

# Ya'll Are the Temple

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[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

And one of the kind of the big ideas that we've been learning thus far is how the Holy Spirit is the personal presence of Jesus. Did you get that?

The Holy Spirit is the personal presence of Jesus. Distinct, but at the same time, the same. So, for example, week one, we talked about in John 14, you remember these words that Jesus says to the disciples.

He says, Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me. In my Father's house, which we learned is not heaven, Father's house is language for the temple.

[ 2 : 08 ] In my Father's house, there's many dwelling places. And if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and I'll take you to myself, that where I am, that is, my presence, may be with you also.

And so Jesus says, I'm going to prepare a dwelling place, a new kind of dwelling place, leaving, but then I'm going to come back. And in this reference, it's not about the second coming of Jesus, so that's true, but he defines what that means later on.

Look at verse 17. In other words, what Jesus, I think, is clearly saying is that I'm going to leave, and I know like that upsets you, but it actually should be of comfort to you, because in my leaving, I'm actually going to return, that is, my very presence was with you in the flesh, but it's going to be with you in the Spirit, right?

And so you're going to have my personal presence not only with you, but actually in you. That was week one. And then in John chapter 3, this was last week, Jesus tells Nicodemus, you must be born, now we're familiar with the language, you must be born what?

Again, but the language here is you must be born from above. And we learned how that's the exact same thing that Jesus means when he says you must be born of water and spirit.

[ 3 : 51 ] That's actually the language of the prophets that talked about how the spirit, like water on dry ground, would be poured out from above. And then Jesus essentially says that that is the same as his very life.

Look at John 3, 13. No one who has ascended into heaven except he who what? Descended, that is the one that came down from heaven, the Son of Man.

So all of this is to say that Jesus speaks about his very life, his very presence, and the presence of the Spirit in the same way.

It is a lot like we talked about in Genesis, the very opening verses of Genesis 1. You have the Word of God, God said, the very Word of God, and the breath, the ruach of God.

And so you notice that they're separate. Word is not the same as breath, and breath is not the same as word. And yet you don't have one without the other. Everybody got it? I mean, this is the beautiful mystery of the triune God.

[ 4 : 59 ] Amen? And so Jesus here, these last two weeks, has been showing us that his very personal presence is with us and in us in sending the Holy Spirit.

Now, what we're going to see tonight is how the Apostle Paul is going to take that concept. He's going to take that understanding, and he's going to apply it to a specific situation that is absolutely transformational.

Look here at 1 Corinthians chapter 3, and we're going to begin reading at verse 1. I'm going to invite you, if you're able, to please stand as we honor the reading of God's Word. Paul here is writing to this church at Corinth, and beginning at verse 1, notice what he says, But brothers, I could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.

I fed you with milk, not solid food, because you weren't ready for it. And even now, you're not yet ready. For you're still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, and are you not of the flesh behaving only in a human way?

For when one says, well, I'm a big fan of Paul, and another says, yeah, but I like to follow Apollos, are you not being merely human?

[ 6 : 25 ] I mean, what then is Apollos? What is Paul? But servants to whom you believed as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but it was God that gave the growth.

So neither he who plants or he who waters anything, but only God is the one that gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we're God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building. And now jump down to verse 16, and watch what Paul says here. Do you not know that you are God's temple, and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

Do you see how that's the language that Jesus used? God's Spirit dwells in you. If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him.

For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple. Let's just go home.

[ 7 : 40 ] That's enough right there. But we're not gonna. Let's pray, okay? Father, help us understand what these words mean. And I pray this evening that it would be as transformational to us in this moment, as it was when Paul wrote these words to the believers in Corinth.

And so, Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, come and help us see. Come and help us understand more about you as it relates to how you dwell in us.

And we pray this in Jesus' name. And God's people said, amen. Amen. You can be seated. When Queen Elizabeth II died in September of 2022, something rather remarkable happened in London. For nearly five days, hundreds of thousands of people lined up outside of Westminster Hall to pay their final respects to the Queen.

