

The title of this morning's sermon is, "*The Greater House Jesus Built.*"

Go ahead and open your Bibles to **2 Samuel 7**.

We were in a series called, "*Pursuing Wisdom.*" We spent quite a bit of time talking about Solomon.

Matthew 12:42 The queen of the South...came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, SOMETHING GREATER THAN SOLOMON IS HERE.

Now I would like to spend the next few weeks talking about why Jesus is greater than Solomon.

Let me share something interesting with you that happened when Pastor Nathan and I were at the Shepherds Conference at John MacArthur's church. During one of the sessions a speaker talked about indicatives versus imperatives. You might remember me explaining these before:

- Indicatives are truths or statements. They indicate something.
- Imperatives are commands. They tell us to do something.

The speaker said some things that stuck with me:

1. First, he said it is much easier to preach on the imperatives versus indicatives.
2. Second, our preaching should have a healthy, balanced diet of both.
3. Third, if we're preaching too much on the imperatives, we should try to do more preaching on the indicatives.

When Pastor Nathan and I left the session we started talking about whether we think we preach too much on the imperatives versus the indicatives. If I err, I probably err on the side of preaching imperatives more than indicatives.

The next few weeks about Jesus being greater than Solomon are going to focus more on the indicatives. This means the sermons will not have as much application directly.

But even when sermons are filled with indicatives, or statements, they can still have application, maybe not directly, but indirectly.

How will this happen?

They sermons will help grow our love and affection for Christ, which will motivate us to obey Him. And this brings us to lesson one...

Lesson 1: clear teaching about Christ produces obedience.

I would like to share something about Katie and I that will hopefully help you see how the sermons provide application, indirectly.

As most of you know, Katie and I go over the sermon twice per week: once on Thursday evening, then I make all the changes on Friday, and we go over it again on Saturday.

Over the years of doing this together hundreds of times, as well from the times we have listened to messages together and then talked about them after, it has become obvious that Katie and I look for two completely different things:

- I like strong, crystal clear, teaching. When I listen to sermons, I hope when they conclude I learned more about the passage than I knew before.
- Katie, on the other hand, craves application. She wants to be strongly convicted and challenged.

To give you an idea what has happened in the past when we finished listening to a sermon, if it was filled with clear teaching, but little application it could look like this:

- I might say, “Didn’t he do a fantastic job explaining those verses? I never thought of that before. I want to go preach this myself, so I can share some of this new knowledge I learned.”
- Katie will say something like, “BORING! How does this help me be a better wife or mother? I didn’t really care to know all that obscure information about the minor prophets.”

If the sermon was filled with application, but doesn’t explain the verses well it could look like this:

- Katie might say, “Wasn’t that great? Didn’t you feel so challenged and beat up, ready to go out and live for Christ?”
- I will respond, “Not really. I feel like that guy sort of walked around on stage, didn’t really say much of anything, but because he spoke passionately it sounded good, but he didn’t really exposit the verses.”

Even though Katie and I have a hard time agreeing on sermons, I think there is a good balance between these two extremes that can please both of us...

As we hear clear teaching about Christ – filled with indicatives – we want to obey Him and live for Him – which allows them to act like imperatives. Only the unbeliever could learn about Christ and not be moved to serve him.

Another way to say it is this...

As our love for Christ grows, our desire to obey Him grows. Jesus Himself said...

John 14:15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

So to teach about Christ, is to teach people to love Him, which is to teach people to obey Him.

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Let me illustrate this with the relationship between a husband and wife, because this is the relationship used in Scripture:¹

- In the Old Testament God is the husband and Israel is the bride
- In the New Testament Christ is the husband and the church is the bride

Imagine a man is walking down the street and an attractive, immodestly dressed woman walks by. Why would he rip his eyes away?

Because of his love for his wife.

In other words, his love for his wife causes him to obey.

And I will give you an example from my own life...

As most of you know, I was raised Catholic, which means I was raised in a works-based religion. It was all about what I was NOT supposed to do.

You would think that because that was the focus of the religion it would cause me to be a very sinless and holy person. Instead, I engaged in the worst sin in my life when I was Catholic.

Why is that?

There are 3 reasons...

The first and most obvious reason is I was unregenerate. I did not have the gospel at work in my life empowering me to overcome sin.

The second reason, and this alone could be the focus of an entire sermon, largely related to Jake's sermon last week...

Commands, or the law, because of our sinful flesh, do the opposite of what we might expect. Instead of producing obedience, the law causes our flesh to want to disobey. We are told not to do something, but because we have sinful flesh, it makes us want to do it.

It is only a heart that is changed through the gospel that becomes obedient. In other words, obedience is a byproduct of regeneration.

The 3rd reason I didn't care to obey is I had no love for Christ.

I would say that I believe Jesus died on the cross for my sins, but because I was in a works-based religion, it was still all about what I did. My righteousness came not from Christ, but from me.

This is a recipe for pride and not loving Christ.

Then in my early twenties I started attending a Christian church. Someone bought me a Bible, I learned about Christ, what He did for me, and my affection for Him grew, as did my desire to obey Him.

Let me give you one more example...

