, all of these mental attitudes since it is possible to place distance when we need to separate without creating a cesspool of evil and a cluster of chain sins. It's like a good laxative, firm, but gentle.

There is no reason to create strife and division when we have to separate, but we have to separate. If we do not separate, we cannot be unified and we are not a fit place for the presence of God. It's just that simple.

Look at the unity passages. If you don't believe me, let the word of God speak unity above all. How long is the glory of God going to remain in a temple where defiling objects and defiled people and the unclean elements are brought in? You're going to see the glory of God sailing over the eastern hills.

He's not going to remain where there is that kind of corruption and defilement. We've got to clean it out. Live in peace.

If we do these things, these four things, the God of love and peace will be with you. I am with you. Fear thou not.

I am with you. God told Israel, you go into the land. I will be with you.

The Lord Jesus, when he was leaving, said, I will be with you to the end of the age. But there's a condition. The one who has my word and keeps it, he's the one who loves me.

I will come to him. My father will come to him and we will dwell with him. We will be with him.

That's the exhorted one. That is the unified and put together properly one. That is the single-minded one.

And that is the peacemaker. Blessed are the peacemakers. Live in peace.

Dwell in peace. To the extent that it is up to you, be at peace with all men. Not always up to us, but when it is, that's our priority.

So look at Haggai. God says, my house is in ruins. You need to build it.

We say, I'm ready, Lord. How do I do it? Now we know. Look at 1st Corinthians chapter one.

Look at 2nd Corinthians chapter 13. We have the answer. And when we are put together properly, when we are God's dwelling, then Galatians 6.1, we can be a blessing to one another, fulfilling both great commands to love God and love one another.

It's a wonderful and timely and important exhortation for us in these crazy days in which we live. We'll close here in a word of prayer and pick up our study next time. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you that you have not left us as orphans with the departure of the Lord Jesus Christ, but your Holy Spirit is with us to enable us, to empower us, to activate your word in our souls, to transform us by the renewing of our minds, to enable us to present ourselves as sacrifices that are holy and acceptable in your sight. We pray that as we consider our ways, as we reflect on these truths, that we will see clearly the details and the particulars and the specifics of how we can draw more closely to you so that you draw more closely to us. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen.