

## 152. Living Stones By Art Evans

Good morning, everybody!

I feel overwhelmed in the goodness of God and the joy of the Lord. Everybody who has helped to lead us in worship, to lead us in the presence of God. Isn't God so amazingly, beyond comprehension good? He has done for us what no one else could do or would do and He's done it completely. He's done it perfectly. I'm so thankful. I'm only good because of Jesus. He found me and changed me and He gets all of the glory for that. And, I absolutely love your Pastor. Arland and Barbara are very, very precious to Wendy, my wife, and me and to our church and the things that he said are certainly mutual. I feel great support, great encouragement through them both and through their friendship and through their spirit of faith. You have treasures here at Living Well. No question about that. And, over the last several weeks as – Christian Worship Center is the name of the church that I pastor in San Diego – they learned I was coming here and have had different times of prayer for you all and for this work and even this morning in the worship service there, a time of prayer was given to just continue to call for the favor of God, the anointing, the supply, everything that's necessary for the will of God to be done here. Not only at Living Well but throughout Ventura County and beyond. All that it is that God wants to accomplish. And to be able to stand here and have your attention for a few minutes. What a privilege for me. What an honor. I don't take that as a small thing.

I've been in church my whole life. My parents were in full-time ministry long before I was born. And, my Dad was a music director and so he was never a pastor but I was raised in a Baptist denomination, for which I'm immensely proud of. I learned really good doctrine growing up, and, being in a minister's home I was born on a Thursday. I was in church that following Sunday and I have been here ever since. I love the church. I've heard it said, I've said it myself, you've probably said it yourself that the church on its worst day is a gazillion times better than the world on its best day. This is the kingdom that remains and we are so honored to be led by the King of all glory, Himself, Jesus the Christ. You may know, you may not know but certainly it is really good to be among those this morning who love, honor and adore the name of Jesus.

The name Jesus is two parts. It's both Old Testament, the fulfilling of the Law and it is New Testament, the coming of salvation. If you were to take *Je*, in the Hebrew that is an abbreviation for the name *Jehovah*. *Jehovah* meaning "God Almighty." Or, THE I AM. We can just continue in worship now. For who He is and for all that He has done. But if you go on to take the name Hosea, in the Greek Hosea is pronounced *sus*, spelled s-u-s. If you put J-e-s-u-s together, Hosea actually means "Redeemer has come." Jesus. God Almighty. The great I AM. As Redeemer, aren't you glad His name doesn't mean God Almighty as Judge has come? Or, God Almighty who could wipe us out if He so intended has come? No. God Almighty as Savior, Redeemer, Healer, Deliverer, Provider, Protector, Peace, Prince of Joy, Righteousness. All that goes along with Him, He is the One who is the Head of the Church. And what an honor! What a privilege! Pastor Arland and I were talking just last evening of the privilege we consider to be a part of the Church! I mean to be a part of the Kingdom is wonderful. To be a part of His great work is an honor. To be a part of His Church, the redeemed. And then, of course, to be a part of His family has changed everything for us. I'm just overwhelmed in my gratitude.

I mentioned being raised in church – a quick insight into my family. Whenever we were getting ready to go to church on Sunday morning, you know, we were among the ones who were going to be among the first to be there. We would be among the last to leave. I was left sleeping under the

