

THE THEOLOGY OF THE HAMMER

The theology of the hammer teaches us to put aside our differences and to work in partnership with one another. Fuller explains it this way:

This theology is about bringing a wide diversity of people, churches, and other organizations together to build houses and establish viable and dynamic communities. It is acknowledging that differences of opinion exist on numerous subjects—political philosophical, and theological—but that we can find common ground in using a hammer as an instrument to manifest God’s love. Even though there may be strong differences on all sorts of things—baptism, communion, what night to have prayer meeting, and how the preacher should dress, for example—we can agree on the imperative of the gospel to serve others in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah describes this spirit of cooperation as well: “The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.” (Isaiah 11:6)

When we respond to God’s call to help our neighbors, it is amazing how easily we forget our differences. As we focus on working together to build a house, we realize that the things that make us the same become more important than the things that keep us apart. Putting the theology of the hammer into practice will help us eliminate poverty housing and will also glorify God. Fuller describes his hopes for individuals, churches and others coming together in Gods service:

My fervent prayer is that our combined lights will be so bright that millions of people will see our good work and God will be glorified as never before. We will make shelter such a matter of conscience that we will in fact, eliminate poverty housing and homelessness.

Maybe, just maybe, God wants to use the theology of the hammer as a means to draw His divergent family closer together. Perhaps God is calling us to issue a joint invitation to “the strangers” of this world to come in and enjoy the abundant life that Jesus said he came to bring.

The Kingdom principles outlined in this section are the reasons that Habitat for Humanity works. The world tells us these ideas are foolish, but we know differently. We continue to reap God’s blessings through obedience to the Lord’s call for acceptance, selflessness and service.