



BUILDING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN ON EARTH

By Dave Gillum

INTRODUCTION

“Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven.”

We have repeated that prayer since we could barely speak as a child. But do we believe it? If we do, then we have some serious work to do to build the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

The structure of Heaven is built on love. The structure of the world is built on money. So what we will do in this book is create the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth in the framework that should be used to make that prayer come true that “Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven”.

CHAPTER 1

*“Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain,
who build it.” Psalm 127:1*

OK, let's start at the very beginning. We were given a formula for building the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. That formula was to begin with loving the Lord, our God, with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. The secondary part of that was to love our neighbor as ourselves. Now this, as Jesus says, is not a new commandment. It is a reiteration of an old commandment. But it is what is used to build the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. The foundation of our structure must sit, lay, and act on love. It is the key and center and cornerstone to everything we do as Christians. It is also the reason that the Kingdom of Heaven does not live on Earth. We are unwilling to love like Christ loved. In the Greek, it is “agape” love, unconditional love for ourselves and for our brother. We can have no house of God on Earth until we

establish this premise.

Now, the hard part about this is that not only do we need to build a new structure in Christ, we need to remove all of the walls of the old structure before we can be effective with a new structure. Several years ago I visited Grand Turk, and we began to go around with a gentleman who lived there for many years. He explained all of the empty, vacant, partially destroyed buildings that we saw on the island. His explanation was that they had nowhere to put the old, so they had to just leave it there. Well, you can't do that with Christ. We have to remove all of the old before we can put in the new. It has been my experience of over forty years in the pastorate that people don't want to do that. It's too much work. If we are to have the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, and God's will be done on Earth as it is in heaven, we must create that environment before we can do anything.

CHAPTER 2

“Upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.” Matthew 16:18

Having now completed the foundation of love, we must turn to building the building. The foundation is love and the building is built on faith. We must believe what we read in the Bible, and we must live what we believe. Peter had trouble with this concept and constantly questioned Jesus. Jesus made it clear what needed to be done and he was consistent in building the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. Each cornerstone was carefully laid so that the walls were built on love, but it had the appropriate amount of faith, hope, and diligence in order to make them work. Most of being Christian is consistency. It runs against what the world thinks because Christians shouldn't try to be innovative. They shouldn't try to be imaginative. They should just follow the blueprint of Jesus and build the house on the foundation of love, where all could gather to serve Jesus Christ. Christianity is really about

one thing. It's really about service. You either are a servant of God, or you aren't. There is no in-between even though the world would like to continue to tell you that there is. The Bible tells us over and over again that if we are to serve, we must surrender. Surrender doesn't mean maybe. It means total surrender to Jesus Christ every day. This is the second major reason that the Kingdom of Heaven is not on Earth. We must surrender first, and then Jesus will give what we need to us. It's not the other way around. Now the house that God built will be sturdy, and as the scripture says will stand forever. The house that man builds eventually goes away.

We have built the walls on top of the strong foundation. We now have a chance that the Kingdom of Heaven will come through on Earth.

CHAPTER 3

We have now constructed the foundation and the walls for our new house of God. But now we must cover the building so that it is not damaged by worldly influences. God not only provided Jesus Christ as the cornerstone, He provided the Holy Spirit to cover us in a world that is completely opposite from the house that we are building. As a result, we must be very diligent in the building of our roof. Once the walls and foundation are erected, the weather will constantly batter the house, attempting to destroy it. That's why a secure roof is so important. In our building process for God, our secure roof is the Holy Spirit. The Bible says that once you have accepted Christ as your personal Savior, the Holy Spirit dwells within you. That dwelling is extremely important because we must call on the Holy Spirit in all things that we do. Like a good roof on a house, the Holy Spirit will ward off all of the "bad weather" that comes at us as Christians in the world. Heaven is easy. Heaven is ruled by Jesus Christ, and there is no one permitted in heaven that exhibits any of

the Earthly emotions of hate, of jealousy, of envy, and many other things. On Earth it is much more difficult because we are fighting the earthly elements that want to destroy our foundation, our walls, and our roof on our Heavenly structure. It's important to remember that the Earth is no longer God's domain. The Earth is where Satan lives on a regular basis. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, there is no middle ground when you're creating Heaven on Earth. There is a constant battle and struggle to maintain Christian principles in a morally corrupt society. I am not describing murder, and that type of thing here. That's easy to identify, and for most people to resist. I'm speaking about the little things that occur in our lives every day that destroy our Christian foundation. The only way to keep our house of God safe and protect our foundation and our walls is to have a secure roof provided by the Holy Spirit. In the next chapter, we will discuss what to put in this house that we have so carefully constructed.

CHAPTER 4

Before we can furnish our Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, there are two more things that we need for the exterior. I have chosen to devote a separate chapter to only two things, because they are extremely important. So far, we have a foundation, walls, and a roof on our Kingdom of Heaven home. We will add one of the most important elements to our house of God. We must have many windows. The windows must be very secure in order to keep unwanted weather out of our home. But they also must open, and they must allow us to see out. We learn what to do in God's house partly by watching what not to do. Houses get very stuffy if we don't occasionally open the windows and allow fresh air to come in. But we have to be able to close those windows when bad weather arrives. The Bible says that we are to live in the world but not be of the world. We can't see what the world is doing if we don't have windows to look out. As we all know, if we leave the windows completely open during a bad storm, everything will be ruined inside because of the

weather. That's also true of our souls. Looking out at a distance to learn what not to do is a good teaching tool that God uses in each of our lives. But he doesn't intend for us to participate in all that is going on outside our windows. He shows it to us so that we can avoid it.

