

God's Mission – The Temple

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MAIN VERSES

[Genesis 1-2](#) • [Genesis 3](#) • [1 Kings 6-8](#) • [1 Kings 9](#) • [Isaiah 66](#) • [Jeremiah 7](#) • [John 1:14](#) • [John 2:13-22](#) • [Acts 2](#) • [1 Corinthians 3](#) • [1 Corinthians 6:12-20](#) • [Galatians 3:29](#) • [Ephesians 2:11-22](#) • [Revelation 21:3](#) • [Romans 8:9](#)

God's Mission and the Biblical Story

As we continue in this series of God's mission, we're discovering what the story in the narrative of the Bible is truly saying. We've been journeying through this idea that the Bible is not just a collection of poems and parable and myth and romance and narrative, right? The Bible we have was written by man who was inspired by God to show us a single story of God's mission and God's goal and God's vocation that he has given to created mankind.

And has it been good so far, the last few weeks? Have you learned anything? It's been good. And this series has been really heavy in biblical concepts because I want you to view the Bible through these lenses.

God's Reign and Creation

That God created His good creation and desires mankind to be involved in making it, in the place where His reign is felt, expanded, and manifest worldwide. It's a mission of God. And what is God's reign? Well, God's reign can be summed up as God's mercy and God's justice and forgiveness, God's love, God's presence being felt and acknowledged. And it isn't this loud, booming thunder of voices. It's not lightning strikes. It's not fire shooting out of the ground. It's something much more impactful than that.

God's reign is felt and expanded and multiplied in his good creation through you. That's how his reign is felt. And that was the command in the garden. And that's the command from Yeshua to his followers. As you go out and you be fruitful and multiply and you make other image bearers. And with the authority that God gave Adam to be a vessel of God's reign, you will go out and you will become victorious over the corruption of this world. And you will stand

for something that this world doesn't recognize. And that is the true, complete shalom of God, the way that creation was always supposed to reflect it.

The Story of God's Redemption

And so, to review, the writer of Genesis tells us a story explaining God's relationship with mankind—this very poetic creation account. And God created his good creation. He invites mankind to be a part of it, a vessel in which he rules his creation through. Mankind, of course, rejects this vocation, seeking autonomy from God and allowing hate, violence, injustice, and sin to enter and thrive in this world.

And so what does God do? God shows mankind the root of the issue is actually their hearts. It is a problem with their hearts. And he sends a true image bearer, a true king, the true Adam, the true son of God, this rabbi named Yeshua. And Yeshua shows us what it looks like to allow God to reign through you. He heals people, offers them health care. He forgives the unforgivable, right? He forgives the unforgivable. He doesn't hold a grudge. He sneers at violence, despite being perfectly justified to take revenge. He is God's good creation manifest.

And he allows himself to be overtaken by the culmination of our hate and violence and sin and evil. And it kills him. It kills him. It exhausts itself onto him. And God looks down and he sees exactly what corrupt nature does best. It destroys. And God, at this point in the story, he refuses to look upon sin and death as part of his creation any longer. And he says that this is not strong enough to defeat my mission. And three days later, a stone was rolled away and the angels proclaimed, he is risen. Death and sin, everything that evil could throw and exhausted itself onto Messiah was conquered. It was conquered. The resurrection had happened. It was not enough to hold God back.

And the good news that comes from that is that if you follow this Yeshua, this king, this victorious king, if you submit yourself as a vessel to God, an ambassador, an image bearer, if you admit to yourself and to God that you are broken and that you are a slave to this world that you helped create, you can be a part of this victory too. This is the gospel. And it is the conclusion to the promises of God. And it is what our very faith orbits around. And we love the Torah. Love the Torah. Torah did not save me. It testified of my salvation. I love the prophets, the Tanakh, the writings. They didn't save me. They testified of my salvation. In Yeshua, God's rule and God's reign, his presence kisses earth, kisses humanity. And it birthed a new creation, a world that will never be the same, where we feel the salvation from the world that we created and we were slaves to.

Temples and Sacred Space

And today I want to kind of continue this line of thought with the idea of spirit, the spirit, and temples. And in the Western world, it's kind of hard for us to imagine the concept of a temple, right? Like we see pictures of it, but to truly understand the emotion that went behind it, a building that has something to do with God. Like you have bricks, and then you have God, right? And somehow they mix together, right? It's kind of a foreign concept.