In fact, some people waited up to 12 hours just to get inside the hall. The line literally stretched four miles through the city.

[ 8 : 55 ] And it was a very, very solemn moment. Couples stood outside in silence. When veterans would walk by, they would stop and they would salute.

There were many people outside who were literally weeping and just sorrowful as they paid their final respects. But what was even more solemn was not the atmosphere outside Westminster Hall, but actually inside.

Inside Westminster Hall, it was completely silent. Not because the guards demanded it, but because the moment demanded it.

I mean, literally when people would walk inside, conversations immediately stopped. Cell phones immediately were put away. Everybody stood there in a sense of honor and reverence.

Listen, listen, listen. The very presence of that moment changed their behavior. Well, almost everyone.

[ 10 : 04 ] You see, during the processional, many of the different political figures from around the world had come to pay their final respects to the Queen. And one of those visiting officials, the Armenian president, did something that actually caused quite a stir.

Not only was he laughing and talking inside the building, but when he went through the line and passed the Queen's coffin, he stopped and took a selfie.

Exactly. You think you were outraged? You should have been in London. I mean, people were absolutely stunned. The news outlets were like outraged.

They did articles about this guy. Because they saw it as completely out of line. And it wasn't just because he took a picture, which you're not allowed anyways.

It's that he seemed, listen, he seemed to have no respect for the very presence that he was in.

[ 11 : 10 ] Is everybody with me? It actually reminded me of a story, a little different story, of country music legend Loretta Lynn. Loretta was a coal miner's daughter from the hills of eastern Kentucky.

And she actually wrote a book called A Coal Miner's Daughter. In it, she describes a time that she got invited to meet President Nixon. And when she was going through the receiving line to greet President Nixon, she walks up, she walks up to the President of the United States and goes, well, how are you, Richard?

I mean, they were stunned. They literally pulled Loretta aside and said, what are you doing? What are you thinking? You do not refer to the President of the United States by his first name, to which

Loretta, being from Kentucky, said, well, they called Jesus, Jesus.

Like, no self-awareness whatsoever, right? Is everybody with me tonight? Are you with me? Most of us, unless we're from eastern Kentucky, most of us have the self-awareness to know this.

We know that our behavior is influenced by the presence that we're in. Amen? Our behavior is automatically influenced by the very presence that we find ourselves in.

[12:39] Now, when I say that, I don't mean like in a bad way. I'm not talking like hypocritically that you're like a different person or something like that. I'm actually talking in a positive way, a respectful way.

You know this. You know this. Most of you know this, right? You don't act at a funeral the same way you would act at a sporting event.

You know that you don't use the kind of tone and language, if you're standing before a judge, that you would with your friends on social media.

Some of you, like if you're around your mom or your grandmother, there are certain things that you won't do or you won't say purely out of respect. It's why it bothers many of you, understandably so, when people are disrespectful during the national anthem.

Does that upset you? Yeah, that upsets you. It upsets a lot of people. Or you think about how people change their behavior when they meet somebody that's famous or they meet some kind of celebrity and they begin to just like change their behavior, right?

[13:50] You'll get that later. So anyways, here's my point. This is the point I'm making and it's something we all know to be true, that our behavior is influenced by the presence that we are in.

There was an old saying in the South that goes, hide the beer, the pastor's here, right? So it's like that's the idea. That's the idea. And so that's actually, of course, in the North, it's like get the beer out, the pastor, whatever, right?

So this is the point Paul is making. This is exactly the point. If you can get that idea in your mind that my presence or my behavior, rather, is changed its influence based on the presence that I'm in, you understand what Paul is saying here.

Paul is writing to this church in Corinth. Let me say just a little bit about the culture that's happening here. This was a very, very, Corinth was a very significant city in Paul's day.

Several years ago, I had the opportunity here at Faith Family to go on sabbatical and I actually got to go to Corinth. Here I am in Corinth.

