

WALL BUSTER

(Ephesians 2:11-22)

- Intro: On the campus of Westminster College.
- In Fulton, Missouri.
 - #About 20 miles north of Jefferson City.
 - Are three giant slabs of concrete.
 - #About 6' wide.
 - #13' high.
 - They are pieces of the Berlin Wall.
 - #Built almost overnight.
 - *August 13, 1961.
 - #Torn down almost overnight.
 - *November 9, 1989.
 - #Three slabs at Westminster College.
 - *Part of 100 miles of wall.
 - +Divided:
 - =East Berlin.
 - =West Berlin.
 - For more than 28 years.
 - They were erected at Westminster College.
 - #It was there.
 - *Winston Churchill.
 - +Former Prime Minister of Great Britain.
 - *Delivered his famous:
 - +“Iron Curtain” speech.
 - =March 5, 1946.

Writer of Ephesians.

- Also talks about walls.
 - #Walls that divide and separate:
 - *One group of people from another.
 - *All of us from God.
- We are wall builders.
- God, in Christ, is a wall buster.

I. We Are Wall Builders.

A. We Build Walls In The World.

1. Great Wall of China.

- a. Did not spring up overnight.
 - Erected over several centuries.
 - #Beginning in the 8th-5th centuries B.C.
 - Requiring the labor of:
 - #300,000 soldiers.
 - #500,000 peasants.
 - *Slaves.
- b. Massive wall.
 - 20'-26' high in most places.
 - #As much as 52' high in some locales.
 - 20'-23' wide.
 - #Wide enough for:
 - *Soldiers.
 - *Horses.
 - *Chariots.
 - In early years.
 - #Mere 3700 miles long.
 - In time it grew.
 - #More than 6000 miles long.
- c. Built to keep out foreign invaders.
 - Mongolians.
- d. Today.
 - Mostly crumbled.
 - But rebuilt in a few places.
 - #For the benefit of tourists.
 - *Take their pictures.
 - *Get their certificates.
 - + "I Climbed the Great Wall."

2. Mexican-American border.

- a. Not nearly as:
 - Long.
 - Wide.
 - High.
- b. Has the same purpose.
 - Keep out those who are considered "invaders."
- c. Yet there are some who manage to evade.
 - Wall.
 - Its intended purpose.

3. Israel and the West Bank.

- a. Serpentine "security fence."
- b. Intended to keep out:
 - Terrorists.
 - Suicide bombers.

- c. Yet it also keeps:
 - Employees from their jobs.
 - Sick from:
 - #Doctors.
 - #Hospitals.
 - *Including from Augusta-Victoria Hospital.
 - +On the Mount of Olives.
 - +Owned and operated by:
 - =Lutheran World Federation.
- d. As we have seen on the evening news.
 - It doesn't begin to keep:
 - #Rockets.
 - #Bombs.
 - *From flying over the top.

B. We Build Walls In The Church.

- 1. Look at all the different brands of churches.
 - a. We have.
 - b. Just here in Tulsa.
 - What we call, in the Nicene Creed.
 - #One.
 - #Holy.
 - #Catholic.
 - #Apostolic.
 - *Church.
 - Doesn't always look:
 - #One.
 - #Holy.
 - #Catholic.
 - #Apostolic.
- 2. Even those of us who are of the same brand.
 - a. Through our lack of:
 - Communication.
 - Cooperation.
 - b. Sometimes act more like competitors than partners.
- 3. When we don't like what's happening.
 - a. On our side of the wall.
 - b. We may be tempted to jump to the other side of the wall.
 - July issue of the Lutheran.
 - #Several articles on dissent in the church.
 - #Humorous little story.
 - *Sven the Lutheran was on a cruise ship when he accidentally fell overboard. He swam to an uninhabited island where he lived by himself for 20 years. When rescuers finally discovered him 20 years later, Sven was showing them around the island. "This is my

house, this is my barn, and this is my church." Then one of the rescuers saw another building that also looked like a church. It had a steeple and a cross on top. Sven scowled. "Oh, that's the church I used to attend."

