

## YE ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD

In the Old Testament, we see God dwelling spiritually in the Tabernacle made during the time of Moses and in the Temple built by Solomon (1 Kings 6-8). In the New Testament, God no longer dwells in houses made by hands. He is pleased to dwell in the hearts of Christians. We receive the Holy Spirit as a present or gift when we are baptized in water *“buried with Him in baptism”* (Rom. 6) for the remission of our sins (Acts 2:38). Only the obedient have the Holy Spirit working in their hearts (Acts 5:32, Rom. 8:11, 1 Cor. 3:16). We happily learn in Romans 8:26-27 that *“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”* It is truly a wonderful and marvelous blessing to have God's Spirit dwelling directly in our hearts and helping with *“our infirmities.”* We don't fully know how to pray as we should. Sometimes when we pray to God we sound as swallows chattering: *“Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me”* (Isa. 38:14). God can see past our words directly into our souls through the Holy Spirit which groans and intercedes for us! We are so VERY blessed to have God's Holy Spirit dwelling directly in our temples! With that being said – we are obliged and duty bound to keep our temples clean and in order before God. Let us consider very seriously our duty to keep our temple *“undefiled”* before God. Paul declares in 1 Corinthians 3:16-17: *“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”* Let us now spend the remainder of this article considering our internal and external responsibilities of our temple *“for the temple of God is holy”*.

### Internal responsibilities toward our temple.

We keep our temples clean by our thoughts (faith). Solomon stated in the Book of Proverbs, *“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he”* (23:7). In short we are our thoughts. The next question is can we think anything we want to and be pleasing to God? Let us learn from the inspired Paul. He said in Acts 26:9-1:

*“I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem:*

*and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities."*

Paul's "thoughts" told him he ought to work contrary to the name of Jesus and have saints killed! Were his thoughts proper, absolutely not! Again, we read from the pen of Solomon *"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life"* (Pro. 4:23). Thus, we are to watch our thoughts and keep our hearts (mind) pure. *"The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit"* (Pro. 12:5). If we asked the Lord the following question, what would He find? *"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts"* (Psa. 139:23). If we ask God the question under consideration, what thoughts would he find in us? Would he find faith working by love or would he find a weak, doubtful faith? Would he find pride, lust, hatred, envy or would he find a gentle, kind and loving heart that wishes others well? Would our thoughts be humble and non-self-serving? Are there thoughts that we don't want others to know that we think? Please remember, God already knows all those thoughts that we would be ashamed for others to know! If we are living for God we will think properly. *"Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established"* (Pro. 16:3). If we are truly living for the Lord we will think proper thoughts by a loving and obedient faith.

#### External responsibilities toward our temple.

Jesus is our greatest example to follow. We learn in 1 Peter 2:21, *"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."* As Christians when we are walking in the example of Jesus, we too are being examples for the world to follow. The inspired Timothy extols, *"... be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."* (1 Tim. 4:12) As the song by Collin Raye states, "We are the only Jesus that some will ever see."

We should be an example in word. We are to be very careful of the things that we say. *"Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."* (Col 4:6) We are to use gracious speech toward everyone. Salt is put in food to enhance its taste. We need to be honest with our words but we need to put salt with them so that they won't purposefully offend anyone. The truth itself will offend many. But, we don't need to try to win an argument via pride or pointedly make someone angry because of pride

and ego. Also, no corrupt communication should cross our lips. In Ephesians 4:29 we are commanded, *"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."* The words we speak are for edifying or teaching. They are not for foolishness or filthy communication.

We should be an *example in conversation*. Our Godly "conversation" is how we conduct ourselves in general. Our outward conduct should readily show that the Spirit of God is working in our hearts. We can do many things that are seemingly "little" but can have great impact on those who are following and those who are seeking God. We should never be selfish in our actions. Putting others first is a kind way to open up a door for a discussion about Jesus. For example, you could help a complete stranger find things in a store while starting a discussion about salvation. Paying taxes, following the speed limit, and wearing a seat belt shows that we are following God (Rom. 13: 1-8).

We should be an example in charity. Charity, love, or "*agape*," is how we love both God and man (1 Cor. 13).

We should be an example in spirit. The word "spirit" in this case is referring to attitude. We are to be joyful and thankful. *"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."* (1The. 5:16-18)

We should be an example in faith. Our belief is a work (John 6:28,29). Our basic belief in God must have works of faith so that we can have a mature or complete faith in God. (James 2:14-26). *"Faith without works is dead"* (Jam. 2:26). A dead faith does not save. A faith pleasing to God must work by love. *"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love"* (Gal. 5:6). If our spiritual house is in order, the things that we "do" will show our faith (Jam. 2:18).

We should be an example in purity. Earlier in this article we talked about having pure minds. Now, let us turn our attention to having pure bodies. We should never dress our temple in such a way so as to solicit lust in someone else's temple. The clothes that we wear reflect who we are. Can someone of the world tell by our clothes and the way we keep our bodies that we are Christians? Or, does our outward appearance show that we are lustful and worldly? When we are attending church services or swimming in the lake our clothes should plainly show that we are living for Christ. The Christian should not wear bathing suits in public. One's dress clothes should adequately cover the body so as to

show that we are living a pure life. One's undergarments should never be seen in public. The Apostle Paul teaches us in 1 Timothy 2:9-10 "*In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*"

In conclusion, God no longer dwells in temples made by hands. He dwells in the hearts of Christians. Our hearts and bodies are the temple of The Holy Spirit of God. We have both internal and external responsibilities regarding our temples. Inwardly we should have an active faith in God without any impure thoughts. Outwardly we should show our faith in God to the world by the example that we set. Are we acting responsibly toward our temple? "*For the temple of God is Holy*" (1 Cor. 3:16-17).

