

Truths God Expects Us to Know and Practice (3)

The Christian Is the Temple of God!

Introduction

- A. Many of the most wonderful provisions of God for the Christian are unknown to us. By our neglect we have robbed ourselves of a great deal of the joy, power, and fruitfulness of the Christian life. What we do not know -- we cannot practice.
- B. One of the astounding truths of the Bible is the subject before us -- we are the very temples of God! It is overwhelming to realize the meaning of this truth and the potential each of us have for holiness, for love, for fruitfulness, for joy, and for spiritual growth.
- C. The text: I Corinthians 6:19,20

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own, you are bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (NIV)

I. The Context -- of this Great Truth.

- A. The background.

Paul had gone to Corinth in his second missionary journey, Acts 18. During his stay of 18 months many were saved and the church was started. This was a great victory for Corinth was a wicked city given to all forms of sensuality and vice. After Paul left the work started to fail. Paul may have written to them and may have visited the church. Nothing seemed to help. The church finally wrote to him and some came from Corinth to visit him, I Corinthians 1:11; 7:1

- B. The question: What caused such a great church (1:5-7) to fail?

While Paul wrote a list of the sins he knew were hindering the church -- the basic answer to such a question would be -- the people had fallen into a way of thinking and living whereby they were literally working against God!

- C. The second question: How did Paul seek to correct their failure?

The approach Paul was led to take had to do with the spiritual description of the believers. While he told them of their sin and called them to repentance -- the basic message of the book has to do with what it meant for them to be Christians. In the chapter under consideration he warns them of immorality -- and reminds them that they are the very temple of God.

II. The Affirmation -- of this Great Truth.

A. The affirmation stated.

Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?

Comment: The Christians at Corinth were familiar with temples. There was not only the famous Herodian temple at Jerusalem but the rather infamous temples of Aphrodite, Apollo, and Jupiter in their own city.

B. The affirmation explained.

1. In contrast to the pagan temples the analogy points to the temple in Jerusalem and the tabernacle-temple of the Old Testament.
2. Three truths were taught by the O. T. tabernacle - temple.
 - a. A place where God met with His people -- on the basis of redemption. Exodus 25:8,22
 - b. A place where God revealed Himself -- in fellowship with His people. Exodus 29:42,45,46
 - c. A place where God was glorified -- in the service of worship and thanksgiving. Exodus 29:43; 40:35
3. As God's temple the New Testament believer exemplifies these three truths. We are redeemed, we have been brought into fellowship with God, and we have the ability to worship God and thank Him.

III. The Exposition -- of this Great Truth.

- A. "Who is in you." Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, but the emphasis is on our person. We are -- as a person -- in a spiritual relationship with God.
- B. "Whom you have received from God." The thought here is on divine grace. God has given us the greatest gift possible -- Himself.
- C. "You are not your own." As the temple of God we are sacred and holy. We do not belong to ourselves.
- D. "You were bought at a price." Here we are reminded of Calvary and the infinite price Jesus Christ paid for our redemption.

IV. The Exhortation -- of this Great Truth.

Therefore honor God with your body.

Comment: The emphasis here is on our body because that is how we express ourselves. Instead of living in the sensuality and self-centeredness that characterized Corinth -- the Christians were to honor God by living as God's temple.

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