I have started performing more counseling again. We have been attending the Criss's home fellowship on Wednesday nights. Andrew and I were talking about how in counseling we often ask people, "What does your devotional time look like?" Which is basically asking, "What does your time with the Lord look like?"

Why would we ask this?

Because it is a window into people's love, or lack of love, for Christ.

And if people don't love Christ, even the best counseling in the world isn't going to motivate them to obey Him. What incentive would they have?

But once people get the vertical right, which is to say their relationship with the Lord right, many horizontal issues have a way of working themselves out.

So it wouldn't be an oversimplification to say that the best way to counsel people is to point them to Christ.

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And with that said, we are going to spend a few weeks being pointed toward Christ in these sermons. As we study about Christ, and our love for Him grows, so too will our desires to obey Him.

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We are going to start in **2 Samuel 7**, which contains the Davidic covenant.

This records the first clear association between Jesus and Solomon.

We looked at this chapter 2 weeks ago. If you remember, David wanted to build a house, or temple, for God, but God said no.

Instead, God promised David quite a few things.

We'll pick up where we left off two weeks ago. Look at verse 8...

2 Samuel 7:8 Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. **9** And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I WILL make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth.

This is the first of 8 times God says **I will** in verses 9-14 showing the unconditional nature of the covenant.

God made David six promises, and this is the first: a great name.

And David's name is one of the greatest in history: he's esteemed in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

2 Samuel 7:10 And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly,

Here's the second promise: a safe place for the nation of Israel.

This was a blessing to David, because previously being a shepherd he'd be concerned about the location of his people, or sheep.

2 Samuel 7:11a from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies.

Here's the third promise: rest from enemies.

When you consider how much David fought in his lifetime, you can imagine the blessing this was.

2 Samuel 7:11b Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. 12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

This is the fourth promise: a son to always sit on the throne.

Here's the important thing to keep in mind...

The son is Solomon, but the verses look past him to Jesus. All the covenants in the Bible are primarily about Jesus. There is no covenant that doesn't look forward to and have its fulfillment in Him. So we'll read about Solomon, but we need to look past him to Jesus.

2 Samuel 7:13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Three times in verses 13-16 God uses the word **forever**. So we know this is looking beyond Solomon because he didn't live – or reign – **forever**.

David wanted to build God a house, but God said He would build David a house, or dynasty, that would never end.

And this brings us to lesson two...

Lesson 2: Jesus built the true and greater house of God.

Go ahead and turn to **John 2**. We won't turn back to **2 Samuel**.

We know Solomon built a physical house, or temple, for God.

But Jesus built a greater spiritual house, or temple, known as the church.

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For a moment think about what the temple actually was...

Above the ark, in the most holy place, is where the presence of God resided. The high priest would enter the most holy place into God's presence, so we could understand the temple was the meeting place between God and man.

Let me ask you this...

When were God and man truly brought together?

At the Incarnation: when God became a man in the Person of Jesus Christ.

Just as the temple brought together deity and humanity, or God and man, so too was Jesus the perfect fulfillment of this...and the temple prefigured it.

Now can you think of one time during Jesus's earthly ministry it seems like He invited people to look past the earthly temple to see him as the true and greater fulfillment of it?

In other words, a time He drew a connection between Himself and the temple?

Look at verse 18...

John 2:18 So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days" 21 But HE WAS SPEAKING ABOUT THE TEMPLE OF HIS BODY.

Now when I speak, like all of you, I try to be clear. Sometimes I realize I'm not clear enough so I try to say things again in a better, clearer way...to remove any confusion.

But Jesus was perfect in all respects, including down to the words he used. So when He said something and people were confused:

- It wasn't His fault
- He didn't say something wrong

Instead, he said exactly what he was supposed to say.

If Jesus wanted to be clear here, he could've been. He didn't have to make an allusion or metaphor between His body and the temple except that caused confusion except that's exactly what he wanted to do.

And this is what I think is happening...

There are overly religious Jews who basically worship the temple. Jesus is trying to get them to look past the earthly temple they worship to worship Him and believe in His resurrection.

One reason I'm certain of this relates to the following verse...

John 2:22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

So Jesus was successful in what he said, even if there was confusion at the time, because after his resurrection, his disciples believed because of what he said.

Now keep this in mind and turn to **Acts 2**.

This is Pentecost.

Consider what Peter said to all those looking on to explain what they were seeing...

Acts 2:31 [David] foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. 32 This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing..

Jesus was resurrected, He ascended to heaven, then sent the Holy Spirit to build the spiritual church, or house of God, on the earth that the physical temple Solomon built only prefigured.

So we can say Jesus built the true and greater temple, or house of God.

Listen to this interesting verse making this point, but first let me give you the context...

Zechariah was a prophet to the Jews when they were rebuilding the temple after they returned from exile...

Zechariah 6:12 Thus says the Lord of hosts, "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch (referring to Jesus): for he shall branch out from his place (referring to him branching out from heaven to earth), and HE SHALL BUILD THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD.

This doesn't refer to the earthly temple, because that would be completed by Zerubbabel.