[15:04] You'll see behind me the temple that was dedicated to Apollos. There's a lot more gray hair in my beard now. So it's what pastoring does to you. Anyways, you notice that Corinth today, it's really mostly ruins.

But certainly in Paul's day, this was one of the most thriving cities anywhere. In fact, if you notice this map, Corinth was, think of Corinth like the handle on a dumbbell, right?

And so if you wanted to travel, you almost had to certainly go through Corinth. And so this made Corinth a very, very significant city.

A way to kind of describe the way Corinth was in Paul's day was think, for example, of San Francisco. So it's San Francisco in that it's a port city. And so you had lots of trade and lots of things by sea that were taking place here.

It was also like a New York city. You had all kinds of ethnic backgrounds. There was a very, this was a very wealthy city. There was a financial district because oftentimes you would have to exchange money as you were traveling through Corinth.

[16:19] It had a huge population, estimated of about 750,000 people. That was enormous for a city in Paul's day.

And it was also like Washington, D.C. You had a government center there, which made it very, very influential. And it was also a Las Vegas.

You had the Temple of Epaphrodite, the goddess of fertility that was there. So if you think about those four cities in America, Corinth was all of those in one.

Are you with me? So a very, very significant place. Now I tell you all that to tell you this. It was because there were a lot of worldly distractions that led to a lot of ungodly divisions in Corinth.

If you know anything about the church in Corinth, this was not a church that was without its struggles. There were lots of issues.

[17:20] And Paul addresses many of them. In fact, they're fighting over, for example, who has the best spiritual gift because the culture was all about superiority.

And so they're like, well, my gift is greater than your gift, and I can do this, and you can do that. And Paul has to address that in the book. They're fighting over whether or not you can eat meat that's been offered to idols.

They're like fighting over who should be first in line to partake of communion. And the particular issue here in 1 Corinthians 3 is that they've become fixated on certain leaders, certain teachers. Is everybody with me? So there's a lot of different issues happening in this church. But this particular one is they are obsessed with certain leaders. Look again in verse 3. Are you still of the flesh for while there's jealousy, there's strife among you?

Are you not of the flesh and behaving in a human way? I mean, one says, I follow Paul. Another says, I follow Apollos. Like, are you not, like, are you Christians?

[ 18 : 35 ] Are you just acting fleshly? Are you acting in a human way? And so all these fights of who's the better teacher and who's more theologically sound, like, aren't you glad the church doesn't deal with any of this today?

You know, that church fights over matters like this were just a Corinth thing. No, it still happens today. And Paul writes them. And he just says, you're not acting Christianly.

You're acting in a human way, in a fleshly way. And then he drops a theological hand grenade right in the midst of this argument.

And we just kind of read it and move on. And we have no idea the significance of what Paul is saying. Look at verse 17. He says, if anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him.

You might want to stop and pay attention to that one. Amen? That's a pretty big statement. To which you want to say, like, what do you mean, Paul? Like, destroying the temple.

[ 19 : 49 ] Like, I'm not, like, taking out a hammer and, like, tearing down walls. Listen, keep in mind, Paul is writing this letter around 50 A.D.

And so the temple is actually still standing in Jerusalem. So you have to realize that what most, when Paul says temple, what most people are going to naturally assume or naturally think is the building.

Like, the actual temple that's in Jerusalem. Is everybody with me? So, like, what do you mean we're destroying the temple? I mean, first of all, the temple is in Jerusalem and we're in Corinth.

And then here comes the theological bomb. Here it is, verse 16. Do you not know that you are the temple?

You're God's temple. And it's God's Spirit that dwells in you. If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him.

[ 20 : 54 ] For God's temple is holy. That is, it is sacred space. And you are that temple. Do you feel the explosion?

Like, this is a massive, massive statement. This is a theological bomb. What Paul is saying here, notice it on the screen, is that you are destroying the temple with your jealousy and your gossip and your fighting and your divisions and your conflict.

