

## “SHUCKING US DOWN TO THE COB III”

(Buildings)

MCC Distinctives

### I. 1 Chronicles 17:1-6

#### A. Just so you know, when it comes to finding a building for our church, I can in some ways relate to David...

- 1) Buildings have proven elusive for us over the years...
- 2) While we began meeting in our living room, spent 11 years in the basement of the old Methodist church, the past 8 years and 9 months here at the school, we have explored many options the past 21 years.
- 3) Our list of considerations includes: Upstairs of the General Store; the old Methodist church; the KP Hall; what's now Osborn Funeral Home; an old church building in Baltimore; a house behind the pharmacy; brick school house at 204 & 37; the Born building at Rt. 204 & Laker Drive... but all these doors would close...
- 4) Since we planted in 1987, a dozen plus churches in a 10 mile radius have been planted. All have buildings. Please refer back to 1 Chronicles 17:1-6... :-)

#### B. So what is the Biblical view with respect to buildings? Are they essential?

- 1) Acts 2:46-47: Met in temple courts, in homes, were happy as clams...
- 2) Acts 5:42: Temple covered 20 + acres, plenty of places to meet...
- 3) Acts 18:6-8: Paul in Corinth-- from synagogue to Titius Justus' home...
- 4) Acts 19:8-10: Paul in Ephesus--from synagogue to hall of Tyrannus...
- 5) Acts 20:7-12: Paul preaches long, Eutychus falls 3 stories from?
- 6) Romans 16:3-5: Roman believers met in Priscilla & Aquila's home...
- 7) 1 Corinthians 16:19: First Ephesus met at Priscilla & Aquila's home...
- 8) Colossians 4:15: Our Lady of Nympha in Laodicea met in her home...
- 9) Philemon 1:1-3: St. Archippus was also a church that met in a home...
- 10) Matthew 18:20: Where Jesus goes to church...

#### C. A little more church history, what was the church like, “Got buildings?”

- 1) The early church met just about anywhere: temple courts, homes, synagogues, riverbanks, theaters, schools, pagan temples, prisons, catacombs...
- 2) Read statement by Justin Martyr...
- 3) Oldest building? Dura Europos on the Euphrates River, circa 231 AD...
- 4) Church structures emerged in the era of Constantine, 306-337 AD...

#### D. I love church buildings, they are my favorite piece of architecture...

- 1) Go on a trip or drive, I love checking out churches...
- 2) I got to speak in some beautiful ones this year: Oakthorpe, Sunman Community, First Presbyterian in New Cumberland, First Baptist in Tiffin, Bethel UMC. (Jay Leno likes vintage cars, I like vintage church buildings.)
- 3) When I walk, I'm ever wondering, “would that buildings or ground work for us?” (Then I remember 1 Chronicles 17:1-6...) :-)

#### E. Let me make some beef jerky statements to chew on:

- 1) In the New Covenant there are no “holy places.”
- 2) The church is meant to be a movement not a monument...
- 3) The church is meant to be a living organism not a dead institution...
- 4) The temple of God exists today--it is you! (1 Corinthians 3:10-17)
- 5) “*There's no magic in the faucets.*” Story: Lawrence of Arabia...

#### E. Let's go back to 1 Chronicles 17:11-14 and read the rest of the story...

- 1) Jesus is that descendant of David, King and Builder of God's house...
- 2) That house is us, the church, and Jesus has pitched His tent with us.
- 3) We preach the Good News of Jesus vs the good news of the church...
- 4) Perhaps a building will come, in the meantime our purpose is clear...

### Sermon Scriptures & Illustrations

#### 1 Chronicles 17:1-6 (NLT)

1 When David was settled in his palace, he summoned Nathan the prophet. “Look,” David said, “I am living in a beautiful cedar palace, but the Ark of the Lord's Covenant is out there under a tent!” 2 Nathan replied to David, “Do whatever you have in mind, for God is with you.” 3 But that same night God said to Nathan, 4 “Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord has declared: You are not the one to build a house for me to live in. 5 I have never lived in a house, from the day I brought the Israelites out of Egypt until this very day. My home has always been a tent, moving from one place to another in a Tabernacle. 6 Yet no matter where I have gone with the Israelites, I have never once complained to Israel's leaders, the shepherds of my people. I have never asked them, ‘Why haven't you built me a beautiful cedar house?’”

#### Acts 2:46-47 (NIV)

**46** Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **47** praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

**Acts 5:42 (NIV)**

**42** Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.

**Acts 18:6-8 (NIV)**

**6** But when the Jews opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." **7** Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. **8** Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.

**Acts 19:8-10 (NIV)**

**8** Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. **9** But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. **10** This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.

**Acts 20:7-12 (NIV)**

**7** On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. **8** There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. **9** Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. **10** Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive!" **11** Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left. **12** The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted.

**Romans 16:3-5 (NIV)**

**3** Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. **4** They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. **5** Greet also the church that meets at their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.

**1 Corinthians 16:19 (NIV)**

**19** The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house.

**Colossians 4:15 (NIV)**

**15** Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

**Philemon 1:1-3 (NIV)**

**1** Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker, **2** to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that meets in your home: **3** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Matthew 18:20 (NIV)**

**20** For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them.

**1 Corinthians 3:10-17 (NIV)**

**10** By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. **11** For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. **12** If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, **13** his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. **14** If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. **15** If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames. **16** Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? **17** If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.

**1 Chronicles 17:11-14 (NLT)**

**11** For when you die and join your ancestors, I will raise up one of your descendants, one of your sons, and I will make his kingdom strong. **12** He is the one who will build a house--a temple--for me. And I will secure his throne forever. **13** I will be his father, and he will be my son. I will never take my favor from him as I took it from the one who ruled before you. **14** I will confirm him as king over my house and my kingdom for all time, and his throne will be secure forever.”

### **Justin Martyr (100-165) on the church in his day...**

And what kind of lives did they lead? Justin Martyr, a noted early Christian theologian, wrote to Emperor Antoninus Pius and described the believers: "We formerly rejoiced in uncleanness of life, but now love only chastity; before we used the magic arts, but now dedicate ourselves to the true and unbegotten God; before we loved money and possessions more than anything, but now we share what we have and to everyone who is in need; before we hated one another and killed one another and would not eat with those of another race, but now since the manifestation of Christ, we have come to a common life and pray for our enemies and try to win over those who hate us without just cause."

In another place Justin points out how those opposed to Christianity were sometimes won over as they saw the consistency in the lives of believers, noting their extraordinary forbearance when cheated and their honesty in business dealings.

### **Lawrence Of Arabia-Faucets**

Author Unknown

"When Lawrence of Arabia was in Paris with some of his Arab friends after World War I, he took them to see the sights of the city. His friends showed little interest in the Arch of Triumph or Napoleon's tomb. The thing that really interested them was the faucet in their bathtub. They spent much time turning it on and off; they thought it was wonderful. All they had to do was turn the handle and they could get all the water they wanted. When they were leaving Paris, Lawrence found them in the bathroom with wrenches, trying to get the faucet off so they could take it with them. "You see," they said, "it is very dry in Arabia. What we need are faucets. If we have them, we will have all the water we want." Lawrence had to explain to them that the effectiveness of the faucet depended on the water system to which it was attached."