There is one more element that is missing in our structure built by God. It is a strong, sturdy door with a deadbolt lock on it. We must venture out of our domicile constructed by God. Often in scripture, God told people to go away and back into the world. He did it with Moses when he brought the 10 Commandments. He did it with Peter, James, and John when they were on the mountain with Jesus, and they were told they had to go back to where they came from. Jesus did it with the lepers. After he healed them he told them to go to the priest and testify. We must be able to open the door, go into the world, testify, and then return to our safe structure. We also must be able to lock the door behind us and not allow unsightly influences into our Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. Try to remember that the garden of Eden was wide open to

Adam and Eve with the exception of one tree. All God said was you can do anything you want to do in Heaven, just don't eat from that tree. As we all know, Satan tempted Eve partially because Adam wasn't there. Satan told Eve a lie which was that God really didn't mean to stay away from that tree. But God really did mean stay away from that tree. There are things in our life that God says: don't go there. We must be able to lock the door and stay away from those things that Satan puts in each of our lives. Now I don't mean this to sound as if a perfect life must be led. We all know that we have fallen short of the glory of God. But we have a way out of sin. His name is Jesus Christ. So if we don't get the door locked in time, if we leave the windows open too long, all we need to do is repent and turn away from those items and God, through his son, Jesus Christ, will forgive our sins. That too, is part of building the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

CHAPTER 5

There are two final steps to completing our house of God. One is furnishing the inside of our house. Now that we have a foundation, walls, roof, windows, and door, now obviously, you're thinking of a bed, couches, tables, chairs, dishes. All those things are important. We need to be able to rest, and to eat, and to sit and think and pray. But there is one thing that should be the center of all of the interior of our house of God. It should never change, and it should be present, as we talk about building the neighborhood in the final chapter of this book. John knew what it was when he said in John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word." Now the Word was made flesh in the Person of Jesus Christ. But Jesus is in Heaven, not on Earth, at this point. Until He comes back, we must have the centerpiece of our interior decorations be the Bible. It should be available for us to consult each and every day, in every situation that we have seen through our windows and that we have gone out and explored in the world. The Word has never changed. The Bible tells us that the Word is

steadfast. As I mentioned earlier in this book, what is built by God no man can tear down, but what is built by man is subject to the weather of the Earth. So when you furnish your house of God, before you buy chairs and couches and kitchen utensils, and a bed, invest in at least one Bible to protect your life.

Finally, when you build a new house you are always required some landscaping. Often you go and look at the house because of the landscaping that has been put in and around the house. If there's too much landscaping, people view that as too much work and don't want anything to do with it. If there's not enough landscaping, people view the house as if it is empty with no character. How do we landscape our house of God? I believe the Bible gives us some clues to how to do that. First of all, our house should be surrounded by obvious love for others. People should have no question about how we feel about others outside our house. The landscaping for our house should be inviting. It should welcome strangers. The landscaping should be leading to the house around the sidewalk so that people know where to go to find God. If we are

going to build the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, we must be as inviting as God is for us to come to Heaven. God has given us a definite pathway that leads to the narrow gate that goes to Heaven. That pathway is lined with service, and repentance, and the love of God through his son, Jesus Christ. We are given the right to refuse that, the same as people can drive right by our house and never stop. We are also given the privilege of stopping, knocking, and God says the door will be opened for each of us. Our house of God on Earth must be the same way.

Now we have come to the end of building our individual house. We have our foundation, our walls, our roof, our windows and door, our furnishings, and our landscaping. But there is one more step that we must do if we are to build the Family of God, if we are to build Heaven on Earth, and it is the final chapter of this book of how to build the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

CHAPTER 6

We have completed a beautiful house built on the love of God. God never intended for us to stop after completing one house. Building the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth requires much more. We have an inkling of that in Matthew 28 when God tells us to go into all the world. For most of us, it is not practical to speak in terms of going into all the world ourselves. So what we must do is build Godly neighborhoods that will bring the light of Christ to a darkened world. How do we build a Godly neighborhood, which turns out to be the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth? I believe it to be very simple, but not easy. We have learned how to construct our house. God constructed one church. It was built on the shoulders of Peter, and God proclaimed that the gates of hell could not prevail against it. We have built our house in the same way. All we have to do is share with others how to build the house and then help them build it. There is a reason why almost every country is built on neighborhoods, whether they call it that or not, it's a group of people

that have built their houses in the same location. They look after each other, check on each other, their children play together, and often, they have block parties to get together. If they are a Godly neighborhood, they build a church or use someone's house, so that they can all get together and worship together. In the beginning of neighborhoods, the developer built a church and a school in the neighborhood. That's where all the kids went to school and that's where everybody went to worship God on Sunday. Unfortunately, we don't do that much anymore. We are attempting to build the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, so we need to act in a Godly fashion. There's a very old song that says, "no man is an island, no man stands alone." If we are building the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, no one stands alone. We help each other, pray for each other, and worship together as a Christian neighborhood. Once the neighborhood is built, we can show that model to other neighborhoods: building cities and states and countries. In the United States of America, there is a motto that says "In God We Trust". The foundation of building the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth is that we all

trust in God. There's an old hymn that says "Trust and obey. There is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."

There are many things as stated earlier in this book that we must do that are different than are being done in the world today. At Christmas, we put a lighted manger scene in our front yard. It is the only thing for Christmas decorations that is in our front yard. It has the star, Joseph, Mary, and the Christ child. No other home in this neighborhood displays that in their front yard during Christmas. They have Santa Claus, reindeer, snowmen, and other various assorted items. We continue to put the nativity scene in our front yard and a cross in our backyard, hoping that people will see our landscape and change their landscape. It is the best we can do. Yet, we must do it if we are going to build the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

I will end this book the same way I started it. "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in

Heaven.” We have the ability to make that prayer come true. I hope, by reading this book, you will join me in building the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.