What it means to destroy the temple is to destroy one another because you are the temple. Do you feel that? And so, Paul uses this temple argument to address conflict in the church of Corinth.

And by the way, this is not the only place that Paul will use a temple argument to address issues in the church. The church of Ephesus was fighting over racial issues.

They were having a really difficult time with Jew and Gentile being in one body. And Paul actually writes the whole letter to the church of Ephesus.

[ 22 : 14 ] And the letter of Ephesians is about unity. It is about this one new man, this one new humanity that Jesus has established. And Jew and Gentile are actually now one, one body in the body of Christ.

Is everybody with me? Okay? Now, notice the language. Notice the argument that Paul gives in Ephesians 2, verse 19. So then you're no longer strangers and aliens.

You're fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God. Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.

In whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy what? Temple. In the Lord. In him, that is in Jesus, you also are being built together into a dwelling place.

That's temple language. A dwelling place for God by the Spirit. This is really, really big.

[ 23 : 25 ] Paul knows his Bible. Would you give me that? He knows his Bible way better than you do. I mean, he wrote a lot of it, right? So he knows his Bible.

And so what Paul knows, these are the dots I'm trying to connect for us, is that Paul knows what Jesus said in John 14. That Jesus would prepare a different kind of dwelling place.

A different kind of temple in my Father's house. And that by leaving, he would actually come back. And how would he come back?

He would come back by his Spirit. That is that his personal presence would dwell with his people. And that means, this is so controversial.

That means there would no longer be a need for a physical building called the temple. Because you are the temple.

[ 24 : 25 ] You're the body of Christ. You are where the Spirit dwells. And I cannot emphasize enough how transformational, radical, shocking, and even controversial this would have been for Paul to use this kind of language.

Paul is the most Jewish Jew ever. Amen? He's like a Pharisee, a Pharisee. Nobody, nobody understood the sacredness of the temple more than the Apostle Paul.

I mean, to say this is significant. Because the temple, that is the actual building itself for a Jewish person, up until Paul says these things.

Again, I'm going to try to use like American analogies to help us understand this. The temple would be like our White House because it represented the national leadership of the Jewish people.

Mixed with the national monument, the temple actually told the story of Israel of the Old Testament. And the Statue of Liberty, the very values that the nation had, all of them in one.

[ 25 : 41 ] Do you see how significant that is? I mean, it is like, it's the thing in the life of Israel. Everything revolves around the temple.

And when Paul says, y'all, which he would have said. And you actually think I'm like making a southern joke there.

But the you, the you in 1 Corinthians 3 is plural. So it's not just you individually. It really is y'all. It's Paul saying, y'all are the temple.

That is not only theologically significant. It is a major, major. Am I emphasizing this enough? It is a major paradigm change in the biblical story.

And so if you would indulge me for just a few moments. Just a few. What I want to do is just a little bit of biblical theology. Bible nerds?

[ 26 : 38 ] Any Bible? This is the moment, you Bible nerds. Okay? Help me out here. I want us to feel the weight of this. And then we'll look at the practical implications of it and it will be done.

So what's going on in Paul's mind when he uses this language? Like what even gives him the basis to be able to say this? So let's first go back in our Old Testament and let me ask you this question.

What's the first temple in the Old Testament? Okay. Some of you, I think I heard Solomon. So some of you would say it's Solomon's temple. Okay?

Somebody would say it's the tabernacle. Okay? You're almost right. Okay? Actually, the very first temple isn't Solomon's temple.

The very first temple isn't the tabernacle in the wilderness. The very, very first temple was the Garden of Eden. Page one of your Bible.

[ 27 : 43 ] Page one of your Bible. The Garden of Eden. And I don't have time to actually go through all the details, but it's a wonderful study. But the language that's used to describe Eden is the same language that will be used to describe the temple as you continue through the biblical story.

Language like it's the place where God dwells with man. It's on a mountain. And in the ancient world where you would put a temple was on a mountain.