And in the ancient world, and even some cultures today, the idea of a temple symbolized a very real way in which the reality of the presence of a god was in our midst. That's what temples do. They house a presence of a god. And it essentially houses the spirit of a particular god so that mankind or man can come and commune with the divine in some way, shape, or form. And you've heard me say this in the past, that the temple was the place where heaven met earth, heaven kissed earth. This is the place where the divine intermingled with humanity.

And we're going to explore that concept today, but in the post-resurrection fellowships or churches in the New Testament, where the assertion is made several times in the New Testament that we are the temple. We are the place that God's Spirit dwells. We are the place where God's sacred space exists to pull heaven and earth together. And I was listening to one professor talking about, and he was trying to explain how ancient temples were viewed and how it's a sacred space, and there are only certain things you could do in this sacred space, and there are certain things you couldn't do in this sacred space. And then he brought the temple to a relevant level so quick, I had to stop. I was like, what?

A Temple Illustration

And he said, when we talk about sacred space, right, or different protocols or different things, would you ever eat dinner in your bathroom? Would you? No. Why not? You don't. It's a sacred space. This space is reserved for only sacred things. And it's fascinating because you would never eat your dinner in your bathroom because it's like, oh, that's nasty. But it goes beyond that. It's not simply a problem with the bathroom being nasty. Do you know how I know this? Because it's the place that also houses the central shrine of oral hygiene. So you have your, what was it called? What do we call it? The seat of honor in the temple series. Remember that? We have the toilet. And three feet away at your sink, you have your toothbrush. It's not even guarded. Like, does anyone actually put a guard over their teeth? You just leave it out on the counter. You do. You leave it out on the counter. I got a little thing I stick it in. It stays there. Sacred space. Only certain things. It makes more sense to brush your teeth maybe like in the

kitchen or maybe outside with the water hose. You clean stuff up. No, bathroom. And so this is where it was so relevant. I was like, this is genius. Because it's a perfect illustration of sacred space.

And not that the temple was a bathroom by any means, that was not allowed necessarily in the temple complex, but it was a sacred space, and it had protocols, and there were certain atmospheres and things that you engaged with in the temple that you could not access elsewhere. And so, if you turn with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 3, we're going to jump in, and usually I try to build up the temple and move forward into the New Testament, and we're going to jump into the New Testament and read some of these verses and try to, what is he talking about, and then move back, if we can. And we're going to look at a familiar verse. And we're going to, of course, the letter that Paul wrote to Corinth.

Corinth: A City Without God's Reign

A little bit of background on Corinth. Corinth was one of the major urban centers of the ancient Mediterranean. It was one of the most cultivated, diverse cities in the empire. It was a popular trade route, which kind of produced a slave hub there, if you will. A slave trade. There were many, many, many different avenues of sexual immorality that took place there. There was idol worship. This place promoted an atmosphere where our particular lifestyle of hell was encouraged, essentially. And the proverbial sexual looseness of the ancient Greek lifestyle and culture was still prevalent.

I have a map. Hold on. This will make sense here. I think I have a map. I'm going to turn it on. So here's a map. That doesn't help you guys at all. But this is a Google Maps map. And over here is Israel. And so over here is Greece. And right there, next to Athens, right there is where Corinth was. So Paul was writing his letter during his travels to this place over here. This was essentially Greece, okay? And I think it had only been about 100 or 120 years since the Roman culture actually infiltrated it. So you had a lot of Greek culture, right? And the things and the pillars of the Greek lifestyle. And then you have the Romans coming in. And one did not help the other. It was kind of like, whoa, kind of inflated it. And this was the modern day. This was Las Vegas. This was one of the Las Vegas's in the Roman Empire. And this was a city that was not displaying the reign of God, a holy life and communion with the God of the universe, but one that promoted violence and injustice and immorality and all around hell.

The Church at Corinth: Image Bearers in an Atmosphere of Hell

And this is the city that Paul thinks is the best place to plant a church, a place where image bearers will go into an atmosphere of hell and bring heaven manifest into it. And Paul's letter to Corinth is one of encouragement and rebuke. He hears about this church that he essentially helped plant, and he hears about these conflicts that are coming in, all of these lifestyle engagements that are coming in. People are forgetting who they are, just like in Ephesus. He's having to write these letters as a response to people no longer remembering what they stand for and what their identity is. And he hears about this church participating in idol worship and sexual immorality, and the fellowships are essentially splitting apart. The fellowship, as we know it, is splitting apart there.