pew multiple times. My parents would get home late at night, and, realize Arthur is not with us, go back in the church. I'm under the pew, you know. It's just been my life, and, when we would be getting ready to go to church, my Mother had a routine that she would take us through necessarily. And that would be primarily my brother and I would have to march in front of her with our pockets turned outward just so she could know we didn't have any Hot Wheels in there; we don't have any melting candy in there; or whatever it might be. But one Sunday in particular my brother made it with a marble. All the way to church. Probably some of you remember that we all use to sit on wooden pews and wooden pews on hardwood floors and those wooden pews are tilted back and my brother and I now, I am four. He's five. Just a little guy sitting on the front row. Mama's up there playing the organ, by the way, with perfect posture. My Mom was 5'11". A beehive hairdo that went another three-and-a-half-feet into the air, cat-rimmed glasses with perfect posture. She is the church lady, you understand. And, so she's up there playing the organ. My Dad is up there directing the whole congregation. He's got his hymnal out singing the first, second and last stanza. My brother got that marble out and we're sitting back - our legs don't even fall off the pew- and, he put the marble at the top of the pew and it would just roll back, so you could hear this ch-kk-krrrr-chk. And my Mom is up there realizing if there's a noise that's not normal going on in church my kids are involved somewhere. My Dad sees it so he's and he's going (demonstrates). He's directing everybody but he's directing everyone's attention over to us. We're going along. My brother and I are having a wonderful time. Church is good. Church is wonderful. We've got our marble. All of a sudden, my brother is turning different colors. So red, coming like blue. And he's going (demonstrates) on the front row on Sunday morning and my Mother from the organ realizes he's swallowed that marble. Now, when the churches use to have the organs up on the platform or in what's called the organ pit there was this curtain that was in front of it like a railing, a curtain there. My Mother in one move, one 5'11", 3'6" high beehive hairdo, glass-rimmed move. Right over that bannister to the front row grabs my brother by one ankle, holds him up in front of the whole church and is going to beating that marble out of his throat. Sunday morning. It was a great time in the Evans household! We loved church! My Dad just stopped. No one was singing, so my Dad just closed his book, he turned to the pastor and he said, "It's all yours." Isn't that great? We have never forgotten about it because when we did get home, the disciplinary processes of the Evans household at that time changed. There was a huge, momentous shift that took place in our family after that. We made sure we didn't take anything to church other than our Bible and our Royal Ambassador handbook. All that to say that we have a tremendous honor.

However, it is that we came into the Kingdom maybe like me some of you were just born into the family and Jesus was there from the beginning and certainly we have to give our lives to His Lordship or maybe you've just come into the Kingdom in the last little while. However, you made it, maybe you would say, "I'm in a church but I'm not part of the church right now." I would plead with you make the best decision you could ever make with your life - not to be a part of the organization and the structure of it all; that's important - but to be a part of the family of God has changed everything. That He would give that privileged opportunity.

You remember when Jesus Himself, this Man that we've been worshipping and talking about and honoring and exalting His name - Jesus; when He said in Matthew 16:18, "I will build MY Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. If you were to take that into a number of different translations, it's really saying it in the offensive, "I will build My church and the gates of hell will not be able to resist the onslaught of the righteous." In other words, as the Church grows and the righteous take their place and they understand their role in the building of His Church as co-laborers together with God, the powers of darkness cannot stop the move in and through the Church. And, of course, we must not only understand that but cooperate with great confidence that God's going to do what He said. When you consider who said that, who made that promise "I will

build My Church.” Who said that? Jesus. Immanuel. God, who cannot lie. He cannot fail and He will not deny faith, which means this and I say this very respectfully. With us or without us Jesus is going to do what He said He would do. We are privileged to be a part and I want to encourage you to take that up as the honor that it is, that God would say ‘I want to co-labor together with us - with you. I want you to be a part of the building of My Kingdom in the earth.’ And as He does this I want us to look at a couple of scriptures that are going to give us insight to His design of the Church and what we are privileged to be a part of.

So, in Ephesians 2 if you were to begin here with me in verse 19, it says “you are no longer strangers or you are no longer foreigners but you are fellow citizens of the household of God.” Verse 20. This is important. “You have been built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. Jesus Christ Himself is the Cornerstone, the Chief Cornerstone or He is the Foundation in Whom, in Christ the whole building is being fitted together.” The whole building. That means everyone is a part. If Jesus Christ is the Lord of your life, He intends you to be fitting together as we grow into a holy temple in the Lord. In other words, you can’t choose Jesus and reject the Church. You can’t say, “Well, I want Jesus but I don’t want anything to do with the body of Christ because I do better on my own.” Well, first of all, that’s a deceptive maneuver of the enemy. Nobody does better on their own. (Pause) Felt like I needed to stop there for a moment and let that register. As a matter of fact, God has promised ‘I will take the isolated, I will take the lonely and I will put them in families.’ Because no one in God’s design did He ever intend to do life by yourself. It’s the enemy who wants us to be isolated and separated because how many of you know the lion doesn’t hunt the herd. He looks for the stragglers, he looks for those who are off by themselves - thinking I can do this by myself. That’s exactly what the enemy wants you to think. Okay, but I’ve got to get back to this now. Okay.

