

## BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION

### C. Objectives (Value, a.k.a. Blessings) of this Study

#### C1. Blessing: Edification

In the Bible, the Greek verb that is commonly translated, edify<sup>i</sup>, is used metaphorically as an increase in wisdom and Godliness. The literal meaning of this word is the building up of a house after the foundation has been laid. We are instructed to build each other up<sup>ii</sup>, together as one house, upon the foundation that we find described in Ephesians 2:19-22,

“therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup>*having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone*, <sup>21</sup>in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, <sup>22</sup>in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”

Further, this house must only be built up in a way that honors God and is in keeping with the solid foundation. Paul cautions us ‘*fellow workers*’ of this danger in 1 Corinthians 3:9-11,

“we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. <sup>10</sup>According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But *let each one take heed how he builds on it*. <sup>11</sup>For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

Therefore, as we edify one another, building each other up, our efforts cannot be contrary to the cornerstone, who is Christ.

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<sup>i</sup> οἰκοδομέω = Oikodomeo, oy-kod-om-eh'-o, Strong# 3618: 1. to build a house, erect a building; 1a. to build (up from the foundation); 1b. to restore by building, to rebuild, repair; 2. metaph.: 2a. to found, establish; 2b. to promote growth in Christian wisdom, affection, grace, virtue, holiness, blessedness; 2c. to grow in wisdom and piety.

<sup>ii</sup> JUDE 1:20-21, you, beloved, *building yourselves up on your most holy faith*, praying in the Holy Spirit, <sup>21</sup>keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Our study of Revelation should edify us, building us up in Christ. Yet, as this prophecy becomes clearer in our minds, there should be no information we discover that takes us away from the true foundation, established before the world began<sup>iii</sup>. For, as we read in John 1:1-4,

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>*All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.* <sup>4</sup>In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”

All that we gain from our study should lead us, therefore, to a closer relationship with Jesus. Paul presents this to us in 1 Corinthians 14:26,

“Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. *Let all things be done for edification.*”

For, as we grow in the knowledge<sup>iv</sup> of our Lord and Savior, we should develop a natural attachment to our foundation, as well as a bond between our fellow believers.

All of us believers, collectively known as the ‘church’, should be well-informed of certain things. Through his Revelation, Jesus gave us foresight of the things that are yet to come. He did this in order to edify his servants, as is explained in the opening line of Revelation 1:1,

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him *to show His servants-things which must shortly take place.*”

We know that Jesus wants us to be informed of future events, not in the timing of when<sup>v</sup> they will occur, but in the assurance<sup>vi</sup> of them coming to pass. For, we know

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<sup>iii</sup> 1PET 1:20-21, *He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world*, but was manifest in these last times for you <sup>21</sup>who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

<sup>iv</sup> 2PET 3:18, *grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

<sup>v</sup> ACTS 1:6-7, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" <sup>7</sup>And He said to them, "*It is not for you to know times or seasons* which the Father has put in His own authority.

<sup>vi</sup> JOHN 14:2-4, In My Father's house are many mansions; *if it were not so, I would have told you*. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. <sup>4</sup>"And where I go you know, and the way you know."

that Jesus will return, which creates in us a wonderful anticipation as Paul writes in Titus 2:11-13,

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,  
<sup>12</sup>teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup>*looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ*”.

We should all live with this expectation, that our Lord’s return is assured!

The edification of the church comes through sharing God’s truth in order that we become unified in our understanding, i.e. a house built on one foundation. For, there is only one foundation: one name given to man by which we must be saved<sup>vii</sup>. He is the cornerstone of this house, which is all of us who bear his name as ‘Christian’. In this house, as his followers, we are to be his vessels, approved by him for his use. Paul explains this in 2 Timothy 2:19-21,

“the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." <sup>20</sup>But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. <sup>21</sup>Therefore *if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.*”

So, part of knowing future events is the understanding of the Lord’s expectation from us, his church. In Revelation, the most important information for us to absorb are the epistles written by Jesus, found in chapters 2 and 3. In these letters, He exhorts us on many points that include: stopping certain practices, resuming those which we have neglected, continuing in what is right, and in not forgetting our first love. Through his word, Jesus edifies the church to be vessels of honor. He defines iniquity for us, and urges us away from such tendencies. For, we are to be like him: to be holy, for he is holy<sup>viii</sup>. In order to be like Jesus we must follow him closely,

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<sup>vii</sup> ACTS 4:10-12, “let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. <sup>11</sup>“This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ <sup>12</sup>“Nor is there salvation in any other, for *there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*”

<sup>viii</sup> 1PET 1:15-16, as *He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct*, <sup>16</sup>because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”

drawing ever nearer to him. Thus, we follow his word closely, which edifies us to be like him.

Hopefully, we will be edified through our study of Revelation by gaining knowledge of things to come, and by drawing closer to Jesus Christ our Lord. In all that we gain, he must be the focus of our time together. One way to measure the blessing of our study is by the amount we are moved closer to God. The psalmist reveals the detriments of being far away from, as well as the benefits of drawing nearer to God, in Psalm 73:27-28,

“For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry. <sup>28</sup>But *it is good for me to draw near to God*; I have put my trust in the Lord God, That I may declare all Your works.”

Thus, another reason for our learning of things to come is that we may declare the works<sup>ix</sup> of God before they appear. By this, we show our trust in the Lord and will bring him glory when his word is fulfilled. It is, therefore, essential that we are not contrary to the foundation in our understanding of Revelation. In order to do this well, we must first know the cornerstone, our Lord and Savior. This will allow us to build according to his direction. Second, we must not add or take away from his word<sup>x</sup>, which edifies us and builds our house.

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<sup>ix</sup> PSM 145:3-4, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; And His greatness is unsearchable. <sup>4</sup>*One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts.*

<sup>x</sup> REV 22:18-19, I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; <sup>19</sup>and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.