Favoring Teachers Over Truth

And in [1 Corinthians 3](#), he addresses something that our generation probably doesn't know a whole lot about. You see, the members of this church in Corinth are beginning to favor certain teachers over other teachers. And they're like, "Yeah, we like this teacher, and your teacher is messed up and we don't like him and he sucks. We've got this teacher, and he's better than your teacher, and he presents the gospel in a way that is much better than your teacher, and so we can't fellowship with you."

And these are not teachers of a sensational gospel or destructive topics or completely false information. We got a lot of those too. These are leaders and teachers teaching the same freedom in Christ, right? Each one his own way, each one relating to a certain people in a certain way, each one with their own testimony.

Spiritual Infants Acting Like Adults

And in chapter 3, do we have it here? Verse 1, it says: "But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people. So this is Paul writing to these believers in Yeshua. I can't even address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Messiah. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you're not ready for it." So you have jealousy and quarreling. People are splitting and dividing over who they think is the best theologian or pastor. Not something that we've ever experienced.

So my theology is more correct than your theology, and my viewpoint of how the gospel of Yeshua has freedom in my life is far greater than the way that you've been taught. And Paul is just like, "You guys are acting like kids." He didn't even say kids—infants, mere humans. You're not even spiritual. You're not acting like new creations. You're not acting like someone who has

committed their life and loyalty to Yeshua. You're not acting like a Christian. I don't see Christians. I don't see believers, is what Paul's saying. You're acting like the greatest allegiance that you have is in this clique or party or movement or group, and not to the one who all of these believers have actually given their allegiance to. So, yeah, if that's you today, Paul basically says he doesn't recognize you as a Christian. You're acting like the rest of the world. An infant in Christ.

Now some of you, infant, baby. Some of you will be like, "Well, at least I'm an infant in Christ. I'm still in Christ." A baby. A baby can't walk down the stairs without falling down the stairs. A baby doesn't know, has no maturity, has no scope of anything, has no sense of right or wrong, has no sense of direction, has no sense of purpose in life. A baby is simply a baby. Needs to drink milk. This is what Paul's calling them. And these babies are acting like they are the smartest, most mature, most experienced adults ever.

You Are God's Temple

And he presents this point in verse 16. He says: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that 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."

I want to do a demonstration because I love demonstrations. So I need four people. Nobody raise their hands at once. Come on up! Come on up, Gideon. Let's go!

All right, so you can line up here. Face everybody else. Y'all don't have cooties—you can step a little bit closer. OK, so what Paul is saying here is this: First, don't y'all know? Y'all are the temple of God, right? So y'all are the temple of God. You guys are getting this. That's great.

So what Paul is saying is: If anyone destroys God's temple, if anyone is being divisive, coming into a fellowship to try to divide it for the wrong reasons, making their faith about arguing theological topics or trying to be divisive or trying to prove they're wrong, let's just say Greg, right? Greg has a selfish agenda, and Greg wants to be right more than he wants to build up the kingdom. And Greg wants to be right and have the knowledge, and he's going to look at you guys and say, "You guys are wrong, and my teacher's better." And what are you going to do because of that? You're going to try to get Jenny to come with you. "Don't you know my teacher's better?"

So you're going to come this way. Come on. So what has just happened to God's temple? It has been destroyed, and Greg did it. And this is what Paul's dealing with. So every time that a fellowship splits for selfish reasons or a church divides just over petty things, childish things,

Paul is saying that it is as if you have walked into God's physical temple and thrown some dynamite in it. And what happens if you encroach upon God's temple? What's the penalty according to Torah? This is why he uses that language. He says God's going to destroy you, because you're doing the same thing. Yeah, but this is all spiritual. It's not just theoretical—in a very real way, it is.

So the idea is that God's temple stays together and God's temple grows. It does not divide. It does not fall. We are not supposed to be the enemies of God. And if he's brought us into community with other believers, then we need to understand that our allegiance is not to a teacher, is not to a pastor, is not to some rogue theology. It is to the one and only Yeshua. That's it. Thank you guys—the temple. That's great, right? Demonstrations! And in this chapter, Paul lists a few reasons why he thinks that this is really kind of a messed up way of living—to proclaim yourself as a believer and then be so focused on your own agenda or your focus.