So, we who are a part of the redeemed, the whole building is being fitted together, grows. Now watch this: Into a holy temple unto the Lord in Whom also you are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. You could say it this way: that the Church is God’s dwelling place in the earth. How we were calling for, honoring and thanking God for His presence this morning. We aren’t here this morning only because it’s Sunday morning or because this is Living Well’s third anniversary. We are here to honor that work and that timing certainly but foremost we are here with a Divine expectation that when we meet together we are a dwelling place for God Himself. What would the Church be all over the world if the first thing, and the fullest thing and the last thing that we acknowledge and cooperate as the Church in the earth is the Presence of I AM? What would the Church be like all over the world if His Presence was priority one? To hear Him, to see Him, to yield to Him, to follow His lead? What did Zephaniah say? He said the Lord your God in the midst of you is might and able to save, to heal, deliver, restore, make new. That’s the God who we have worshipped this morning. That’s the God that we have welcomed and anticipated His Presence. And that is what the Church is being designed for. When Jesus said, “I’m going to build My Church this is what He said I’m building, a dwelling place for God. I’m building a people who are fitted together so that God can come and move in the earth. Now, there’s no question about it for those who are saved you are the dwelling place of God. What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Lord. But there is something of New Testament significance about the people of God coming together. Where two or more are gathered in My Name there God Almighty the Redeemer has come. I will be there. The Church is a dwelling place for God. Let’s just take a question for a moment. What if the majority of those who God intended, when He, even though they are saved, they just decided I don’t want to be built into the Church. I just want me and God to have my own thing and you know, I’m going to go to heaven and that will be fine. What if the majority of the living stones took that idea? What is it that we would be forfeiting if we do not cooperate together with Jesus in the building of His Church? Well, He said I’m building it as a dwelling place of God in

the earth. Is it possible that when we don't come together and allow ourselves to be built into that edifice that we are compromising or at least to some degree forfeiting the presence of God? You say, "Well God's with me." I know. But is it possible the reason God is building His Church through Jesus and through laborers together with Him is because He has fullness of His glory and fullness of His presence and power in mind? And, what more does our generation need than the fresh anointing, presence and power of the living God? He is the Hope of the nations, not religion, not organization, not the buildings that we have. All of that has its place but what our generation needs the most is exactly the objective as to why Jesus said, "I'm building My Church" and that is we are a dwelling place for God Himself. Where God is anything is possible. Our God was and is and forever will be. I AM He who was, I AM Him who is and I AM He who will forever be. If He was the Healer, He is the healer and He will forever be the Healer. If he was the Prince of Peace, He is the Prince of Peace and He will forever be the Prince of Peace. He is Jesus Christ and He changes not. If He was the Word of God, He is the Word of God, He will forever be the Word of God. If He was the Deliverer, does anyone have a testimony this morning of what He has brought you out of? (Laughter). And He wants to do the same for everyone but it's a result of the magnitude of His presence and His great power.

Let's look now to 1 Peter 2 just for a moment. While you're turning there, I want. 1 Peter 2. I want to remind you of something the psalmist said in Psalm 127:1 he said, "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who have built it have labored in vain. And unless the Lord watches the city (Thousand Oaks or wherever it is that you're from in Ventura here in this area; San Diego; Los Angeles), unless the Lord watches the city the watchmen wake up in vain." Now, he did not say 'Unless the Lord builds the house, the house doesn't get built.' He didn't say that. It's very possible that even in the name of God, we can give full effort to building His Church but unless He's the One building it we have built it in vain. In vain means empty. This is the word now. This is the definition of vain. It's empty; it's fruitless; it's temporary. That's what it means to build in vain or we have watched the city in vain. You know, it doesn't matter how great our military is. It doesn't matter how developed and sophisticated our strategies become. There is sophisticated evil out there that requires Divine protection and that is what He has promised from His abiding presence.

I think what I'm trying to bring us to in this moment if I'm hearing the Holy Spirit right is that we must be aware and resist the idea that Church is just a Sunday morning organization thing going on and that throughout the rest of the week it doesn't really matter that much. If there is any thing that is at the top of Jesus' list in His continued ministry in the earth it's Matthew 16:18: "I will build My Church." So, I thought that the priority of Jesus would be to save the lost. But what if He saves the lost and there's no church to grow them in? What if there is no church for what was tombstones now becoming living stones, that there's no building for them to be built into and their just as alone now as before they were saved. I know that Jesus wants the harvest saved but let's say equally important to Him is fulfilling this declaration, "I will build My Church." It's on heaven's mind, it's on the mind of Christ, it's in God's heart. And I just believe that one of the things that we are celebrating today is that we have so graciously and generously been included in what is most important in the heart of God - building His Church.