That's where it was believed the gods were. There was priests in the garden, Adam and Eve, that are called to work the ground. You've got a river or a water source that runs through it, as you'll see in the temple.

You've got a tree of life, which you'll see the lampstand in the temple is just a remembrance of the very tree of life. And it faced east, which is what temples did in the ancient world.

And so, Eden is actually a temple. It's the very place where God and human beings dwell. Listen to me. Eden was a sacred space.

[ 28 : 57 ] A sacred space where God and human beings were one. Does everybody see that? That's the first temple. It's where God's spirit dwelled.

Well, you know the rest of the story, right? Adam and Eve sin, human beings sin, and they're actually cast out of the temple. They're cast out of God's presence. And later in the biblical storyline,

when God makes a covenant with Israel, okay, now this is where we'll pull in some of the language you threw out.

He's going to establish what? The tabernacle. The tabernacle. And the tabernacle essentially represents what God had established in Eden.

It's a sacred space. Faced the east. Had water. Had the lampstand for the tree of life. On and on and on. And it's where God's spirit would dwell with God's people.

Everybody with me? Okay? Have I lost some of you? Shame on you. All right? Come on. Keep up. Keep up. And then when they, and the reason why it was even in this structure is because, now by the way, they didn't have vehicles in the ancient area.

[ 30 : 05 ] So I just noticed that. Anyways, and God told them drive a Hyundai. Right? So whatever. Whatever. So, but they're like commuters.

They're commuters. They're traveling through the wilderness. And then when they finally get to the land, then they can establish something more permanent. And what is that?

That's Solomon's temple. And so now you have the tabernacle, which reflected Eden, essentially established in a building. And I would encourage you, go read like 1 Kings chapter 6 through 8 if you want some extra reading.

And what you'll notice is this Eden imagery that's in the temple. Right? You have cherubim, these angelic beings. You have the priests that are working the temple like Adam and Eve.

You've got water for cleansing. You've got the lampstand. In other words, now the temple is this sacred space. The temple is where God and human beings are one.

[ 31 : 11 ] As God is reminding His people, listen, I am with you. God is with His people. Are you with me? This is what I wanted from the very beginning in Eden was to dwell with my people.

And so all of these symbols, all of this temple language is describing the presence of God with the people of God. But there's a problem that develops.

This is so important. It's really important. Do you believe me? It's really important. Please don't zone out. Because I'm trying to tell you what's in Paul's mind.

So I'm taking you on a little trail. We're coming back to 1 Corinthians. The problem that developed later in the Old Testament once a temple was established is that Israel became fixated on the temple rather than God Himself.

Are you still with me? Like they became obsessed with the temple rather than obsessed with God. That is, they loved the symbol more than they loved the real thing.

[ 32 : 28 ] And so God sends these prophets to Israel to call them out like Isaiah and Ezekiel and Jeremiah. Let me give you one example, a significant one, of Jeremiah.

Look at what Jeremiah says. This is Jeremiah 7 verse 4. Do not trust in these deceptive words. This is the temple of the Lord.

This is the temple of the Lord. This is the temple of the Lord. For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly execute judgment one with another, if you don't oppress the sojourner and the fatherless or the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, or if you do not go after other gods to your own harm, then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever.

Now look at verse 11. Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?

Behold, I myself have seen it, declares the Lord. Now just hold on to that for a couple of seconds, and I'll show you how significant that is. But what is Jeremiah saying?

[ 33 : 45 ] Jeremiah is saying, you spiritual num-nums, you have fallen in love with the building rather than what the building meant to point to, namely that God is with you.

And like you think you're okay because you have a building. So the way you're operating in your mind is it doesn't really matter if I violate the law, I don't take care of the sojourner, and I shed innocent blood, and I worship other gods.

None of that matters because look, we got the building. We've got the temple. And Jeremiah is saying the temple has become a farce because you have made it an expression about you rather than what it was supposed to be in the very beginning all the way back in Eden, which is God with you.