C. Sometimes We Even Build Walls Within Ourselves.

1. Braxton Bragg.
 - a. Confederate General.
 - During the Civil War.
 - b. Fort Bragg in North Carolina.
 - Named for him.
2. Bragg was the most argumentative of officers.
 - a. In his younger days when he was quartermaster at his post.
 - In charge of the supplies.
 - b. He was also temporarily put in command of his company.
 - As company commander.
 - #He ordered supplies from the quartermaster.
 - But as quartermaster.
 - #He denied the request.
 - As company commander.
 - #He protested the denial of his requisition.
 - But as quartermaster.
 - #He refused to reconsider his original rejection.
 - c. When word of this got out.
 - Another officer declared:
 - #"My God, Mr. Bragg, you have quarreled with every other officer in the army, and now you are quarreling with yourself."

D. All Of This Wall Building Also Walls Us Off From God.

1. We don't always see the Christ.
 - a. In our sisters.
 - b. In our brothers.
2. We don't always act in such a way.
 - a. They can see the Christ in us.
3. When our wall of sin separates us from God.
 - a. We can't bore through.
 - b. We can't climb over.
 - c. We can't dig under.
 - d. We can't run around.
4. As the writer of Ephesians puts it:
 - a. We are without God.
 - b. We are without hope.
 - Ephesians 2:12.

II. But God Is A Wall Buster.

A. In Christ God Breaks Down Walls Between God And Us.

1. On Good Friday.
 - a. When Jesus died on the cross.
 - b. Curtain in the Temple.
 - Separated:
 - #God from us.
 - #Us from God.
 - Torn in two.
 - #There was no more separation.
2. On Easter morning.
 - a. Wall that entombed Jesus' body.
 - Was broken down.
 - b. There was a resurrection.
 - There was no more separation.

B. In Christ God Breaks Down Walls Between Other People And Us.

1. Ephesians 2:11-22.
 - a. Circumcised.
 - Uncircumcised.
 - b. Jew.
 - Gentile.
 - c. Near.
 - Far.
2. God breaks down every wall.
 - a. Through the blood of Christ.
 - Ephesians 2:13.
 - b. Through the cross of Christ.
 - Ephesians 2:16.
 - #Crucifying our enmity.
 - #Putting to death our hostility.
 - c. Not with:
 - Bombs.
 - Bullets.
 - Bludgeons.
 - d. But with love.
3. God's love.
 - a. Not just on one side of the Great Wall of China.
 - And not on the other.
 - b. Not just on one side of the Mexican-American border.
 - And not on the other.
 - c. Not just on one side of the Israeli-West Bank security fence.
 - And not on the other.

- d. In Missouri.
 - Main penitentiary.
 - #In Jefferson City.
 - *For many years.
 - Was called "The Walls."
 - #God's love.
 - *Not just on one side of those walls, either.
 - e. In the love of Christ God breaks down all of the walls.
- C. Through The Holy Spirit God Empowers Us To Be Wall Busters.
1. Story of a Quaker nurse.
 - a. Served the poor.
 - In southern Poland.
 - b. In 1923.
 - She died.
 2. Only cemetery in town.
 - a. Roman Catholic.
 - Under the rules of the time.
 - #She couldn't be buried there.
 - *She was a Quaker.
 - *Not a Catholic.
 - b. After much discussion.
 - Church officials decided.
 - #She would be buried.
 - *Just outside the cemetery.
 - *On the other side of the fence.
 - c. During the night.
 - Peasants whom she had served.
 - #Came to the cemetery.
 - #Moved the fence.
 - *Her grave was no longer on the outside.
 - *It was on the inside.

Concl: What walls need to be broken down?

- In our hearts.
- In our lives.

Today in Jerusalem.

- Temple with all of its walls has been destroyed.
- #Walls that created the Court of the Gentiles.
 - *"This far and no further."
 - +Gone.
- #Walls that created the Court of the Women.
 - *"This far and no further."
 - +Gone.

#Walls that created the Court of the Israelites.

*For the men.

*For the boys who were of age.

+ "This far and no further."

=Gone.

#Wall that created the Holy of Holies.

* "This far and no further."

+Gone.

In Berlin.

-Small section of the wall remains.

#As a reminder.

-The rest.

#Little pieces.

*Small enough to fit on a refrigerator magnet.

In time.

-In God's time.

#All the walls will be gone.

-In the cross of Christ.

#God is a wall buster.