

Temple of the Holy Spirit: The Body

Did God give us human bodies to use and abuse as we like, or does He expect more? How does He expect us to view and care for the marvelous bodies He designed? The apostle Paul said that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. A temple means a dwelling place of God or the house of God. It means we have been through 3 levels of God's care. Creation, redemption, and the bestowing and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Because of this, there is no greater reason to treat your body like a temple. Many people believe, "It's my body, and I can treat it any way I like." But what does our Creator God say? "*Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.*"(1CO6:19) Our bodies are a stewardship from the Lord, a gift from above. Genesis 1:26-27 – "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Psalm 139:14, "*for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works,*" is how King David described God's creation of human beings unique and set apart! David praised God for this marvelous work called human body. Bible where the body is actually likened to a temple.(JOH2:21)

Man is a triune (trinity) being, the image and likeness of God. He has the body, the soul and the spirit. Both the soul and the spirit are in a vessel; the body. When a person connects his/her spirit with the spirit of God i.e accepts Jesus, the spirit of God moves and dwells in the body of that person. In Acts 2:38 says, if you repent and get baptized, you will receive the Holy Spirit. The spirit dwells in the earthen vessel, the body, thus the body is the dwelling place of the spirit of God. And when the Holy Spirit dwells in the body, the person becomes the body of Christ. Jesus promised to send a Helper.(JOH14:16) Here, He specifies that this is the Holy Spirit, available to those who believe in Christ. "*If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.* In fact, this Spirit "indwells" those who believe (ROM8:9)

There is a purpose behind everything God does, and the creation of the human body. A major purpose in this life is to grow in the righteous character of God. Through His dwelling in us by the power of His Holy Spirit, we are helped in achieving that purpose in life that will enable us to live forever.(2CO6:16-17) God will dwell in men by the power of His Spirit. If our bodies are to serve as a temple or dwelling place for the Holy Spirit, God have specific expectations about how we treat and care for our bodies. The purpose of the Holy Spirit is to build you up in the body of Christ to glory of God. Thru His power, we are sanctified as we repent, receive ordinances, and keep our covenants.(ROM15:16) He regenerates (JOH3:3-5), indwells (ROM8:11), anoints (1JO2:27), baptizes (ACT2:17-41), empowers (MIC3:8), comforts (JOH14:16-26), gives joy (ROM14:17), gives discernment (1CO2:10-16), bears fruit (GAL5:22-23), gives gifts (1CO12:3-11)

The human body needs to consume food for energy virtually every day. But not everything that crawls, runs, flies or swims was designed by the Creator to be consumed by people. God does care what meats we eat! We also care for our bodies with proper sleep and exercise and appropriate social activities. It is no secret that even the things we think about can impact our health. "A good report makes the bones healthy"(PRO15:30) What we choose to think about and even the words from family and friends can affect our health. *if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.*(PHI4:8) God promises to give a peace of mind that can help us cope with stresses and trials that sometimes war against our temple of the Holy Spirit. "*Now, who is willing to consecrate himself today to the LORD?*"(1CH29:1-5)

Bible taught the need to remember what was dwelling in them and how they would be held accountable for their care of their spiritual temple. "*Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are*"(1CO 3:16)

What God's says about importance of your body in 1Cor.6:12-20: God expects me to manage my body: "*Everything is permissible for me, but not everything is beneficial. I will not be mastered by anything*"(v.12). Your body is a gift from God. He given it to you and it's your responsibility to manage it well. My body is God's property: "*The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord*"(v.13) Our culture teaches us that we can do whatever we want with our bodies. God created our bodies, so we don't have a right to share them with anybody. My body will be resurrected after I die: "*God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also*"(v.14) One day he's going to resurrect a new glorified body. My body is connected to the body of Christ: "*Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?*" Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!"(v.15) God considers sins against the body because your body is connected to the body of Christ. "*Flee sexual immorality.*"(v.18) Sexual immorality is a sin that defiles our bodies. The Holy Spirit lives in my body: "*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit ?*"(v.19) Your body is God's temple. When you don't take care of your body, you are destroying God's temple. Jesus bought my body on the cross: "*You were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body*"(v.20) Taking care means that our bodies must be 'cleanliness'. We must make sure that we keep body away from things which destroy, harm and defile it, like fights, killings, adultery, prostitution, fornication and all evil. God created your body, Jesus died for it, the Holy Spirit lives in it. All harmful things are brought by devil to destroy the temple, the body. Surrender your body to the Lord as a living sacrifice.(ROM12:1) Glorify God with Your Body.