The Remnant Mentality

I see a lot of people that are focused on being part of the remnant. People seeking to be a minimized people of God. As if to say that God's expectation is not to engulf the world with his presence, is not to allow all nations to come and worship him. No, there is only a select few that he's going to choose. And I'm part of that remnant. What do I have? Anybody? Anybody? God is not searching for—his mission is not to create a remnant. His mission is that all would come. All would come.

And I see so many people that just want to disqualify others from being believers because all they want is to be the single source of divine truth. This remnant, this rogue sensationalism. And according to Paul, you're not acting like believers. So avoid that.

God's mission and his kingdom is that his reign would increase, not decrease. That it would overtake the world. And this is exactly what Christianity has done for the past 2,000 years. And I am so thankful for the millions of wholehearted believers of Yeshua that went out to be fruitful and multiply so that I could one day be saved by this Messiah, by this Christ, by this King, by this Yeshua, by this Jesus. And that my son can be born into a world where people all over it are proclaiming this name. I'm thankful for that. And that also gives me hope that God knows what he's doing. He knows what he's doing and it's actually working. And I'm proud to be a part of that. God's not looking to snuff that out, minimizing his reach through his people, backtracking on his own mission.

The Temple Imagery

And Paul just puts this whole assertion out there—that you're the temple—as if it's self-evident. Look at yourselves. Don't you know? Guys, don't you know that you're the temple of God? Don't you know that? Because the temple's sacred, and you're not acting in a sacred way.

And Paul uses this imagery of being God's temple as a way to help people keep their focus on God's mission for them in his world. And all throughout Paul's letters, he carries this same idea. Like in Ephesians, he repeats this same affirmation to the church there in Ephesians chapter 2. He says, "So then... Who's the cornerstone? Yeshua. So who's that cornerstone again? Yeshua. The cornerstone of what? The temple. The temple." He's the cornerstone of the temple, of the dwelling place of God's spirit and presence manifest. And Paul's saying—he's encouraging the Ephesians—"You guys are bricks in the temple on that foundation, and you're building up the temple. And y'all are doing this."

And do you know what the issue that Paul was addressing in Ephesus was? He wasn't addressing church splits and bickering over stupid stuff. He was addressing racism. So in our world, we think of racism as whites and blacks, basically, in America. So in the first century, that was not the case. All y'all would be dirt. All of you guys would be rejected. Rich, wealthy, white person, no. Rich, wealthy, black person, ew. No, it's not good enough. The Judean people had such a passion for identity that anyone who was not DNA lineage—No, you're beneath us.

And if you were a Judean and you acted like another culture, no, you can't eat with me. You can't sit at the same table with me. You need to have a separate table. You need to have a separate seat on the bus. You need to have a separate water. It was the same thing. And the church of Ephesus is like the same. And Paul's like, listen, guys, all of you, all of you are part of God's temple, despite their skin color, or in this case despite your ethnicity or despite your DNA. So quit looking down on each other because of their lineage or their ethnicity, because they're the same size brick—you're building up the same house. Go, Paul! He does it. There's no DNA-proven lost tribes coming back. It's not gonna happen. It's just people coming from all over the world. I'm DNA-proof Israelite. It doesn't matter. Because Scripture tells us that there's only one seed. There's only one seed. And [Galatians 3:29](#) says that seed is in Christ, in Yeshua. That's it. So your DNA can be great, but if you're not committed to following this Yeshua, this King, this birth of new creation, this rabbi that says, "Listen, if you follow me, you can get a taste and start living out the world to come now. And you can be a vessel that others could be with you. And they can experience God's kingdom now." This is what Paul was dealing with.