Now, we're going to take a turn here. You got 1 Peter 2? Let's just read verses 4 and 5: "We are coming to Jesus as to a Living Stone. He was rejected, indeed, by men but chosen by God and precious. You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." Isn't that beautiful? We, as living stones, are being built. Is that what your Bible says? I want to read that sentence again. "You also, as living stones, are being built." Now, don't misunderstand this - what I'm about to say but listen to it in context. Everybody wants to tell you we as living stones are being blessed. We're being

blessed. We're being blessed. Lord, we thank You we are being blessed. So, thank You for blessing me. Thank You for blessing me. If you'll get saved the Lord is going to bless you. And, how many of you have full confidence that's true? But let me tell you this. In God's agenda, wisdom and plan for your life and for His Church, if He has to choose between blessing you and building you, He's gonna build you first. Because if He blesses you but He is not given the opportunity to build you, His blessing can ruin you. How many of you know you can't fire a cannon from a canoe? (Laughter). Yeah, we got to get something more underneath you than just that little canoe if you're gonna be carrying the heavy warfare and military material of the blessing of the Lord. I remember, I'm just thinking here for a moment. We're not going to turn from this yet. You remember the two requests of the prodigal? When the prodigal came to his father the first time, what was his request? Here it is. Father! Give me what is mine. Now father, we know the story. He loaded him with his inheritance. And how many of you know God wants to daily load you with benefits and blessings? No question about that. But thankfully, our Father is perfect in His wisdom and perfect in His timing. He's not going to be the ruin of you. He may be the frustration of you. But that's all for your good as well. The prodigal goes out. He uses all that resource and spends it on himself. Finally, as Jesus gives this parable, uses the phrase - "He comes to the end of himself." And he decides, 'I'm going to go home to my father's house.' And as he begins to rehearse and go through all that it is he's going to say to his father, we find the second request. The first request - "Father, give me." The second request - "Father, make me one of your servants." It's a big difference between 'bless me' and 'build me.' This is the understanding that we, if we realize and cooperate in our approach to what Jesus is doing in the Church and even through our lives, then we want to be sure that we have heart posture of 'Lord, I know You want to bless me. You are a blessing-generous, giving God. There's none like You in that regard but Lord, as You bless me or even as You see fit, I certainly Father, want You to build me.' Build me as a living stone, along with other living stones so that as we are being built together, we are that spiritual house, that dwelling place of God so that when people come from other places and uh, different times when we meet together just like we are experiencing this morning, there is the assurance that even though so-and-so may not be here or so-and-so may be off somewhere else, there is One that has assured that He is going to be here in our midst strong and mighty and able to save, heal, deliver and do what only He can do. God has promised His presence in the midst of His Church.

Living stones, being built together. Some years ago, I was blessed, privileged to be a part of a mission's team where we went into Mexico and we had dozens of teenagers. I was a youth pastor at the time and I had another youth pastor friend whose his group and my group kind of mingled together and we went down into Mexico for a couple of weeks - actually we were there for fifteen-sixteen days. And had a great, great time. Many, many people - I wish I had time to give you stories of God's amazing power and faithfulness there. But let's just, let me say many got saved. Praise God! But one of the things I learned from this trip and particularly to Mexico was that many of their structures, their homes are small. They're somewhat short and they're crooked. And, even as you're walking in some towns, you'll walk by a pile of stones. Just a big pile of brick and rock. And you ask, "What is all of that?" And here is the answer I heard more than one time. It is this, "Oh, that's a house that fell." "Why did the house fall?" "Because the stones were not prepared." In other words, we got the stone right out of the dirt, right out of the earth and because we didn't get all of the rough edges off. We didn't shape them to be fitly joined into the other stones, as a result when you walk into the house you've got to bend down because when the stones resist preparation or they say 'It's not necessary. Just plug me in as I come.' If we do not allow ourselves to be prepared and fitly joined together, we can only build so high before it starts to lean in its own direction. And, eventually, it is going to fall over because the stones not being prepared it's been built in vain. Its empty, its fruitless and its temporary. Unless the Lord builds the house. So, if Jesus is gonna build the house how many of you knows He knows, He's the Architect, He is the Builder