The church is the accomplishment of God's eternal plan to dwell among His people on the earth. Who could ever imagine that God could dwell among His people as Jesus promised? *I will not abandon you as orphans, I will come to you.* (JOH14:16-18) "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (EPH2:19-22) God has chosen to dwell in His church thru His Spirit. God has purposed to glorify Himself in the church. All believers have become fellow citizens with the saints. All are given equal standing in the kingdom of God. And this church is like a family have access to the Father. What is more exciting than to have the privilege of becoming a part of the church?

The eternal covenant, God's desire to fellowship with men, the walk in the garden, Exodus 25:8 In the Old testament times Jacob reveal his understanding of the vision he had been given. "Then Jacob woke up and thought, "Surely the Lord is in this place, but I did not realize it!" He was afraid and said, What an awesome place this is! This is nothing else than the house of God! This is the gate of heaven! Genesis 28:16-17 Jacob took note of the place where the ladder was standing. This place, he reasoned, was a holy place. God was there, and He did not even realize it (until his dream). This was God's dwelling place. This place was somehow "the gate of heaven," the place where heaven and earth met, where men on earth found access to heaven. As a result, Jacob named the place Beth-el, the house of God. the sanctuary.

How could a holy God dwell in the midst of a sinful, stiff-necked people (stubbornness, argumentative)? The solution is found in the law itself. *First*, God gave His law that forbade things which were offensive to Him. *Second*, God provided a sacrificial system, where sins could be temporarily atoned for. Men could not keep the law that God gave; thus the sacrificial system was provided so that atonement could be made until the "Lamb of God" came to atone for sins "once for all" *Third*, God established various boundaries, assuring that sinful men would not come too near. This is evident in the tabernacle, where only the high priest could enter into the Holy of Holies, and just once a year. When Moses asked to see God's glory, it was necessary for God to shield his view, so he would not look directly upon Him God did come to dwell among His people in the Person of His beloved Son: "*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory,*" (John 1:14-18) *The Word became flesh.* John 1:1 makes it clear that the *Jesus* was fully God, but 1:14 that he was also fully human. The glory of God that once indwelt the tabernacle, later the temple, came to earth in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. The ladder was the gateway to heaven, as it were. And Jesus was that ladder! Jesus was the Messiah, Who came to earth as one Mediator between God and men for our spiritual life.

There is a similarity between the way God's presence came down upon the temple and the way God's presence (the Spirit) came upon the church. Note the day of dedication of Solomon's temple. (2CH 7:1-3;12-15) "When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple." When God's presence filled the temple, fire came down from heaven, consuming the sacrifices. As a result, the glory of the Lord filled the temple. In response, people fell on their knees and began to praise God. Now consider the similarity of this incident in the temple with the first Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4 "When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. to guide and protect it until the second coming.

Bible continues to use the imagery of the church as a temple in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people" Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty." If a holy God was to dwell among His people, they must separate themselves from the abominable practices of the heathen nations. Since God dwells in the church, do not create alliances and relationships which are incompatible with the character of God. The work of our Lord on cross of Calvary produced what the law could never accomplish – a salvation achieved for all who believe. This new way of access to God through shed blood of His Son gives us a boldness to approach throne of grace. (HEB10:19-25)

God dwells in the church through His Spirit, so to bring glory to Himself. He is a holy God and God's temple is a holy temple, and we are to be a holy priesthood, (1PE2:5) We must therefore not become unequally yoked with unbelievers. We must serve God in reverence and fear, for God is a consuming fire. (HEB12:28-29) It should be characterized by brotherly love, hospitality toward strangers, care for persecuted saints, sexual purity, faithfulness in marriage, freedom from greed, honoring the leaders in your life, purity in doctrine, boldness to venture to reach out to others, offering the sacrifices of praise, charity toward those in need. Spiritual leaders responsibility it is to shepherd them. Finally, pray for those with him who are proclaiming the gospel. The purpose of the church is to glorify God as our service in terms of worship. God is faithful, by whom you were called into fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1CO1:9)