All Nations Will Come Together

So you've heard me quote from the end of Isaiah. It's called 2nd Isaiah, that last section of Isaiah. And 65 and 66. In [Isaiah 66](#), the last chapter of Isaiah, it speaks about the climax of God's reign on earth. It's our hope—what's coming and what we live out now. And what [Isaiah 66](#) has to say is this: it doesn't say DNA-traceable people of Israel will ascend into the temple, the holy mountain of God. That's not what it says. Isaiah proclaims that all nations, all nations will come together, and all nations will have access to God's sacred space somehow. And his name won't be proclaimed in Israel—it'll be proclaimed all over the world. Everywhere will proclaim. All people will know his name. And it's fascinating because [Isaiah 66](#), when it's talking about this great final climactic moment of God's restoration of Eden and the earth, Israel and Judah are nowhere mentioned in the chapter. The nations are. Because that is what we're going for—that the whole world would proclaim the glory of God. Our God is that big. And I'm excited to be a part of that.

Your Bodies Are Members of Christ

And so as we continue, this is a soapbox. As we continue in 1 Corinthians, if you can flip back there, we see Paul addresses inappropriate behavior actually in chapter 6, and he uses the same language speaking about this temple. And members of this Corinthian church are starting to come against each other and starting to settle disputes outside the fellowship in a way that's not really kosher, and they're treating each other like they're not fellow followers of this Yeshua, this king—like they're a bunch of pagans who have no idea who Yeshua is. And this is what Paul says in [1 Corinthians 6](#). He says: "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?"

So Paul's addressing some serious issues here. Sexual immorality. So just so you guys know, the Greek word there is pornos. Idolaters, adulterers, men who practice homosexuality—something the Roman law actually protected back in those days. Greedy, thieves, drunkards, people who would rather spend their lives in the symposia, just drinking all the time and partying, seeking a lifestyle that is outside God's kingdom. They will never experience the fullness of God's shalom. They will never taste nor see heaven manifest on earth, these people.

He says: "But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of Yeshua. And by the Spirit of God, you were baptized. You entered the waters and entered into the assembly of God."

And Paul is also addressing something that was very culturally accepted. See, in Corinth, a way that you would participate in the temple worship of other gods is you would go into a temple and make an offering or whatnot, and then you would drink a lot of wine and you would sleep with a temple whore, a temple prostitute. And he's actually addressing this as well. And if you keep reading the chapter, these believers are like, "Yeah, but we've been freed. Like, we've been forgiven. Like, why can't I keep doing this? Why can't I keep acting this way, Paul? Like, I've been forgiven. You told me I've been forgiven. I've been freed." And Paul's like, "No, no, no, no."

Married to Yeshua

And Paul goes on and says this. He says: "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never. Never. Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her?" Quoting Genesis, right? "For it's written, the two will become one flesh. But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him."

So you have this Yeshua—through his life, ministry, and mission, his death and resurrection—Paul is saying that when you choose to follow him, his spirit joins with ours. His spirit joins with ours and we become one with him. His presence takes up a type of residence within us so that we are one with him. And it's kind of like a marriage. This is what Paul's saying to demonstrate our relationship with Yeshua. It's a marriage.

When you get married, you take vows, right? You take covenants. You agree to the covenant. And when we do this with Yeshua, that's what he's saying. You got married to Yeshua. And when Paul continues, he says: "Would you go and take this body in which is filled with the spirit of Yeshua, of the King—this body that is Yeshua—to this world and go attach it to a person outside of the covenants of marriage? That's crazy. Why do you think this is appropriate? Like, how can you... It makes no sense."

Would you engage with this pornos, with Jesus? No. The two don't go together. They can't. You would be betraying your identity as a follower of Yeshua if you sleep with someone outside of the biblical covenant of marriage. It's what Paul is addressing here.

And he goes on. He says: "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body—here we go—is a temple of the holy spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own." He says that again in [Romans 8](#), or as it's also translated, "You don't belong to yourself. For you were bought with a price to glorify God with your body."

This is the same logic that Paul's using in chapter 3.

The Sacred Space We Become

And I love this, and I want to let this sink in the weight of what Paul is saying. He's saying that y'all are the temple of the living Spirit of God, and you defile the temple, the sacred space of God, by sleeping with prostitutes or partaking in pornos or going to symposia or thieves or greed or being abusive to other people. And he's holding the same stress when it comes to racism. You being racist is the same degree of sacrilege as sleeping with a temple prostitute. Oh, and in chapter 3, you thinking that you're better or promoting division within the larger body of Yeshua Christ, the king, or thinking that there is some itty-bitty remnant that is God's end goal and the world would not be fully impacted by God's reign, or that you think that you are the one that needs to tear apart the fellowships—this is the same thing as being with a temple whore. And this is where Paul takes this very seriously.

