

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

February 15, 2009

Tear down to build up

by David King

"See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant" (Jer. 1:10).

"And it shall come to pass, that as I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to throw down, to destroy, and to afflict, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the Lord" (Jer. 31:28).

"(There is) a time to break down, and a time to build up" (Eccl. 3:3).

The illustration that God uses in these passages is a common one from everyday life. In planting a garden, the gardener's first task is to root up all the weeds and other vegetation. Only then can he can plant his crops. Likewise, every remodeling project starts with a demolition phase, before the new construction can begin. In rebuilding an ailing company, a new CEO usually must first make some painful decisions — reduce the payroll, cut some product lines — before he can rebuild the brand.

In all these endeavors, the pattern is the same: Existing conditions stand in the way of progress, so we must first tear down before we can build up. It's a simple fact of life.

It's no different in our spiritual lives. Before we can become productive citizens in the kingdom of God, we have to go through a painful process of cleaning out the garbage that would interfere with our new role. The Bible calls this "repentance," a change of heart that results in a changed life. This is not merely an "I'm sorry" confession, but a commitment to change that reaches deep into our soul. We

must wrestle with bad attitudes and misplaced priorities. We have to challenge some long-held and cherished beliefs. We must cast off old behaviors that are incompatible with our changed direction. In short, we must tear down in order to build up.

Looking at this principle from another angle, our preaching and teaching must include some level of "constructive destruction" to be effective. The people we are trying to reach with the gospel message are almost always caught up in religious error of one kind or another. Those "weeds" must be pulled up before the seed of Truth can find fertile soil. To state this point more plainly, there is a place for negative preaching. People need to have their old prejudices and misguided beliefs challenged before they can appreciate the beauty of the simple gospel. This must be done with care and love — after all, we are dealing with souls here — but it must be done.

Sadly, some preachers seem to build their careers on this destructive aspect of preaching. They are quite good at tearing down, plucking up, and afflicting, but struggle at building up and planting. The gardener who is always tilling his ground to keep the weeds out will have a clean garden, to be sure. But he will never have any crops until he starts planting, watering, fertilizing, pruning. The weeding is only preparatory for a greater objective.

If we are really serious about improvement, we must accept the necessity of some tearing down in our lives. It's not fun, but it's essential to real growth.