**Lessons from a Lockdown**

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**Day 38**

**Ephesians 2:19-22**

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

***Questions for Personal Reflection:***

1. Have I ever been a foreigner or a stranger to a place or a group of people? How did it feel like?
2. How should being part of God’s people affect me? What should I do?
3. How should being part of God’s family affect me? What should I do?
4. How do I know if my life is built on the Word of God? What can I do more?
5. What role do I play in God’s church? How do I contribute to making the church, God’s home?

***Insight:***

As Christians we are fellow citizens with God’s people. We are no longer simply citizens of the countries we are in. We are citizens of God’s country, a member of God’s nation. We therefore owe a greater loyalty to our heavenly nation more than our earthly one. While we strive to be good residents in the place we are in by being obedient to their laws, we must make sure that we give Caesar only what is Caesar’s and give to God what belongs to God (Mt 22:21). While we submit to the governing authorities (Ro 13:1) we should not forget that we owe a greater allegiance to our King. Our loyalty to our earthly leaders should never conflict with our loyalty to our God. Should we idolize any leader more than we worship God?

As Christians we are members of God’s household. We are part of God’s family. Every single Christian is either our brother or sister in the Lord. While our family of origin may not be perfect, we can imagine how God wants a family to be. In a family, we know each other and we take care of each other. We love being together and when we are apart, we strive to remain in touch. Does this describe our relationships in the church? Is there anything preventing us from being a family?

The church, God’s people, His family, is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. What does this mean? If the church were a building, its foundation is the Word of God and Jesus himself as the most importanct part of that foundation. The strength of a building depends on its foundation. The foundation bears the load of the building and anchors it against forces that could destroy it. Does our strength depend on the Word of God? Is Jesus our strength? How strong our foundation is individually contributes to the strength of the church’s foundation collectively.

How can we say that the Word of God and Jesus himself form our foundation? First of all, what is our goal in life? What is our vision? Is it based solely on our desires or is it based on what Jesus wants for us? Is our goal in life influenced by the world or by the Word? Second, when we make decisions who do we consult? Do we make choices leaning on human understanding or do we consider what Jesus thinks and the principles taught by the Bible? Third, when facing life’s challenges, who or what do we rely on? Where do we base our security? While fellow Christians can be a great source of comfort, ultimately Jesus and the Word of God must be our refuge.

It is good to read the Bible every day. But why are we doing it? Do we read the Bible to make ourselves feel good? Is it a ritual that we do so that God will bless us that day? Shouldn’t we read the Bible to know what God wants and how he feels about things so we can know how to live? Are we putting into practice the things we are learning? We are truly building on the strongest foundation when after we hear Jesus’ words, we put them into practice (Mt 7:24). Are we only reading the Bible but not putting it into practice? As the end of each quiet time, we ought to make decisions on what we are going to do or change because of what God taught us. Then we must spend our days making sure we put these decisions into practice. Our foundation is determined not by the good that we hear, but the good that we put into practice.

The church is supposed to be a holy temple in the Lord. So that means each one of us, as stones in that temple need to be holy. Also, we are being built together to become a dwelling, a home where God lives by his Spirit. So, the church is not just any organization. God’s vision for the church is for us to be holy. God wants to live in our church. Therefore, as a hospitable people we must do everything we can to make him feel welcome. Thus, when we meet together, we give our all to sing the best songs that our voices and our music can offer. The fact that lately we do our singing in front of a (phone, TV or computer) screen should not change our desire to worship him with our very best. Those who speak in church must speak knowing that God himself is listening and watching. Everything we do in church must be with the intention of making God feel welcome among us. Therefore, whether we meet as the entire congregation or in small groups we must have the same heart. For where two or three of us gather in His name, there He will be with us (Mt 18:19).

The lockdown should not change our identity, our foundation and our vision as a church.