And so what you ought to do is look at the temple and be reminded about how God wants to be in relationship with you. He wants to dwell with you, but you have fallen in love with the temple and

made it about yourself.

Everybody with me? Now let's go to the Gospels. I want you to keep all of that in the back of your mind. The purpose of the temple, the sacredness of the temple, the symbolism of the temple, this is a big, big deal to Israel.

[ 35 : 18 ] And notice how John starts his Gospel. Now if you've been around me for very long in my teaching here, I actually refer to this quite a bit, but it's worth the repetition.

Look at how John starts his Gospel. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. Now what language is that?

That's like first sentence of your Bible language. He's taking you back to creation. When God spoke Word, and it was.

Everybody see that? And what... Come on, come on. Come on. You with me? Come on, Saturday night. Come on. Come on. Come on. Come on. And what was God's desire, and page one of your Bible, to dwell with His people?

And so He spoke a word, and He created these things through His Ruach, through His Spirit, so that what would come about in His creation is that He would dwell with His creation, human beings, and we would dwell with God.

[ 36 : 24 ] How did that work out in the Old Testament? Not so much. So notice what the Word that was there in the beginning, that was God and was with God, does in verse 14.

And the Word became flesh, and literally tabernacled, dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

It's temple language. That's really significant. Are you starting to realize that the biblical authors are brilliant? They're absolutely brilliant. They're not like randomly putting things together.

This is inspired of the Spirit. And so John here is using temple language, and he's saying, you know how in the Old Testament the temple was the place where God and human beings would come together, and God's very presence would dwell with man?

That tabernacle now walks among us. That temple now has flesh and blood.

[ 37 : 38 ] Jesus is sacred space. Everything that God desired in Eden and tabernacle and temple has now been given to you in Jesus Christ.

Are you with me? And what does John intentionally place right after John chapter 1? John chapter 2.

That was a joke, right? I went to seminary for this stuff, folks. Come on. What story? What story in John chapter 2? Jesus in the temple.

And what does Jesus quote? I told you it was significant. And he told those who sold the pigeons, take these things away.

Do not make my father's house a house of trade or a den of robbers. Jesus knows his Old Testament. He knows his Old Testament, and he's doing what Jeremiah did.

[ 38 : 48 ] That is, like Jeremiah, he's going into the temple, and he's saying, you've made this place a farce. You've missed the point.

You've made it about you. When the whole time, it was meant to remind you of the Spirit of God, God dwelling with His people.

Listen, you have made the temple about yourself rather than making the temple about God's Spirit. Does everybody see that? And then what does he do?

You know what he does. Keep reading. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple with sheep and oxen, and he poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their table.

And we read that, and we're like, yeah, go get them, Jesus. That's right, man. Just turn those tables over and give those Pharisees and religious leaders what they deserve.

[ 39 : 50 ] I try so hard to get us to understand the... Do you have any idea how serious that was? Again, I'm going to try to give you an analogy in our day, okay?

If you want to see how serious that is... By the way, I am not recommending you do what I'm about to say. I'm just saying, if you want to try this out, how serious it is, get on a plane and go to the White House and walk inside with a whip or some type of weapon.

Do not recommend it. I do not recommend it. And try to run everybody out of the White House. You're welcome to do that if you want prison time.

Okay? How's that going to go over for you? Are you trying... You don't walk into that sacred space and behave that way. Jesus did.

Jesus walked into the temple, this sacred space, with a whip, and ran everybody out.

[ 40 : 59 ] In fact, this event, this event, is what puts the target on Jesus' back. Do you remember at his trial? What...

It wasn't... It wasn't healing people on the Sabbath. They didn't like that. There was lots of things. It wasn't eating with tax collectors. They hated that too. What was the single event the religious leaders believed gave them grounds to murder Jesus?

What he said and what he did regarding the temple. Are you with me? What happens next in John? We're still going to get back to... I'm closer to done than I was five seconds ago. Okay? Then what does Jesus say to the woman at the well?