We're involved in the same mission, and that is to create a space that is the dwelling place of God's Spirit. And Paul drops this big bomb here when he says, "Y'all are the temple." And that's really, really something. Like, it's really easy to say in a very spiritual sense, like, "Okay, we're the temple because we don't have a temple, like it's okay. Like, I get it." But like, when Paul wrote this, it was around 55 AD, and there was still a temple standing in Jerusalem.

The Temple's Symbolic Power

And here's this Jewish guy writing to all these people saying, "Yeah, but you guys are the temple." This is what stood in Jerusalem. That's the temple that stood in the first century. The buildings on the side would have been bigger, but regardless, that's about it. And it was beautiful. And to a Judean in the first century, the temple was something that they would have been very familiar with, as we've discussed in previous weeks in the whole series on the temple, because it reflected Eden, and it reflected the story of the garden, and it reflected the model of God's good world where God and man met, and God's reign overtook creation.

And this was God's sacred space. And corruption and hate and violence and injustice and unclean things could not enter there. The things that divide us from God—they don't enter there. And on this very spot on this mountain, the temple was the home of this building off and on for like a thousand years. Like, yeah, it was destroyed a couple times, but it was the same spot, this holy spot. It was very, very, very symbolic. And this building was the place where Israelite culture, community, fellowship, and worship orbited around for a millennium.

And think of a big symbol in our country. What's the biggest symbol of freedom we have in our country? Statue of Liberty. You are the Statue of Liberty! Uh-huh, uh-huh, right? Right? This is where the leadership of Israel was housed and all decisions were made here. And it represented Eden. And it represented the story of God and his people. And people looked at this building and they saw the only place where they could experience the intimacy of God.

The Temple as Sacred Space

This was the geographical space where God's reality-altering present was incarnate. And where does Paul say the temple is? In a house church with a bunch of people bickering. What a conundrum—what would this enigma be for Paul? He just tosses this grenade in and lets it explode.

So a temple is a building that represents this beautiful, flourishing thing. When I tell you "the peace of God," what image comes into your mind? Do you picture maybe a beautiful sunset over the mountains? There's no hate and there's no offense towards you and there is complete relief from everything that plagues you in your life—this breath of fresh air that has just expanded so much that it's completely at peace. This is this transcendent life where we get to experience that peace again. This was viewed as being housed here in this sacred space. This was something that belonged and was a byproduct of this sacred space. At least that's what the symbolism was. The idea that this temple or this shrine was the space where God's divine peace was able to connect and come into our space. And it was the place that was viewed as the place that connected the divine and humanity. And it wasn't just another space that we got to walk around or go to work or watch TV or walk around the backyard. No, this was a special place because this is where heaven truly was manifest. And that's what it symbolized.

The Story the Temple Tells

And the temple told a story because in this story, this sacred space and this human space were united and overlapping. And that's the story of [Genesis 1-3](#)—when God's space and human space overlap. And we know that these good times in [Genesis 1](#) through 3 only last about a page and a half. You turn the page and this creator God is rejected by his image bearers. These humans reject the generosity and the blessings of God. And they choose to define good and evil their own way apart from God. And it creates a fracture between this connection. And we tear it apart through our own agendas and our own behaviors and our own pursuits. And we no longer experience the fullness of God's peace and reign and presence in his shalom.

And when you read the story going forward, it's fascinating in the Bible because we see these—instead of this one big space that engulfs the world of God's presence and his temple engulfing the world, we see these little spaces all throughout the biblical narrative where these little itty bitty spaces are just these links, these chains almost, still holding a connection to heaven and to earth. And that's how they were viewed, just barely holding it on. Like it's just barely hanging on. And these places were called altars or temples or the tabernacle. This is the place that connected heaven and earth. And it was the only place.

Solomon's Temple and the Garden of Eden

So why don't you read [1 Kings 6-8](#). When Solomon builds the temple, what does it look like? It looks like the Garden of Eden. Angels and budding flowers. Yeah. They even hung wreaths on the outside of it. And when you enter into that temple, you enter into Eden.