TIM ELDRIDGE  
(Algood, TN)

## APOLOGIA

QUESTION: When did the Old Testament era end and the New Testament begin?

ANSWER: "*The law and the prophets were until John*" (Luke 16:16). If the Law ended at the coming of John, then carefully note: Technically and precisely this would refer to the birth of John. Until refers to the event under consideration and not to the duration of that event. To a child, "You may stay out until 11:00 o'clock," does not include the entire eleventh hour. It means precisely one minute after 10:59. According to this understanding, anything done or taught by John after his birth would have been after the Law of Moses had been fulfilled. But John died because he condemned Herod for violating the Law of Moses (Mark 6:16-28). Thus, the Law of Moses at that time remained in effect. If the Law ended at the death of John (Matthew 14:10), then why did Jesus continue after John's death to teach the Old Law? After John's death, Jesus continued to preach the same as John, "*The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the gospel*" (Mark 1:15). After John's death, Jesus continued to teach the Law of Moses: To the cleansed lepers, "*Go and shew yourselves to the priests*" (Luke 17:14). To the rich, young, ruler, "*Keep the commandments,*" which were then explained by Jesus to be the Ten Commandments of the Old Law (Mat. 19:17). Jesus taught in Matthew 5:23-24, if you remember that your

*"brother hath ought against thee"* to leave your gift at the altar. Where is the altar at which we in the Christian era are to leave our gifts? It should be evident from the foregoing that this passage is not speaking of either the birth or the death of John but rather of the culminating climax of the Law of Moses and John's important role in fulfilling that grand purpose. John's mission was to open the door for the Savior who was to be sacrificed, thus further fulfilling that grand purpose. Luke 16:16 anticipates this conclusion to the Old Law. But then in Colossians 2:14 it is written of Jesus and the Old Law that He *"took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."*

If the Old Law had been fulfilled by John, then this passage contradicts Luke 16:16 by stating another and different time at which the Old Law was fulfilled. According to this passage the Old Law was not fulfilled by John and was not taken away at least until the sacrificial event on the cross. But as Luke 16:16, this passage must not be misunderstood to mean that the Old Law was finalized at the crucifixion. The crucifixion brought to a climax some 1,500 years of sacrifices symbolized by the rending of the veil of the temple (Mat. 27:51), thus further bringing to a climax God's grand purpose (Heb. 9:8-9, 10:19-21). The Law and the prophets were until John. Both of these passages speaking of the end of the Old Testament era are to be beautifully understood by Jesus' own statement in Matthew 5:18, *"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled."* The precise time of the fulfilling of the law was when all related prophecies had been accomplished. Among other related prophecies not noted, these inform us that the Old Testament era would be completed and the New begun at a time when:

1. Rome was in power. (Daniel 2:47, Luke 2:1)
2. Jerusalem was the location. (Isaiah 2:2-3)
3. The Holy Spirit brought a new law. (Joel 2:28-32)
4. All peoples would be involved. (Micah 4:1-2)
5. It was referred to as "the last days" (Micah 4:1-2)

On the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem, when the Holy Spirit fell upon those gathered, involving *"men out of every nation under heaven,"* it was referred to as *"the last days."* Peter with much convincing authority stated, *"This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel"* (Acts 2). Not during John's day, not at the cruel crucifixion, but at this precise time did God arrange for the end of the Old Testament era and the beginning of the New. And this is unquestionably sustained by Peter when in Acts 11:15 he explained his presence at the conversion of Cornelius by stating, *"As I began to speak the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning."* The beginning referred to was Acts 2, the only other time the

Holy Spirit was ever in like manner outpoured. The Old Testament era ended when the era of the New Testament began!

HARRY COBB  
(Wedowee, AL)

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. What were the seven nations in the promised land that God assured the Israelites He would defeat?
2. When Elisha was on his way to Bethel, he pronounced a curse on some youths from the city; many of them were mauled by bears as a result. Why did he curse them?
3. In the book of Isaiah, what did Isaiah use in chapter 5 as an allegory to represent the people of Judah and their God?
4. According to John's Gospel account, who followed Peter into the tomb?
5. Peter reminded his readers that one day with the lord is like what?

and remember last month's questions?

1. To whom did God say, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples shall be separated from your body."? REBEKAH (Genesis 25:21-23)
2. What was the first evidence of God's enhancement of Samson's strength? HE KILLED A YOUNG LION WITHOUT ANY WEAPON (Judges 14:6)
3. What two miracles took place while Elijah was staying with the widow? THE WOMAN'S DEAD SON WAS REVIVED AND GOD INCREASED HER OIL AND FLOUR (I Kings 17:15-16, 22)
4. Paul explained to the Galatians that after his conversion, he did not go immediately to Jerusalem to confer with the disciples. In fact, it was three years before he went to see whom? PETER (Galatians 1:18)
5. What did the writer of Hebrews say followers of Christ should not give up? ASSEMBLING TOGETHER (Hebrews 10:25)