A couple of chapters... John 4, actually. Look at it here. Jesus... No, no, no. I'm not done with John 2. I'm not done with John 2. What happens right after the event in the temple? This is significant.

[ 42 : 03 ] Jesus answered them, destroy this temple and in three days I'll raise it up. And the Jews said it's taken 46 years to build this temple and you're going to raise it up in three days.

And we talked about this a couple weeks ago. John then tells you he was talking about the temple of his body. In other words, the temple... This is so important. The temple is no longer a building. It's a person. The real temple is actually here. In fact, Jesus will not only be the temple, he'll be everything that came with the temple.

He'll be the sacrifice. He'll be the priesthood. Like, he's literally a walking, talking temple. He is where God's very personal presence dwells in the flesh.

Now, notice what Jesus says to the woman at the well, the Samaritan woman. This is John 4. Our fathers... This is the woman talking. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say it's in where?

[ 43 : 09 ] You have to go to the building. You have to go to Jerusalem is where people ought to worship. And Jesus said, Woman, believe me. Believe me. The hour is coming when neither on this mountain or in Jerusalem, translation, the temple, will you worship the Father.

The hour is coming. In fact, that hour is now... Talk to me. Here. It's here right now when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth for the Father is seeking people to worship Him.

Okay. You with me? Bible nerds, I know you are. The rest of you, I hope you got something out of that. Okay? My point is this. Jesus has completely transformed the way people thought about worship, the way people thought about the temple, the way they thought about how God's presence dwells with God's people.

Does everybody see that? That it is no longer a place, it is no longer a building, it's a person. That it's no longer about you going to the sanctuary, it's about you being the sanctuary. sanctuary. The Spirit of God is now in you. Okay? Now take all of that background, I'm landing the plane. Take every, because listen, listen, that's the background people don't tend to read.

[ 44 : 37 ] And Paul has all of this in his mind. He has all of this story in his mind when he says this. Let's go back to our verses, verse 16.

Please feel the weight of this. Do you not know, Corinthians, that you're God's temple? That God's personal presence dwells in you.

And if you destroy it, God will destroy you. Because God's temple is sacred space.

And I'm telling you that y'all are the temple. Do you feel the weight of that now? Do you feel the theological explosion?

Listen, you're going to divide the church because you like that teacher better than that teacher?

[ 45 : 51 ] You're going to divide the church because someone who loves Jesus ate meat that was offered to an idol? Even though they don't worship the idol? You're going to divide this place because you think you have a better spiritual gift than someone else?

Don't you realize, Corinthians, you're doing the same thing they were doing in Jeremiah's day?

They're doing, you're doing, the very thing they were doing when Jesus walked into the temple.

you've made this place about yourself rather than where the spirit dwells.

You see, the temple, notice this on the screen, the temple was never meant to be about you. The temple was always about the spirit of God.

don't tear down what God calls sacred. Don't gossip about the thing God dwells in.

[ 47 : 24 ] Don't divide what Jesus died to unite. because the temple's no longer a building in Jerusalem.

The temple is the body of Christ. The spirit not only dwells among you, the spirit dwells in you. Do you feel that? God is the God of us practically. And I'm done. Here we go. Three very quick applications that I think Paul has in mind for the Corinthians and for us.

First, a right view of the spirit of God changes how we see conflict. It changes how we see conflict. We tend to treat gossip and bitterness and church cliques, well those are just normal church problems.

Listen to me. Listen. Listen. And it happens in every church and we're normalized to it. That's just church people. Paul calls church conflict, unhealthy conflict, vandalism to the temple of God.

[ 48 : 49 ] When you fight and you quarrel and there's strife and jealousy among you, you are literally tearing apart the very temple of God because this is where the spirit dwells, in y'all.

So you need to see that how we speak to one another and how we disagree with one another and how we handle offense with one another.

It changes when we start seeing together this place as sacred space.

Are you with me? Not the building, the body. when you really understand who the Holy Spirit is, it will change the way you view church conflict.

