

- Rev. Grant Mangold, [www.RiversideChurchIowa.com](http://www.RiversideChurchIowa.com)

## INTENTIONAL BIBLE BASE

The Three Stooges working construction: Moe asks the foreman, "Do you start from the bottom up or the top down?" Bottom up of course. Moe says to Larry and Curly, "Tear it down boys, we gotta start all over!"

The Bible says about believers in Jesus, "***you are God's building***" and "***you all are God's temple and God's Spirit dwells in you***" (1 Corinthians 3:9 and 16). Jesus said, "***I will build My church***" (Matthew 16:18) and "***you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house***" (1 Peter 2:5).

How does God build with living stones? Ephesians 2:19 explains, "***Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.***"

The apostle Paul goes on to say in Ephesians 3:10 "***so that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known***" to all creation - according to the eternal plan that He realized in Jesus. The resulting building reveals the plan and the planner and the builder - God Himself.

God is intentional. He is the master builder, and He has a blueprint. He has revealed it in the Bible. Each person who trusts in Christ alone for salvation becomes part of God's building project. And it's all based on God's Word, the Bible. This is our base and foundation, and it drives what and how God builds. And this plan is the same for every person who believes in Jesus and every congregation of God's people - whether across town or across country or across the world.

Jesus prayed for all who would come to believe in Him, that God would build them up: "***sanctify them in the truth, Your word is truth***" (John 17:8). Jesus said the Holy Spirit would use God's Word to bring people to faith in Christ, then teach them God's truth and how to live it out in our lives (John 14:26). That's how you are sanctified, which means set apart, made holy - just as God said in the verses listed above.

Romans 12:2 says "***be transformed by the renewing of your minds***" according to God's truth, not lies of the world, the flesh or the devil - so that you are "***conformed to the image of Christ***" (Romans 8:29).

God has a plan and He works it out. I like to put it this way, "*The Spirit of God works the Word of God so the people of God become like the Son of God.*" That's the nutshell version of God's eternal blueprint.

How does God do this? It all happens when you get intentional - when you believe God's Word and then live it out. That's why Jesus gave you His Holy Spirit - to empower you to understand and live out the Bible - to "***be doers of the Word, not just readers or hearers***" (James 1:22).

The Apostle Peter explains in 2 Peter 1:16-21 how the Gospel message isn't myths and manmade stories. It's the good news about a real person, Jesus Christ, whom the disciples knew with their own eyes and ears and hands. God told them, "***this is my beloved Son, listen to Him***" (in Matthew, Mark, and Luke). The Holy Spirit led the disciples to write it all down. God superintended their words so what they wrote is His Word. And Peter says this written Word is even more fully confirmed - "***made more sure***" - than even their own eyewitness direct experience of hearing Jesus speak and God affirm Him as His son!

God caused it to be written down - so that every Christian believer in every time and every place would know the same words that God spoke. No mistakes or guesses. And Peter says "***we are to pay attention to God's Word as to a lamp shining in the darkness.***" It works! "***The sacred writings make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus***" the apostle Paul explains. "***All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work***" (2 Timothy 3:15-17).

Do YOU want to be built up by God into a holy dwelling for the Holy Spirit, to display God's wisdom to the world? Then get intentional with God. Make the Bible your base each day. Put it into your mind, then put it into action in your life. Follow God's blueprint, and God's plan will become real for you, in you, through you. Follow God's blueprint, and you will build up not just your life, but those around you too!