And Paul says, y'all are the temple. You as a group and you as an individual are the place where God meets this world. And we get hung up because the story of the Bible puts so much emphasis on this building made with bricks. And it was magnificent, incredible, especially after King Herod did it. I'm not a fan of King Herod, but he made the temple pretty. But I would assert that the temple building was always supposed to represent something bigger than itself.

Solomon says this in [1 Kings 9](#). He says, "How can the heavens even contain you, God? How can this temple even contain a piece of your presence?" Solomon knew. Solomon knew. It's gold and it's bricks and it's stone. It was there to be a centerpiece for Israelite vocation, to take the presence and the reign of God to all nations.

The Word Became Flesh

And as we've discussed in the other week, John starts his gospel off in his opening chapter about Yeshua in the context of new creation. God is bringing in a new world, a new creation in Yeshua. And what does John say after he rewrites Genesis through Yeshua's presence? He says this in [John 1:14](#). He says that the Word became flesh and made His dwelling place among us. Right? Who's the Word? The Logos? This is Yeshua. Yeshua became flesh and made His dwelling among us. And that Greek word there, to dwell, is skaino. If I say skainoi—you speak Greek—it means to dwell in a tent or a tabernacle. And it's the same word that's used in [Revelation 21:3](#) when speaking about the temple dwelling among God's people.

And John is saying that this person of Yeshua, the sacred space of God, this person comes to set up a sacred space where the deity and humanity meet together. Where God and mankind

coexist in harmony and unity. That's beautiful. That's beautiful. Because this is exactly what the prophets promised was coming.

The Temple Incident

And in the next chapter, in John chapter 2, we see something take place. In John chapter 2, it speaks about Yeshua going to the temple. And you know the story. Yeshua walks in and he sees the weak and the poor being abused by the temple staff and by the temple structure. And he just—he makes a whip and he goes in there and he starts flipping tables and throwing his whip at people and gets them out of there. "You're defiling my father. You make my father's house a den of thieves. Stop it. Get out."

Now I want you to imagine what would happen if you went into the White House with a whip and you were like, "You den of thieves of this country, go on and start whipping at everyone and getting them out." Would that go successful for you? No, you would die. And this is a greater encroachment in the eyes of the Pharisees than us going to the White House. What Yeshua did here prompted his death.

This is why John starts out the account just like this. This is what prompted everything. Because they refer back to this during his interrogation and his crucifixion. And he says this and they're like, "What authority do you have to come do this?" Which is a valid question. Who do you think you are coming in here whipping around and hitting, flipping money tables over, letting the pigeons go—those cost money. Who's going to reimburse me for this? Just throwing everyone out of the temple.

The Temple of His Body

And it says in verse 19, "Yeshua answered them, 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.'" And the Jews then said, "It had taken 46 years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" That was the accusation. He said he's going to destroy the temple. Remember this was before they killed him? This very moment got him killed.

And then John, in verse 21, kind of whispers to the reader about everything that Yeshua just said about rebuilding the temple. And he says this: "But he was speaking about the temple of his body." He was speaking about his body, not the physical temple. And John's telling us that this temple had become a joke. In the actions of Yeshua, in the parables of Yeshua, he's saying the same thing. And if anything, it was an idol to the religious. This is the same thing that

[Jeremiah 7](#) talks about and [Isaiah 1](#) talks about. When Israel proclaims out to, "Oh, we have the temple—obviously God is with us"—it was a joke.

And John is telling us, "Here's the temple. And it's not a building. It's a person." And it's the central place where God and man will meet. This Yeshua is the person that this big building was ultimately pointing to—as the union of the creator and the created. This place of perfect relationship with God. The divine became human to reconcile heaven and earth in a way that we never could.

And when did he say this temple would be rebuilt? How many days? Three days. What's that referring to? His death and resurrection. Yeah. The temple will be built upon the very act of Yeshua allowing the worst to overtake him. And he takes this on to himself, and the divine becomes weak to take into himself the corruption that causes our rift between God and ourselves. And this is essentially what the temple's purpose was meant to be. It was supposed to bring us back to God. The sacrifices for evil behavior. Yom Kippur, the day when all uncleanness and sin and transgression was purged from God's sight—that was the purpose of the temple. It was to show us, "Listen, this is the place that heaven will meet earth, and if you will come to me, we will take care of everything that divides us."