And all God's people said, amen. Secondly, is a right understanding of the Holy Spirit changes how we view other Christians. It changes how we view other Christians, both to the church at Corinth and the church in Ephesus.

[ 50 : 06 ] Paul uses this temple argument as his basis for unity. That is, what you see is Jew and Gentile.

What you see is young and old. What you see is different theological camps. What you should see is another brick in the temple of God.

What you should see is not only that they're image bearers of God, but even more so as Christians, they are the very temple of God with you.

Would that change, like if a church, and I think that's Paul's point, if a church really took that vision of one another, what do you think the primary expression would be?

How about 1 Corinthians 13? The greatest of these is love. Because no longer would I be concerned about tearing other people down, I recognize that we're all together a part of the very body of Christ, the place where God's spirit dwells.

[ 51 : 31 ] Are you with me? If you understand the spirit and it doesn't change your view of one another, you do not understand the spirit. Lastly, a right view of the Holy Spirit will change how we view the church.

Preach, preacher. Preach, preacher. My experience in now 78 years of pastoring, church. I don't know.

Because pastors age like dogs. Just look at the video and now. Cool. I'm actually 174. Whatever. But listen, listen, listen, listen.

Most Christians, and I will put myself in that category unfortunately too many times, most Christians think about the church the way the Jews thought about the temple.

The way the Corinthian Christians were thinking about the church is that this place is really about what I get out of it. It's what I get out of it.

[ 52 : 40 ] It's a consumer mindset. Do I like the music? Do I like the sermon? Well, that's an easy question. Of course you like the sermon.

Right? But you see what I'm saying? Is that I go to church so that I can feel better about me and I can have my needs met and I can feel good spiritually because I did my sacrifice for the week or whatever.

You don't understand the Spirit. Because if you understood the Spirit, you would understand what this place is. You would understand who we are.

And that when we come together, it is not for us. It is for the glory of God to dwell in this place together that we would experience and worship and commune with God.

God. God. God. His very personal presence. That's worship. That's worship. It's not having the songs that you like at the volume level you prefer.

[ 54 : 03 ] It is about gathering focused on the Spirit that dwells among us and in us. Do not tell me you understand the Spirit because you can speak in something different.

You have not understood the Spirit until you change the way you think about conflict, you change the way you think about one another, and you change the way you think about worship.

Because y'all are the temple. when people walked into Westminster Hall after Queen Elizabeth died, the atmosphere changed.

Conversations were different. Phones disappeared. Voices lowered.

Why? Because people instinctively knew they were standing in a place of reverence. Meaning, the presence they were in changed their behavior.

[ 55 : 19 ] I'm done with this, but you got to hear it. If that's true for the body of a dead queen, how much more the body of a risen king?

the personal presence of Jesus in the Holy Spirit dwells with us and in us.

And that not only means we are individually saved. It means collectively we're a sanctuary. And all God's people said, amen.

Let's pray together. Father, thank you for your word to us tonight. And I pray that it will reshape the way we think about one another.

That to understand the Spirit is the personal presence of Jesus. That you are with us. And you're not only with us, you are in us.

[ 56 : 23 ] So much so that the Apostle Paul could say to the church in Corinth. You're God's temple. Don't you understand what Jesus did? It's not a building in Jerusalem.

It's not even a building in Burnsville. It's your flesh and blood gathered as your people together. And when we understand the very Spirit, the very presence that we're in, behaviors change.

And there's a lot more love than strife. And a lot more unity than division. So, Spirit of God, help us understand these things.

Help us understand who you are. And what it means that you're in us, not just individually, but what it means that you're in us collectively as a congregation.

And now as we come to this time where we come to the table, and we think about the very death of Jesus, how the temple was torn down, but it was raised in three days.

[ 57 : 49 ] things. And that changes everything. It means that you now, because of what Jesus did, have a new dwelling place.

And that's in us. May we worship and praise you for what you've done for us as we celebrate communion in Jesus' name. Amen.

that Thank you.