

## **THE CORNERSTONE IS CRITICAL TO THE CHURCH**

Ephesians 2:18-21 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

In this day and age, with laser transoms and levels, the importance of a cornerstone has become non-existent. The laying of a cornerstone is, at most, symbolic. It is the place where the name and/or date of the building is found or into which a time capsule is placed.

Prior to modern technology and building instruments the cornerstone was the most important part of the building process. To have a perfect building one had to have a perfect cornerstone. A perfect cornerstone had to be solid and square. A perfect cornerstone was required for the four walls of the building to be perfectly square. Perfectly square walls insured that the rest of the structure would be strong to stand the test of time.

Ephesians 2:18-21 describes the Christian Church. You will note in St. Paul's words found in this section of Scripture Jesus is said to be the cornerstone for the Church. All the rest of the Church is determined by how it is built around Jesus Christ. The entire structure of the Church, with Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, is joined together, and becomes a holy temple in the Lord.

Christian congregations, when constructing a church building, put a great deal of time and emphasis on developing building plans. They carefully select the best building materials. They contract with an excellent contractor. They depend upon their architect to supervise the construction project so the final building is as perfect as humanly possible.

Jesus said, "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20) St. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 2 says it is what is taught inside the church that determines if it is "a holy temple of the LORD." The foundation of the Apostles and Prophets is referring to the church teaching the words of Holy Scripture written by the Apostles and Prophets. The cornerstone of the church, from which all the rest of the church is fitted together, is its teaching

about Jesus Christ. "... for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

As a member of a Christian church, critical for your spiritual life is the gospel, absolution of your sins, and the sacraments you receive inside the four walls of the church rather than the brick, mortar, roof, flooring, lighting of the building, etc.

Prayer: O LORD, bless me with a church that is founded upon the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, the right administration of the sacraments, with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone of its ministry and pastors faithful in preaching the word and administering the sacraments. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The Church's one foundation Is Jesus Christ, her LORD;  
She is His new creation By water and the Word.  
From heav'n He came and sought her To be His holy bride;  
With His own blood He bought her, And for her life He died.

Elect from ev'ry nation, Yet one o'er all the earth;  
Her charter of salvation; One LORD, one faith, one birth.  
One holy name she blesses, Partakes one holy food,  
And to one hope she presses With ev'ry grace endued.

Though with a scornful wonder The world sees her oppressed;  
By schisms rent asunder, By heresies distressed,  
Yet saints their watch are keeping; Their cry goes up, "How long?"  
And soon the night of weeping Shall be the morn of song.

Through toil and tribulation And tumult of her war  
She waits the consummation Of peace forevermore  
Till with the vision glorious Her longing eyes are blest,  
And the great Church victorious Shall be the Church at rest.

Yet she on earth has union With God, the Three in One,  
And mystic sweet communion With those whose rest is won.  
O blessed heav'nly chorus! Lord, save us by Your grace  
That we, like saints before us, May see You face to face.  
(LSB 644)