and He knows how to get this done right. He's the One, Jesus, who taught us. The wise man, he built his house on the rock. But the foolish man, he built his house on the sand and when the storm came the fall of that house was great because his was on the sand. But when the storm came to the man whose house was on the rock it stood, it could not be shaken. Why? Because it was built on the rock. Now, if Jesus is referring to a wise man who built your house on the rock, how many agree that if we're talking about Him building His own house, He's going to do it the way that He told us to do it which is – you can count on this. If you are in a church where Jesus is building the church and it's not a church in vain; it's not a church that's empty and temporary. If it is a church that Jesus the Christ is really building, you can count on it. It is going to be built on this everlasting, unshakeable rock of His word.

Now what's the difference between the wise man and the foolish man? You say, "Well, one heard the Word." No, remember, they both heard the Word. What was the difference? It wasn't that they one heard the Word and the other didn't hear the Word or one was given an opportunity and the other was not given an opportunity. No, the difference between the wise man and the foolish man, the man who built his house upon the rock and the man who built his house on the sand is not that one heard the Word and one did not but one obeyed the Word. And one heard the Word and did not. In other words, I know what I need to do. I'm just not interested. Okay, well. Our generation needs the presence of God. And His presence is looking to abide in a dwelling place called the Church. And the materials that He is using to build His Church is not brick and mortar, it's not hotel rooms although this is all wonderful where we meet but ultimately the material Jesus uses to build His Church is what He calls living stones. Living stones. But those stones like me, like you, like everybody else in this room, I need to agree to the process of preparation. Isn't that right? In other words, I can't come into the church and think that because I'm here then I'm, and I'm hesitant on this word but hear my heart, because I'm here I'm qualified to fit. Really, we are all a work in progress and if you're like the rest of us you come in with some rough edges. Let's call them attitudes, let's call them paradigms, let's call them past experiences, let's call them habits, addictions, whatever it might be. Those rough edges if we all just leave our rough edges alone the house is going to be crooked, it'll only go up so high. You know, when you want to broadcast the light of hope and glory to the nations you want to let Jesus build us as high as possible. So, in order for the stones to be prepared we have to agree to the process. So, as I know your pastor and I have sensed even in these few moments together the heart posture and passion of this church, I know that Living Well does not want to make a promise to Ventura without also preparing to take people through the process.

Just letting that settle for a minute. The process can be painful because change in itself is uncomfortable. But when we understand that ultimately what it is that God is working on us for, to be fitly joined as an edifice of His presence and glory that's going to remain and grow high and potentially reach this entire region for the glory of the King, whom we all love, adore and trust Him. We know He is the Hope of the nations. Let's do everything we can as living stones to be fitly joined so He can build us as high and strong and enduring as possibly. He can build. Everybody tracking with me so far?

Okay, I'm almost finished. I've got one other thing I want to show you which is Psalm 102. In Psalm 102, umm, how bout we just start in verse 13? Okay, you ready? "Oh God, You will arise and have mercy on Zion." Now remember, Zion is a prophetic term of the Church and we're going to hear the name 'Zion' for eternity. It's God's eternal kingdom. Aren't you glad that you will arise and have mercy? That's Jesus! God Almighty as Redeemer, Savior, merciful King has come. "For the time to favor her, yes, the set time has come." Verse 14: "Your servants" – that's us - "we take pleasure in her stones." You know, remember what that means? We take pleasure in her stones meaning that