When we read of the "world", we are reading the Greek word *kosmos* often refers to the inhabited earth and the people who live on the earth, which functions apart from God. Satan is the ruler of this "world"(JOH12:31;1JO5:19). By the simple definition world refers to a world system ruled by Satan, we can readily accept Christ's claims that believers are no longer of the world—we are no longer ruled by sin, nor are we bound by the principles of the world. We are being changed into the image of Christ, causing our interest in the things of the world less to become more like Christ. Believers in Jesus Christ are simply in the world—physically present—but not of it, not part of its values.(JOH17:14-15) As believers, we should be set apart from the world. This is the meaning of being holy and living a holy, righteous life—to be set apart. We are not to engage in the sinful activities the world promotes, corrupt mind that the world creates. Rather, we are to conform ourselves, and our minds, to that of Jesus Christ.(ROM12:1-2) We are not to immerse ourselves in what the world values, nor are we to chase after worldly pleasures. This is a daily activity/commitment. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place."(JOH18:36,37) The context of Jesus' statement is His interrogation by Pontius Pilate during one of His trials. Jesus does not deny His kingship; He has a kingdom, but it is "from another place". He says He had "come into the world", with the clear implication that He was from some place other than this world. His kingdom is heavenly and extends over the hearts and minds of His subjects. It does not originate in this world: His royal power and state are not furnished by earthly, or fleshly ordinances, material wealth, imperial armies. As His followers, Christians are members of His kingdom, which is "not of this world." We know that "our citizenship is in heaven"(PHI3:20) As a result, we "put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light"(ROM13:12) We wage spiritual battle, but "the weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world"(2CO10:4) We "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness"(MAT 6:33) And we rest in the knowledge that our King gives us eternal life: "The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever"(1JO 2:17) The sufferings and trials of this world are part of life. But, in remembering that we are "not of this world," we know that such things are just for a little while.(1PE5:10) The benefits of our heavenly inheritance in His coming kingdom, and glory that is ours in Him, so that we can be part of "a kingdom that cannot be shaken."(HEB12:28) This world in its present form is passing away.(1 CO7:31) Until our King returns, we wait, hope, and we do what we can to bring others into the Kingdom of His beloved Son.

The word "church" comes from the Greek word *ekklesia* which is defined as "an assembly" or "called-out ones" Romans 16:5 "greet the church that is in their house." Paul refers to the church in their house—not a church building, but a body of believers. The church is the body of Christ, all those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation, of which He is the head. "And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way."(EPH1:22-23) The body of Christ is made up of all believers in Jesus Christ from the day of Pentecost. The body of Christ is comprised of two aspects: The universal church consists of all those who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink"(1CO12:13) The local church is described in Gal.1:1-2: "Paul, an apostle and all the brothers with me, to the churches in Galatia." The members of universal church should seek fellowship, edification in a local church. Glorify God in you daily life.

The New Testament emphasizes the importance of local assemblies. Hebrews 10:24-25 commands every believer to be a part of such a local body and reveals why this is necessary. "*And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.*" It is only in the church to which one is committed that there can be the level of intimacy that is required for carefully stimulating fellow believers "to love and good deeds." The godly men can shepherd the believer by encouraging, admonishing, and teaching.(HEB13:7,17) Apostle Paul gave Timothy special instructions about the public meetings, he said, "Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching"(1TI4:13) Part of the emphasis in public worship includes these three things: hearing the Word, being called to obedience, action through exhortation, and teaching. Acts 2:42 shows us "They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." They learned God's Word and the implications of it in their lives, joined to carry out acts of love and service to one another, they commemorated the Lord's death/resurrection thru the breaking of bread and they prayed. We should gladly minister and be ministered to among God's people. Active involvement in your local church is to living a life grows spiritually. Are you serving your church today? Those who are dividing the church are destroying it. This is because the church of Jesus Christ is a living organism, not just an organization. Corinthian church was being divided into four parties. Thus, it was in danger of being destroyed. Is destroying the local church really that serious? if anyone destroys the temple of God, "God will destroy him" When Corinthians are guilty of abusing the Lord's Supper the Lord disciplines them with weakness, sickness, eventually death. We must never underestimate value that God places on relationships and unity in our local churches. God is serious about His temple "*For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple*"