

## **“Under Construction – Part 1”**

**Ephesians 2:19-22**

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In Matthew 16:18, Jesus promised that He would build His Church, the Body of Christ. The Church is a living organism, composed of immortal souls. Here in Ephesians, Paul tells how Jesus is fulfilling His promise to build the Church in a dynamic way.

1. God builds the Church with people, not buildings and programs.

*“you are...of God’s household” (2:19)*

2. The Church is composed of redeemed people.

*“you are fellow citizens with the saints” (2:19)*

- a. each believer is a heavenly brick

*“you also are living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood” (1 Peter 2:5)*

- b. the Church is still under construction

*“you are being built together” (2:22)*

3. The foundation of the Church has already been built.

- a. the foundation is the apostles and prophets

*“having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (2:20)*

- b. Christ is the Cornerstone of the foundation

*“Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone” (2:20)*

4. Church growth is promoted when there is true unity in the Spirit.

*“growing into a holy temple in the Lord” (2:21)*

*in whom you also are...a dwelling of God in the Spirit” (2:22)*

**The Office of Apostle:** limited to only 12--also called “the twelve” (Matthew 26:14); personally called, trained and commissioned by Jesus (John 6:70); had to witness the resurrection (Acts 1:22); had the gift of signs, wonders and miracles (Acts 2:43; 2 Corinthians 12:12) and divine revelation (Hebrews 2:3-4); established the doctrine and leadership structure for the Church (Acts 2:42; Jude 3). The Twelve Apostles were: 1) Simon Peter (Cephas); 2) Andrew, Peter’s brother; 3) John; 4) James the brother of John; 5) Philip; 6) Bartholomew (Nathanael); 7) Thomas (Didymus); 8) Matthew (Levi, the tax-collector); 9) Simon the Zealot; 10) Jude (Thaddaeus); 11) James the Less; 12) Judas Iscariot; 12) Matthias, who replaced Judas.

**Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles:** Paul was called by the resurrected Christ personally to minister to the Gentiles as an official Apostle (Galatians 1:1,11,12; 2:8). Paul was in a class by himself as an Apostle—he identified himself as an Apostle (1 Corinthians 9:1) while pointing out his unique classification as one “untimely born” (1 Corinthians 15:7-9); he had the gift of miracles, spoke and wrote divine revelation, was caught up into heaven, and wrote 13 New Testament books.

**Those with the Gift of Apostleship:** There were a few men in the early church who had the gift of apostleship, yet did not have the unique office of Apostle (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28); they were charged with specific duties of ministry relative to establishing the church in the beginning, having the sign gifts at their disposal. Some of these men included Barnabas (Acts 14:4,14); James, the Lord’s brother (1 Corinthians 15:7; Galatians 1:19); Apollos (1 Corinthians 4:6,9); Silvanus (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2:6); Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25); Andronicus (Romans 16:7); Junias (Romans 16:7).

There are no apostles today—the foundation of the church was completed 2,000 ago. The Twelve Apostles of Jesus will be given special recognition in the New Jerusalem, having their names etched in the 12 foundation stones of the eternal heavenly city—there are no vacancies (Revelation 21:14). To carry on the work of the ministries that the Apostles started in the early church, God has given pastors, teachers, elders, evangelists, all the saints and the indwelling Holy Spirit.