

Christ the Cornerstone

Tony

Scriptures:

Isaiah 28:16-17

Ephesians 2:19-20

1 Peter 2

I've always been fascinated by building work. Years ago when we lived in the Forest of Dean, my morning walk with our dog took us past a dilapidated bungalow in the middle of a large overgrown corner plot. I heard many stories of its past and many predictions of its future.

One morning large machines arrived and began demolishing the bungalow. Three weeks later the whole plot had been cleared of debris, rubbish and weeds. Diggers began appearing to excavate deep channels where foundations would be laid. Many views were expressed about its future. "Will it be an Old Peoples' Home?" "Will new houses be built?" "What height will the building be?" Their questions were soon answered as the deep trenches were filled with concrete until the level foundations spoke of one large building. One year later saw an impressive house, standing in beautiful grounds. This building relied on the foundations being excavated in line with the plans and the subsequent walls being built in exact vertical and horizontal lines.

In the days of Jesus, there were no mechanical diggers or concrete yet all walls were kept upright and level because the builders made reference to one large square rock set at the corner of the ground floor. The cornerstone, known as the principal stone, was larger and better finished than all other stones, and it would remain the solid part of the building.

The Bible describes Jesus as "the Cornerstone" on which His church will be built. Once the stone was set, it became the basis of determining every measurement in the remaining construction. There are many references referring to the coming Messiah as "the Cornerstone" in the Old Testament: *"So this is what the Sovereign Lord says, "See I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation, and the one who trusts will never be dismayed. I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plumbline." (Isaiah 28:16-17).*

Here, God is speaking to the scoffers and boasters of Judah, and He promises to send the Cornerstone, His precious Son, who will provide a firm foundation for their lives if they will trust in Him. The Cornerstone theme continues into the New Testament. The Apostle Paul was an evangelist, disciple maker and created local churches, teaching believers in his letters, encouraging and correcting them. To the Ephesian church he wrote:

"Consequently you are no longer foreigners or aliens but fellow citizens with God's people, and you are members of God's household, built on the Apostles and prophets with Christ Himself as the chief cornerstone. In Him the whole building is joined together, and rises to become a Holy Temple to the Lord." (Ephesians 2:19-20)

Peter takes up the metaphor in his first letter, when he writes in chapter 2 that Jesus is "our Cornerstone, chosen by God and precious to Him." In verse 6

Peter quotes Isaiah 28:16. Just as the Jewish people needed to build on the correct Cornerstone, so did the Church of the New Testament and all who have followed since, including we who follow Jesus today.

Sadly not everyone aligns with God's Cornerstone. When news of Jesus' birth was revealed to the magi (wise men), they set out to bring Him gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, and they worshipped Him. When Herod heard the same news he began to plot the death of Jesus and was filled with anger and hatred.

So, who is Jesus in your life? Each of us must decide. Will He be our firm foundation or a "stone of stumbling"? I would encourage each of us to read and meditate on 1 Peter 2.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus to be our chief Cornerstone, the One who securely anchors the life of every believer to You. My earnest prayer is that every individual, in every fellowship of believers, will become firmly anchored to You (our Cornerstone) as You continue to build Your Church on earth until she is sanctified and worthy to be Your pure Bride at the time of Your coming again. Amen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCdASxyPIKE>