TITLE: Rebuilding The Temple!

TEXT: Zech. 4:6-7; 1st Co. 3:16; Phil. 4:13;

Pr. 3:5-6; Jere. 1:5; Ps. 139:13-14; Ja. 1:22;

1st Co. 6:19-20

INTRODUCTION: This morning I want to talk about rebuilding...

What do you suppose is harder to do, to build something new or to rebuild something old?

I have found that usually it is a whole lot easier to build something new than to rebuild something old.

When you build something new there is nothing of the old to get in the way that you have to work around....

Rebuilding can be a very difficult task.....

There was a man of the Old Testament that was given the enormous task of rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem.....

In the days of the prophet Zechariah, about 519 BC, there lived a man, a descendent of King David, by the name of Zerubbabel.

Several years after Israel had been taken into Babylonian captivity by King Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon fell to Cyrus, the king of Persia. The Persian King, Cyrus, allowed about 50,000 of the exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem for the express purpose of rebuilding the Temple.....

He appointed Zerubbabel as Governor and Joshua as High Priest and gave them the task of seeing that the temple was rebuilt and worship re-instituted.

This proved to be the typical re-modeling project...

There were major obstacles to overcome from the get go.

There were those who were hostile to the

Rebuilding project, especially Samaritans that lived in the area who tried to do everything that they could to keep it from happening..

There were labor problems and material problems and people problems...

Just the fact that the project had to be done exactly as before, on the exact same sight to the exact specifications as the previous temple made it an enormous task....

When this temple was first build Jerusalem was a major world power and had, for the most part, unlimited resources to work with---now the job would be done by returning exiles who had nothing of material value....

Through much hardship Zerubbabel was finally able to get just the foundation completed by 536 BC but then even more obstacles arose and the work finally came to a standstill..

If Fact, it would be another 16-18 years before the temple walls would actually be rebuilt....

How discouraging it must have been for Zerubbabel!

There are some here today that can identify with what it is like to take on the task of rebuilding something and all the problems that seem to arise from it...

Wives that have had to endure the remodeling of the home know how frustrating it can be....

Example: Parsonage----Back when we did the first remodel it would have been much easier to build a new building than to redo the old one. All the (obstacles and working around things).

It can be hard, it can be frustrating, It can be discouraging… We can come to the place where we just want to give up.

I imagine that Zerubbabel was to that point.

He tried his hardest, He did his best, but as hard as he tried, the more of his effort that he put into it, it just didn't seem to be enough.

The temple wasn't getting done! He just seemed to come to a place where everything just seemed to stand still.

Then the Lord gave the Prophet Zechariah these words to speak to Zerubbabel.....

**Zech 4:6 (NIV) So he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: `Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.**

**7 "What are you, O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of `God bless it! God bless it!'"**

When rebuilding the temple walls came to a standstill what was Gods advice to Zerubbabel...

I**t’s Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.**

What did God mean?

Might: = Hebrew **chayil {khah'-yil}**

**1) might, efficiency, wealth, ability,**

Power:= Hebrew **koach{ ko'-akh}**

**1a) human strength**

What God was saying to Zerubbabel was:

Zerubbabel, it is not by your efficiency, your wealth, your ability, or your strength that the temple wall will be built but it will only happen by and through My Spirit..

In order for it to happen by My Spirit you first need to give Me control and allow Me to rebuild the temple walls through you.

Because Zerubbabel, it will never be accomplished by your might or by your power. It can only be accomplished by and through My might and My power! By My Spirit-- By My enabling Grace…

Do you realize this morning, that as a Christian, you and I have been called by God to rebuild a temple?

**1Cor 3:16 (NIV) Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?**

Temple: **3485 naos {nah-os'}(to dwell);**

**1) it's used of the temple at Jerusalem, but**

**only of the sacred edifice (or sanctuary) itself,**

**consisting of the Holy place and the Holy**

**of Holies**

The part of the temple where the Spirit of God dwells!

When the exiled Jews returned to Jerusalem the first order of business was to rebuild the temple.

The first structure to be rebuilt in the city wasn't city hall or the school house or the doctor’s office or the grocery store or even permanent homes to live in. The first building to be rebuilt was to be the Temple.

Why? Because it is what was a visual representation of God’s presence to the people.

After the temple was rebuilt, after Gods presence was established among them, then they were to build around it.

After we come to Christ that is the priority that we are to have..

To first establish a fit dwelling place for God to dwell and then build our life around that.

**1Cor 3:16 (NIV) Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?**

You, yourselves are Gods temple, you, yourselves are a holy dwelling place for God.

You are the inner room, the inner sanctuary where the very Spirit of God resides.

Our primary calling, after we receive Christ into our life is to make our life a place that is fit for God to dwell…

Just as Zerubbabel was called to rebuild the walls of the temple so that God would have a Holy place to reside in, we have been called to rebuild the walls of our lives so that the Holy Spirit of God has a Holy place to reside in.

When Zerubbabel tried to do it on his own, by his own might and power, he failed. He couldn't do it.

The same thing happens to us when we try to make our life a fit place for God to dwell by our own might and power. We fail; we fall short of getting the job done.

We often end up frustrated and discouraged just like Zerubbabel did.

Because it is not by our might or by our power

that we are sanctified, that we are made holy.

Our sanctification, our becoming Holy just as He is Holy, our becoming a temple worthy of God’s presence is only possible by and through His Spirit-- By His enabling Grace.

The Apostle Paul showed that he had an understanding of this fact when he said...

**Phil 4:13 (NIV) I can do everything through him who gives me strength.**

Think of a time when you have fallen to sin, when you have missed the mark after coming to Christ...

You did so because you were standing, not in the

power and might of the Lord, but were trying to stand by your own power and might.

How do I know that? Because whenever we stand in the power and might and strength of the Lord it will be sucifficient, it will be enough! It will get the job done!

If we fall as a Christian it is always because we try to do it ourselves instead of allowing God to do it through us!

**Prov 3:5 (NIV)** **Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;**

**6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.**

If we want to walk on straight paths, if we want to live a victorious Christian life, be a fit temple for the Holy Spirit of God to dwell in, we need to first trust in the Lord with all of our heart and lean not on our own understanding! We need to acknowledge Him in all of our ways!

We trust in the Lord with all our heart when we take His Word for what it is---truth-- real, perfect, pure, absolute truth...

God’s Word says what it means and means what it says!

Leaning on our own understanding will almost always get us in trouble.....

Example: Abortion----pro-choice argument in the beginning was that abortion should be allowed for rape or incest. Why should a woman be expected to have a child under those tragic circumstances?

What they were doing by using that argument was they are leaning on their own understanding.

The absolute truth of God’s Word says that the taking of any innocent life is always wrong! The Word of God tells us that God recognizes life, not just after the first or second or third trimester, but the moment of conception…

**Jere 1:5 (NIV) "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."**

**Psal 139:13 (NIV) For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.**

**14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful,**

**I know that full well.**

Leaning on our own understanding, how we feel about things is dangerous to do because our understanding, along with the rest of our being, is flawed! Our understanding is just as subject to our sinful nature as the rest of our body is.

God tells us not to trust it but to Trust Him…

We are to: **In all our ways acknowledge Him and He will make our paths straight.**

We acknowledge Him in all our ways by setting Jesus as our example and then simply doing as Jesus would do.

We acknowledge Him in all our ways by taking the Word of God for what it is--Gods inspired Words to us and not just be hearers of His Words but by being doers of His Words.

**Jame 1:22 (NIV) Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.**

**In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight!**

He will help you rebuild the temple walls and make the temple of your life a place that is fit for His Spirit to dwell....

When Zerubbabel was given the task of rebuilding the temple the Lord gave him temple building instructions and temple building tools..

He said...

**Zech 4:6 It is: `Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.**

**7 "What are you, O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of `God bless it! God bless it!'"**

Verse 7 speaks of what happens when we rely, not upon our might and power, but rely upon the Holy Spirit of God in our lives....Rely upon Him by living lives of obedience to Him... By leaning not on our own understanding, doing what we think is right, but by trusting God, trusting the absolute truth of His Word and subjecting our life to its truth, not subjecting its truth to our life or lifestyle!

**7 "What are you, O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of `God bless it! God bless it!'"**

**"What are you, O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground!**

As Zerubbabel was trying to rebuild the temple, leaning on his own power and might, on his own strength and sufficiency, he encountered a mighty mountain of obstacles in his way that stooped him cold.......

When he let go and let God, when he gave control to the Holy Spirit then the miraculous started to happen...

The mighty mountain of obstacle became level ground before him. The obstacles were removed from his path and the temple was finally brought to completion.

The same promise is true for us today.

We have been called to build a temple for God. The temple of our lives…

There may be many mountains of obstacles in our life that make the building of our temple seem to come to a standstill where for every step we take forward we seem to take two steps backward.

(You ever felt like that?)

When that happens, most probably, we are still trying to stand in our own strength instead of standing in the strength of the Lord....

We are still leaning on our own understanding instead of totally trusting in God and leaning entirely upon Him.

The solution and the promise is the same for us as it was for Zerubbabel....

The solution....

It is **`Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.**

The promise as we embrace the solution...as we embrace the work that the Holy Spirit wants to do in our life by simply being obedient to Him is...

**7 "What are you, O mighty mountain? --you will become level ground.**

As we trust and rely upon the power and presence of God in our lives and live our lives in obedience to His Word and His will, all the mighty mountains that stand in our way will be made level ground. We will walk in and on straight paths... straight paths that will lead us right into the very Kingdom of God!

**Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of `God bless it! God bless it!'"**

The capstone is the stone of completion, the headstone, the last stone laid....

When the last stone was laid and the Temple was completed there were shouts of great joy.

When our temple is complete, when the last stone of faith is laid in place, when Jesus returns for a victorious Church, there will be shouts of great joy as we enter an eternity with our Lord…

Are you anticipating, looking forward to that day?

This morning...If you have accepted Christ into your life, Scripture says...

**1Cor 6:19 (NIV) Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.**

What's the condition of your and my temple this morning?

Are we allowing God to make it into a place that is worthy for His presence to reside?

Is our life being made ready for the capstone to be laid?

Are you trusting and relying upon the power and presence of God in your life to complete your temple and make you into the man or woman or child of God that He has pre-ordained for you to be?

**Phil 1:6 (NIV) being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.**

**Isai 40:30 (NIV) Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;**

**31 but those who hope in the LORD**

**will renew their strength.**

**They will soar on wings like eagles;**

**they will run and not grow weary,**

**they will walk and not be faint.**

**Is this a promise you ARE READY to claim?**

**Then Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;**

**6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.**