



LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

“Bethel Build Celebration Service”

Ps. James Lowe - November 15, 2015

WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

- Who introduced you to the Christian faith?
- How old were you when you received your first Bible or other sacred religious book?
- What was your first church experience like?

WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at <http://www.bethelworld.org>

PART ONE - BETHEL BUILD

Bethel is on the threshold of a great new era in its history. Nearly four years ago on New Year's Eve Senior Pastor James Lowe gave the church a prophetic word from the Holy Spirit, encouraging us that God was declaring “Harvest Time” to Bethel. Not only was this a word of encouragement, but also of exhortation. God was speaking to everyone at Bethel that we were to engage people with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. This naturally entails our need to also establish spiritual foundations in their lives, and equip and empower them to advance God's kingdom here on earth.

Soon thereafter several pastors not on Bethel's staff independently of one another gave prophetic words to the church. Each of them quoted Isaiah 54:2, which in the ESV reads:

“Enlarge the place of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes.”

This message was also clear: It was now time for action with regard to expanding the church's facilities. For years Bethel has been limited in its ability to grow and expand due to the size of our sanctuary and supporting fellowship and ministry space, classrooms, and general facilities. Discussions and research had been underway for several years about the possibilities for such an expansion. But the prophetic word made clear that it was now time to move forward.

Consequently, three years ago Bethel launched Bethel Build, which is our prayer and capital stewardship program to prepare the way and financially provide for the building of a new sanctuary and other facilities. Site work has taken place and the structure has begun to be erected. Much more work remains to be done, but based on current progress Bethel aims to hold its first worship services in the new sanctuary by the Autumn of 2016. Completion of the project and the scope to which it can be accomplished is dependent on our ongoing prayers and financial giving. Everyone's involvement is genuinely needed.

More significantly, over the past three years Bethel has baptized 360 men, women, and children, and has also added 726 new members to the church. Ps James continues to encourage and exhort us as a church that God's message that it is Harvest Time has not diminished or gone away. Instead, he is strongly convinced by the Holy Spirit that God intends to birth many more people into his kingdom and restore many more stray believers to the community of faith, if we will give ourselves wholeheartedly to the work of evangelism and discipleship.

This sense of prophetic emphasis is not only affirmed by the rest of Bethel's leadership team, but numerous church consultants have also said that Bethel should expect to experience significant growth once the new sanctuary is completed. Practical wisdom is in strong support of the prophetic word.

PART TWO - BETHEL'S MISSION & VISION

Bethel has long sought to align itself with God's missional imperative: to preach the Gospel and make disciples of all nations. Our mission and vision are succinct, but profound and thoroughly biblical:

Our Mission = Every Nation In Our Generation

Our Vision = Reaching A City To Touch The World

Individuals, churches and ministries have their own unique calling, purpose, and personality. Bethel's identity is derived in part from being a member of Every Nation Churches and Ministries, a worldwide movement of churches. Every Nation's purpose is summed up in its mission statement. As a member church, we wholeheartedly subscribe to the Every Nation mission, which states that Every Nation exists

"To honor God and establish Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered, socially-responsible churches and campus ministries in every nation"

1. Why we exist: **To honor God.** Our starting point is the honor of God. Our goal is to honor God. Our desire is to honor God. The chief end of Bethel is to "honor Him and enjoy Him forever". This is foundational for understanding why we do what we do. It is all about Him, not us.
2. What we do: **Establish churches and campus ministries.** This is the cornerstone of what we believe God has called us to do. Our aim is to reach every nation in our generation by planting churches and campus ministries.
3. Where we go: **Every nation.** *"After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands."* (Rev 7:9)

May God bless the work of our hands and answer our prayers as we give ourselves unreservedly to worship, serve, and follow the one he has appointed as the judge of the living and the dead, even our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. To him, the Father, and the Holy Spirit be glory forever and ever. Amen.

PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.

- Do you believe there are opportunities around you in your daily life to talk to others about the Gospel?
- How are you taking advantage of any opportunities to talk to others about the Gospel?
- When was the last time you brought a guest to church? When was the last time you invited someone to be your guest at church?

PRAYER (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Pray that the Holy Spirit will burden your heart for the spiritually lost and straying.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will empower you to effectively minister to the spiritually lost and straying through speaking to them, praying for them, doing good deeds for them, and exercising spiritual gifts to minister to them.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you in your prayer and financial giving to Bethel Build.