This looks past the earthly temple to the spiritual temple – or greater house – Christ built.

Now keeping in mind the relationship between Jesus' body and the temple let me connect the dots:

- The temple, or earthly body of Christ, was destroyed and then rebuilt...or crucified and then resurrected.

- Then Christ in his physically resurrected, or we could say rebuilt, body or temple, ascended to heaven.
- At Pentecost Christ sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to earth to establish, or build, a temple or house of God, on the earth in the absence of His physical body, or temple.

It's like the temple went to heaven at Christ's ascension, then the Holy Spirit re-established the temple, or house of God, on the earth.

The beauty of this is we are part of this house, and this brings us to lesson 3...

Lesson 3: we are part of the house Christ built.

Listen to how Paul describes us...

Ephesians 2:19 You are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into A HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD. 22 In him you also are being built together into A DWELLING PLACE FOR GOD by the Spirit.

We are God's house!

Solomon built the physical house, but we are the spiritual house Christ is building.

Let me read these three back-to-back so you see the theme this is:

- **2 Corinthians 6:16 WE ARE THE TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.**
- **1 Timothy 3:15 You may know how one ought to behave in the HOUSEHOLD OF GOD, which is the CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD, a pillar and buttress of the truth.**
- **1 Peter 2:5 You yourselves LIKE LIVING STONES ARE BEING BUILT UP AS A SPIRITUAL HOUSE, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

This greater temple or house is not built out of earthly stones that can be destroyed, but living stones that cannot be destroyed.

Go ahead and turn to **Hebrews 3**. Right after Paul's letters. Hebrews, James, Peter.

The Book of Hebrews is about Jesus being better:

- Better than the angels...
- Better than the prophets...
- Better than the Joshua...
- Better than the Promised Land...

The author wants to show why Jesus is better than Moses, and look what he says...

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,

Apostle means “delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders” which makes it a perfect title for Jesus.

Look at **verse 2**...

Hebrews 3:2 who (Jesus) was faithful to him (God) who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house.

It says **house**, but it means household, because it's referring to people, or the nation of Israel Moses was faithful over. Moses was faithful over the **house** – or household – of God, in that he led the people of God for 40 years.

Hebrews 3:3 For Jesus has been counted worthy of MORE GLORY than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself.

Jesus is counted worthy of more glory than Moses, b/c He [built the] house that Moses is only part of.

Here's another way to say it:

- Moses was faithful over the spiritual house of God.
- But Jesus built that house that Moses was only part of.

A builder receives more honor than the house He builds. People admire a beautiful house, but the builder gets the honor.

Now what does it mean for us that Jesus built the greater house of God that we are part of...why should it encourage us?

I'll tell you why it encourages me, and it has to do with durability!

This brings us to lesson 4...

Lesson 4: nothing can destroy what Christ builds.

Solomon was the wisest man to ever live. As you'd expect, he built a magnificent temple. It was a marvel of the ancient world.

But what happened to it?

The Babylonians destroyed it.

The Jews rebuilt the temple after the exile. Then Herod – who was known as Herod the Great b/c of his building projects – beefed up the temple to please the Jews.

My understanding is the temple was so amazing the disciples equated its destruction with the end of the world. That's why Jesus shocked them when He said...

Matthew 24:2 “You see all [the temple’s stones], do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”

Just as Jesus said, the Romans came and destroyed this temple too.

But if Jesus builds something, what do you think?

It's not going to be destroyed.

Jesus wanted us to be confident that His house wouldn't be destroyed by even the strongest spiritual forces...

Matthew 16:18 “I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

That's sturdy isn't it? If you're in Christ, you're part of this house that can't even be knocked down by hell itself.

This is how sure you can be in your salvation.

Since we are part of the temple that means that we can never be destroyed. Spiritually speaking we are indestructible...

Matthew 7:25 The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

Let me close with this...

In thinking about what man builds versus what God builds, the Tower of Babel came to mind. Listen to these verses...

Genesis 11:3 They said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly...4 Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”

Their pride and self-focus is revealed through them three times saying, “**Let us,**” as well as their desire to **make a name for [themselves]** versus God.

This is a picture of false, works based religions trying to reach heaven.

People can spend their lives piling one brick on top of another trying to get to heaven in their own effort, but they do not get any closer than the people who constructed the Tower of Babel.

This building looked indestructible, which is what people think about their works today, but it was an offense to God.

Rather than clinging to Christ, they cling to their good works that are as filthy rags before our perfect God.

Everyone must choose whether they want to be part of a man-made structure, or part of the indestructible house Christ built.

Let's choose to be part of the eternal, indestructible house Christ built.

If you have any questions or I can pray for you in any way, I'd consider it a privilege to speak to you after service.

ⁱ And this is why we see throughout Scripture when people sinned against God, He compared it to unfaithfulness in the marriage relationship. Here are a few examples:

- **Jeremiah 3:20 Surely, as a treacherous wife leaves her husband, so have you been treacherous to me, O house of Israel, declares the Lord.”**
- **Hosea 3:1 And The Lord said to me, “Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, even as the Lord loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins.”**
- **James 4:4 You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.**