

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2025**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
EPHESIANS**

Message Five

The Universal Building and the Local Building

Scripture Reading: Eph. 2:20-22

- I. In Ephesians 2:20-22 is the revelation of the building in two aspects—the universal aspect and the local aspect:**
- A. Universally, the church is uniquely one, and the church in a particular locality is locally one.
 - B. In verse 21 we see the universal aspect of the church: “All the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord.”
 - C. In verse 22 we have the local aspect: “You also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.”
 - D. The holy temple refers to the universal aspect, and the dwelling place of God, to the local aspect:
 - 1. All the local churches added together equal the universal church—Acts 16:5.
 - 2. Apart from the local churches there is no universal church.
 - 3. The building of the local churches is the building of the universal church.
- II. Ephesians 2:20 says, “Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone”:**
- A. As the Body of Christ, the church is God’s building; we need to pay attention to the foundation—1 Cor. 3:10-11.
 - B. The foundation of the apostles and prophets is the revelation they received regarding Christ and the church for the building up of the church—Eph. 2:20:
 - 1. The church is built upon this revelation.
 - 2. This is the meaning of *the foundation* in Ephesians 2:20.
 - C. Verse 20 reveals that in God’s building Christ is the cornerstone:
 - 1. Christ was raised from the dead by God, becoming the cornerstone of God’s building with God’s salvation being uniquely in Him—Acts 4:10-12.
 - 2. Psalm 118:22 speaks of Christ as the cornerstone for God’s building, and Ephesians 2:20 speaks of “Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone.”
- III. In Christ Jesus “all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord”—v. 21:**
- A. Here we see that in Christ, who is the cornerstone, all the building, including both the Jewish and the Gentile believers, is fitted together and is growing into a holy temple in the Lord.
 - B. Since the building is a living one (1 Pet. 2:5), it is growing into a holy temple:
 - 1. The actual building of the church as the house of God is by the believers’ growth in life.

2. Today the church is growing; however, it is not growing in our natural life but in the divine life, the spiritual life—Col. 1:6, 10.
- C. Ephesians 2:21 also says that all the building is fitted together; the word *fitted* means “being made suitable for the condition and situation of the building.”
- D. As verse 21 points out, all the building is growing into a holy temple:
 1. The Greek word rendered “temple” means “the sanctuary, the inner part of the holy temple.”
 2. This means that the entire building of God’s house as His sanctuary is in Christ the Lord.
- E. The phrase *all the building* refers to the universal church:
 1. In Matthew 16:18 the Lord Jesus said that He would build the church: “I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”
 2. The building in Matthew 16:18 is the building in Ephesians 2:21.

IV. In Christ Jesus “you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit”—v. 22:

- A. The word *you* in verse 22, which refers to the local saints, indicates that the building in verse 21 is universal and that the building in verse 22 is local.
- B. In this verse Paul was saying that the local saints were being built together in Christ into a dwelling place of God.
- C. In these verses Paul covered both the universal aspect and the local aspect—vv. 21-22:
 1. All the building is growing—this refers to the universal aspect.
 2. The believers in a particular locality are being built together—this is the local aspect.
- D. *The temple* and *the dwelling place* refer to two aspects of the same thing:
 1. The temple is the place in which God’s people contact God, worship Him, and hear His oracle.
 2. The dwelling place is a place of rest; God rests in His dwelling place.
 3. No matter how many churches there may be on earth, there is still just one building with these two aspects.
- E. Verse 22 says that we are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit:
 1. *Spirit* here refers to the believers’ human spirit, which is indwelt by God’s Holy Spirit.
 2. God’s Spirit is the Dweller, not the dwelling place.
 3. The dwelling place is in the believers’ spirit.
 4. God’s Spirit dwells in our spirit; therefore, the dwelling place of God is in our spirit.
- F. Verse 21 says that the holy temple is in the Lord, and verse 22, that the dwelling place of God is in spirit:
 1. This indicates that the Lord is one with our spirit, and our spirit is one with the Lord.
 2. To be in our spirit is actually to be in the Lord; also, to be in the Lord is to be in the spirit.
 3. He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit—1 Cor. 6:17.
 4. We cannot separate our spirit from the Lord; thus, our spirit is the place where the building of the church is.
 5. The building is not in our mind, emotion, soul, or heart; it is absolutely a matter in our spirit.