

## There's No DIY Channel for Building a Church

There was a time in my life when I wanted to build my own house. When most people say that, they mean they're having a house built; but I wanted to build it *myself*. This was long before the nonstop, 24-hour DIY programs motivating countless people to say, "Yeah, I could do that," while they munch Doritos in an easy chair. Not me. I wanted to pour the concrete, frame it, hang sheetrock, cut into the sheetrock because I forgot to do the wiring first, that sort of thing. To stand back after a few years, admire it, and say, "I did that."

I have done a good amount of remodeling over the years, and if I had had the time and money, perhaps I would've done it. But I'm past that stage now, and I'm content to join the other men watching TV and saying with a mouth full of Doritos, "Yeah, I could do that."

Building your own house. The concept just sounds so American. The rugged individual building his own home. He doesn't need help. He's John Wayne in a tool belt. He's Noah from *The Notebook*, rebuilding an old house for the love of Allie.

Now I'm living vicariously through a friend. Stephanie and her husband are building their own home, a project that began to take shape six years ago. Stephanie regularly posts on social media stories and photos of this project. I've enjoyed watching it come to life. They've served as their own contractor, foreman, and gopher. Friends and family have occasionally showed up to drive a nail or two, but through it all, it's been their baby. At the end of it, they'll be able to take that John Wayne pose, sitting tall in a Caterpillar Bobcat watching the sun set behind the house *they built*.

If you can do it, I think that's a great way to build a house—but it's a lousy way to build a church. Worse than lousy; it's terrible.

Building a church—reaching, discipling, encouraging, and so forth—is not the task of one person. Pastor search committees are too often on a quest to find a new pastor who can "really grow our church." If you are expecting your pastor to

singlehandedly grow your church, you're going to be highly disappointed. And you're setting him up for failure.

Your pastor's role is not to do the work of ministry—all that's expected for the church to be the church. His role—his *calling*—is to equip you to do the work of ministry.

"And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, **to equip the saints for the work of ministry**, to build up the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-12).

In other words, we're in this together. I have a role in the building process, and you have a role. So get off the pew and get busy. Don't know what your role is yet? Ask.

If you've ever volunteered with a Habitat for Humanity build, you know how it works. Volunteers arrive on Saturday and are given specific tasks. Some volunteer for certain jobs because they know what to do; others get on-the-job training. When I helped, I asked, "Where do you need me most?"

Don't sit around in your pride waiting to be asked. Show up. Go to your pastor or a church leader and say, "Here I am. Where do you need me most?"

It may be doing ministry within the church walls. It may be ministry in the community. But when you step up and carry some of the load of ministry, you are building up the church. You are making a difference in the kingdom of God.

"From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body **for building itself up in love by the proper working of each individual part**" (v. 16).

We, the church family, must work together. Don't lay it all on your pastor. You have a role in building the kingdom of God. So strap on that tool belt and get busy.