



BUILD

by Whitney Davis

We've often heard the phrase, "Rome wasn't built in a day." Those of you who have waited for construction to complete on a new home or particular building project are well acquainted with the blood, sweat, tears, and TIME involved in these projects.

After enduring almost a year of having everything in our lives shaken up, we now can't waste any more time sitting on the sidelines. We must begin to build amongst what may feel like the ruins of our lives. Many of us set goals and resolutions and start the new year full of organization and promise. Often it doesn't take long to lose sight of those goals. As we go throughout this year, it will be imperative to continue to operate in healthy rhythms and disciplines in our personal and spiritual walk to see building success.

Let's look at how we can relate the building process to constructing a healthy spiritual foundation for growth.

1.) CLEAR THE LAND

Before construction can commence, the land has to be cleared. Debris is removed, sometimes trees and other signs of life that exist are uprooted. It's hard and tedious work. But it is necessary before construction can begin. We may feel like the life has been sucked out of us in recent months- this is good news. The Lord has been stripping things from us to "clear the land" and re-establish a firm foundation in us.

Practically speaking- it is an excellent time to take inventory of your life. What things have you been wasting time or headspace on that aren't bringing life or glorifying God. What items can be uprooted and

stripped away so that those things that are priority can have room to flourish. Evaluate your commitments and calendar. Find ways to simplify your life to set the stage for your building project to begin.

2.) ESTABLISH THE FOUNDATION AND FRAME

After preparing the ground, the “bones” of the structure begin to be constructed. Foundations and framework are essential for the structure before it can become a functional space. As believers, our foundation and frame must be sure and established before we can flourish and become a complete and healthy temple of the Lord.

We strengthen and construct our personal foundation and frame through dedicated and intentional time in the Word of God, worship, prayer, fasting, and gathering with other believers. These are essential parts of our discipleship journey. When we struggle or lack in these areas, our foundation becomes unstable. We need that strong base to weather the storms of this life. Are things feeling out of control? Is life trying to consume you? Steal away with the Lord. Commit to spending daily time with the Lord, even when you don't feel like it. Following these faithful spiritual disciplines contributes to helping us build the Kingdom of God by first building up ourselves in the faith.

3.) CONSTRUCT THE NECESSARY ADD-ONS.

It's great to have a clear lot and a foundation and frame, but not a whole lot of other progress can be made without venturing to then add walls, plumbing, power, a roof, flooring, and other essential components of the structure.

Taking time to rest and restore yourself in the Lord is essential. This time allows for careful attention to be given to the foundation Christ is laying in your life. But it can't stop there. Our creative God has gifted all of us, and we begin to explore our gifts and talents we

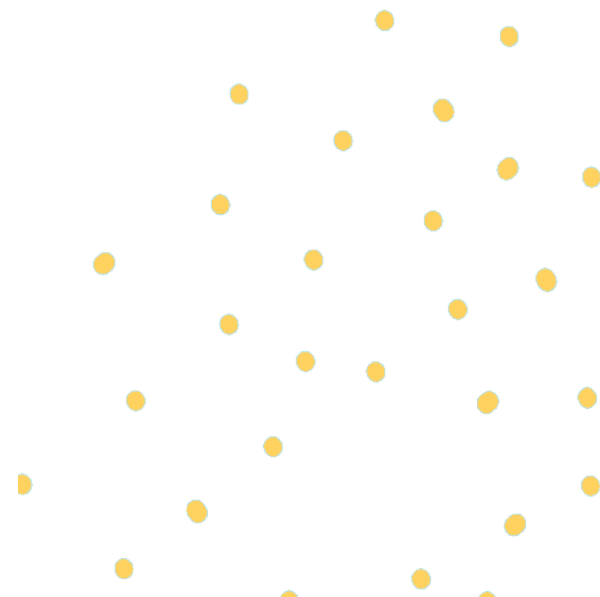
start to add on to the framework He has constructed in our lives to become more whole and healthy. What are you passionate about or good at? Begin to serve and devote some of your time to those things and allow the Lord to continue to grow you as a temple.

4.) FILL THE HOUSE.

You've built your structure or home. Great! But if you never fill it with people or community, it doesn't serve its whole purpose.

As you continue your journey of becoming more like Jesus, you will find your foundation sure. You will find yourself recognizing and operating in your gifts, and then you must endeavor to fill the house you've built. Allow the Holy Spirit to dwell there. We were created for community. Welcome others into your life. Allow your love for the Lord to overflow into the ways you love others and share Christ in the world around you.

Staying dedicated to intentional spiritual disciplines and healthy rhythms in our lives will help us build ourselves up in the most holy faith and make us better able to help build up the body of Christ and walk alongside those yet to believe in the Lord. Commit this year to be disciplined in your walk with the Lord. Stay faithful- He is building you up and empowering you to participate in building His Kingdom.



CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- 1.) Think about your life (your building). Is it healthy or in good shape? What needs attention?
- 2.) Do you struggle with staying disciplined in your spiritual walk with the Lord? How so?
- 3.) What has been most helpful to you during times where your foundation didn't feel sure?
- 4.) Is there anything you sense the Lord calling you to build? What has He given you passions for? What are you gifted to do?

CALL TO ACTION:

- 1.) Reach out to a friend you trust this week and ask them to help hold you accountable with your daily spiritual rhythms (time in the Word, prayer, worship, etc.)
- 2.) Write down or journal sometime this week about something you feel the Lord is calling you to build.

Memorize Ephesians 2:19-22 week:

Now therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.