we love one another. Here I am in Thousand Oaks on Sunday morning. I'm from San Diego. But you know I didn't come to Thousand Oaks because I like Ventura. I came because I take pleasure in being with this living stone and these living stones and now all of you living stones. I came to fellowship with the other living stones of the church that Jesus is building. I take pleasure in you and us together with Him! What a joy! What an honor! What a blessing! It's holy and this is eternal. This is what is going to remain past all of our politics; past all of our things going on in the world; all of our hobbies and things like that. They all have their place but this is what matters most to eternity. Alright, so we take pleasure in her stones but watch this now – the last part of verse 14. "We show favor to her dust." That's kind of strange isn't it? Unless you've been paying attention and I know you have to the things that I said leading up to this. "We take favor in her dust." You know what dust is? Dust is the sign of a work in progress. When living stones are hitting together and God is taking all of those edges and is refining and He's not just leaving you the way that He found you but He getting you ready to be fitly joined to her and to him and to them and to that and the other. He's got the plan. He's the Architect. He's the Builder. He's the Master Designer and He knows where you fit! But to get you ready from where He found you some dust has got to fly. But if you understand what He is doing, we favor the dust. Is that what your Bible reads? We favor the dust. In other words, when we see the dust we know, O Lord, O God, you getting some things done, Lord. I don't really understand. I don't know the whole picture and this does not necessarily feel very good to me, but Lord I know that what You are doing is nothing necessary and I want to be among those stones who are prepared and framed and fit by your love, by your truth, by your anointing, by your nature, by what's on your mind, and what's in your heart so that I can be fitly joined with the other living stones and be a part of this eternal work called the Church. "Arise and shine," Isaiah prophesied to the body of Christ, "for Your light has come and the glory – the doxa, the brightness, the *kabod*, the goodness, the mercy, the power, the presence of God Himself has risen upon you for darkness, it covers the earth. How many of you think we're in Of Mice and Men right now? It is the best of times and it is the worst of times. You following me? For the world it is seemingly the worst of times but look at the Church. As the darkness gets darker God said the brightness and the richness of the paths of the righteous they just get brighter and brighter until the fullness of the noonday sun. So as darkness comes to the earth, gross darkness upon the people, the Lord Himself, the Lord, that's Jesus, the Head, He will arise upon you and His glory will be seen and draw the nations.

Look at me just a moment as I stand here. There is a very important reason why I, Jesus, the apostle Paul, Peter all refer to the Church as His body. We are His body. He is the Head. When Jesus is lifted up, when the Head is lifted up what happens? He said, "If I the Son of Man be lifted up, I will draw." Now we just heard from Isaiah that the glory of the Lord will rise upon you and His glory will be seen and draw the nations. It confirms. So, we all want the Head to be lifted, to be exalted in the nations because as Jesus, the Hope of salvation, Healer, Deliverer, Provider, King, Wise, Counsel, everything that our world has and evermore will need. If He is lifted up, He will draw the nations into the Kingdom, into the Church. How do I lift the Head? If its truly a part of the body? I can only lift the Head if I add to this body. You see, as this body is getting filled and more stones are being added, what's happening to the Head? The Head is being lifted, being raised up. But if I decide ahh, it's not important and follow the trend of many and just say, "No, I'm going to do my own thing," what happens to the Head, that Head that you love, that Head that you honor, that Head that you know saved your life and is the only Hope of the nations. What happens to the Head at the cost of us doing our own thing? It's lowered. Not only that, if I speak against the body – oh, I love Jesus – it's that church I don't want nothing to do with. Well, you can't beat against His body and exalt His Head at the same time. If you want the Head lifted, be fitly joined because that's how we individually have the privilege of helping to lift the Hope of the nations.

When you contribute, when you give. I'm not just talking about finances but that's included certainly. We're not only following the nature of God but we are also helping as co-laborers with God to build His Church. And as we build the Church the Head is lifted higher and higher.

Lastly, God says and I quote, "Where is a house that you can build for me?" In other words, we can't take even and everything I just said and say, "Oh, it's all on us." Hold it. God says (Isaiah 66), "Where is a house that you can build for Me? Where is so much as a footstool that you can provide for Me that I can put My feet to rest? For with My own hands I've created everything." In other words, if God had intended that He didn't want your help or mine, He doesn't have to have it. He has honored us to be a part. And know this. Any place where God puts His honor it's going to bless your life. Now, it's gonna build you but it's gonna bless you. He said, "By My own hand I've created everything." But there is one man, one person to whom I will yield and will incline my ear. It is to he who is of a broken and contrite spirit and trembles at My Word. In other words, it's not all about our gifts; it's not all about our contributions; it's not all about our giving and what we can do. Thank God for all of that. He's blessed us and honored us by including us but ultimately what God is building in His house is living stones who are broken, contrite, humbled before Him and say, "God, do in me and through me what only You can. Build me, Lord, so that You can bless through me. Build me as You establish Your kingdom in my generation. Amen?"