You Are the Temple

And after Yeshua was raised from the dead, he is this fully manifest presence of this divine place on earth. And he's the living, breathing, sacred space where heaven and earth meet. And he promised his followers something. Remember this. He made us a promise that he would send us something. He said, "I'm going to send you a Comforter." And what was this Comforter? It's the Holy Spirit. Other gospels say it was his spirit. It was the spirit that resided in him. That's what resides in a temple, remember? It's the spirit of the deity. And Yeshua says, "I'm going to send this to you. And it will be with you. He's the living, breathing, sacred space."

And so he says, "If you're loyal to me, you'll take hold of the spirit and you'll commit to loyalty to this kingdom and you will follow me." And so if Yeshua is this temple, as John says, and he sends his spirit to his followers and you claim and grab hold of this spirit, what does that make you? It makes you part of the temple, just like Paul's letter to Ephesus says.

It makes you a member of Christ's body, right? Right? Yeshua's death is the place where the sinfulness of humanity was dealt with. It was. Your past is forgiven. The lashing out of your anger, it's forgiven. Your lusts, dealt with. Your selfishness, it's dealt with. Your corruptness in the eyes of God, it's dealt with. And there's nothing keeping you from a real tangible

relationship with God. Will you grab hold of that and enter into life? Will you commit your loyalty to a new king who offers restoration and rescuing?

Member of Christ's Body

And this is what Paul, Peter, and John are all attempting to portray, this reality. The reality that a group, as a group, we come together and we build up this temple. The space where God's spirit dwells. And as individuals, if you grab hold onto Yeshua, committed loyalty to him, your life is not your own according to [Romans 8-9](#). Your life is not your own. Your life is now sacred space. It is shared space. It's shared between the divine and this world. And this is the place where healing and reconciliation and shalom manifest. This is why Paul engages the men going around having sex with everybody. He says, your body is not yours. Your body is not yours. What are you doing to God's temple? You're looking down on others because of their DNA. What are you doing to God's temple? You are being divisive, yearning to achieve your own agenda with the Bible. What are you doing to God's temple?

And worship team, you guys can come up. Here at Founded in Truth, we're constantly growing. And that doesn't just mean numbers by any means. It means as a community, we grow. And we are the temple. You are the temple. And you guys know where the word church comes from? It comes from the idea of the house of the king in Latin. The king's house. That's why it's used all over the world. The king's house. And as a group and as a fellowship and as a church, we are a sacred space. We are a sacred space. And we are the place where healing should take place. Reconciliation should take place. Forgiveness takes place. Mercy takes place. Joy takes place. We are members of Yeshua. And I would encourage you, temple, to ask God to show you the things in your life that are unclean in his presence, that need to change, that stain his holy place, that minimize his presence in his sacred space, his shared space with you.

We Are God's Temple

We are a family here. We are one. And we are in Yeshua. And that's how we live ourselves out. That's how we live our lives out. And so please stand as we conclude services in the same way we entered them, praising God through song and worship. And prayer team, we have a prayer team available here for anyone who would like to take advantage of having a fellowship that supports you and intercedes with and for you. And so if there's something that's overtaken your life today, maybe there's something that is distracting you from being the vessel of God's inhabiting spirit. If there is something that is tearing you away from the genuine interaction

with God as the place where he meets the world, I encourage you, I invite you to come. Don't let this opportunity come and go.

Take On Your Identity

Guys, you were meant to be a visible manifestation of God's spirit in this world. And you cannot do that with distractions, just like in Corinth, just like in Ephesus. Fear, anxiety, addictions, selfish pursuits. So I'd encourage you to take on the identity of how Yeshua sees you. Forgiven, restored, a new creation, an image bearer, the thing that reflects God's spirit into this world. And boldly confront the things in your life that are keeping you from God's identity in you. Shalom.

I'm Matthew Vandrells and I hope you enjoyed this message. Founded in Truth exists to cultivate a fellowship of image bearers that live the redeemed life only Yeshua can give. If this ministry has been a blessing to you, we would love to hear from you. Send us an email through the contact form on our website and tell us how God has used this ministry to edify your faith and relationship with Him. If you'd like to see more messages like this one, subscribe to our YouTube channel by clicking [here](#). If you'd like to donate to this ministry and be a part of what God is doing through it, you can donate through our online giving portal [here](#). We thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to next time. Shalom.

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