

Temple of God

by Tricia Berg

Hopefully we all know from reading our whole Bibles for ourselves that each believer's body in this age is the temple/dwelling place of God. (1Cor. 3:16-17, 6:14-20, 2Cor. 1:22, 6:16, Eph. 2:22, 3:16-17, Gal. 6:8, Rom. 8:9-14, 1Thess. 4:7-8, 1John 3:24, 4:13, 2Tim. 1:14, Jam. 4:4-5, 1Pet. 2:4-5) We are the Body of Christ, which is a great mystery not revealed until Paul's ministry. (Col. 1:18, 24-29, 2:9-15, Eph. 1:5-14, 1:22-3:12, 5:32, Rom. 2:28-29, 11:25, 16:25, Heb. 11:39-40, 1Pet. 1:10-12) However, Jesus did discuss the indwelling Spirit with His disciples on the night He was betrayed. (John 14-17) Previously, He referred to His body as a temple. (John 2:18-22, 17:19-23, Col. 1:15-23, 2:9-10, John 1:1-3, 14, 8:58, John 1:32, Matt. 3:16-17, Mark 1:10-11, Luke 3:21-22, 4:16-21, Isa. 42, 59, 61, Heb. 1:6, Gal. 4:4-5, Isa. 9:6-7, Psalms 2:12, Prov. 30:4) In the eternal kingdom, there will be no other temple than God and the Lamb. (Rev. 21:22-23)

In the Old Testament, God's Spirit came upon chosen individuals at various times. (Some examples: Balaam - Num. 24:2 (also see these warnings: 2Pet. 2:1-3, 12-22, Jude 1:4, 10-23, Rev. 2:14, Acts 20:28-35, Rom. 16:17-19), Samson - Judg. 13-15, Saul - 1Sam. 10-11, David - 1Sam. 16:13, 2Sam. 23:2, Jeremiah - Jer. 1:4-19, Ezekiel - Ezek. 11:5, Micah - Mic. 3:8) Yet even John the Baptizer, filled with the Spirit of God from the womb, did not live to see the New Covenant established by Jesus with His blood. (Luke 1:13-17, Matt. 11:10-14, 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:14-20, 1Cor. 11:23-26) He came to prepare the way for Jesus. He referred to himself as a "friend of the Bridegroom [Jesus]." (John 3:29, Matt. 22:1-14, 25:1-13, 2Cor. 11:2-4, Rev. 19:7-9)

The New Covenant is the fulfillment of the promise God made to Abraham before the law was ever given to Moses. (Gen. 22:15-18 - also read Gen. 22:1-14 to understand that God was demonstrating what He would later do Himself—give His only begotten, beloved Son (John 3:16-18, Matt. 3:17, 17:5, Mark 9:7, 2Pet. 1:16-21), Deut. 4:29-31, Jer. 31:31-40, 32:37-44, Ezek. 16:60, 37:21-28, 2Cor. 3:3-11, Heb. 8:6-13, 10:16) When we enter into it through belief, our faith is counted as righteousness just as it was with Abraham. (Rom. 4:3-25, Gal. 3:1-9, 29, Eph. 2:8-10) While there was as yet no written law to obey, Abraham loved God and obeyed Him. (Jam. 2:18-26, Heb. 11:8-10) IF we are children of Abraham with the faith of Abraham, then let's behave as such. (Rom. 4:12 - notice that "walking in the steps of [Abraham's] faith" is NOT the practice of "works salvation," NOR is "following Jesus," Matt. 16:24-27, Luke 9:23-26, Matt. 3:9-12, John 8:39-47, Rom. 7:4-6)

This is NOT about making up our own “law for Christians” of picky rules and enforcing them on one another. (Rom. 14, Col. 2:16-23, 1Cor. 4:6, 1Pet. 5:2-3) It's about earnestly seeking individually, willingly to please our Lord in all we do, out of love, respect, reverence, adoration, devotion, gratitude (the list could go on...) (Col. 3:23-25, 2Cor. 9:6-8, 1John 3:16-18) It's about not being enslaved to ANY physical desire, and not putting anything higher in importance and value than God and His promises to us. (2Cor. 7:1, Heb. 6:11-12, 10:23-39, 11:13-17, 12:14-29 (and Gen. 25:29-34, 27:34), Phil. 3:17-21, 1Cor. 9:24-10:13, 2Pet. 1:3-15, 2:19, John 8:31-36, Rom. 6, Jam. 1:12, 2:5, 1Cor. 2:9, 1Pet. 4:1-5, 2Pet. 3:11-18, 1John 2:25-29, Titus 2:11-15, 3:3-8) It's about walking in the Spirit, in the LIGHT. (John 8:12, Eph. 4:17-5:21, 1John 1:5-2:6, 3:4-10, Gal. 5:13-25, Matt. 5:13-16)

When the “law is written on our hearts,” then we no longer need a “tutor” or “guardian.” (Gal. 3:23-39, Rom. 2:13-16, 7:7-9, 1Tim. 1:9-11) This does NOT mean that God no longer has any expectations of His children! It means that because He has become our Father, we have now been given the desire and power to seek and do His will, from the heart. (John 1:12-13, Jam. 1:18, Phil. 2:12-16, Rom. 2:29, 6:17-18, 16:19, Titus 2:11-15, 1Pet. 1:14-19, 2Pet. 1:3-5, 2Cor. 12:21, Rev. 2:5, 16, 21-22, 3:3, 19 - letters to the churches, Heb. 12:8-11, 2Tim. 2:19-26) We do NOT revert to the Old Covenant law with its rituals, NOR to our own man-made list of rules. (Gal. 4:21-31) But we DO remember that God doesn't change—so whatever He hated in the past, He still hates. (Heb. 13:8, John 8:58, Mal. 3:6, Matt. 23, Luke 11:42-54, Isa. 1:10-23, Lev. 19:9-20:27 - there is no longer a physical death penalty, but spiritual for those who harden their hearts and refuse to repent - Jude 1:12-13, Heb. 3:12-14, 6:4-8, 10:26-31, Prov. 6:16-19, Mal. 2:13-17, 3:13-4:3) The Spirit gives the free gift of saving faith, but we are warned not to grieve or quench Him. (Rom. 10:17, Eph. 2:8-10, 4:30, 1Thess. 5:19-22)

Notice below how Paul goes right from the topic of honoring God with our bodies into discussion about the coming redemption of our bodies:

*Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to **walk and to please God**, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that **each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God**; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For **God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness**. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God,*

who gives his Holy Spirit to you. Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, so that you may **walk properly** before outsiders and be dependent on no one. But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. **For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.** Therefore encourage one another with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4:1-18

Again here, Paul stresses that we must honor the Lord with our bodies in a passage where he also discusses entering the Kingdom of God:

*Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. **"All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"—and God will destroy both one and the other.** The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. 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! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. 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 is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you**, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So **glorify God in your body.** 1 Corinthians 6:9-20*

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete **exercises self-control in all things**. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I **discipline my body and keep it under control**, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. 10:1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might **not desire evil** as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." We must **not indulge in sexual immorality** as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must **not put Christ to the test**, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, **nor grumble**, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. 1 Corinthians 9:24-10:15

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship**. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:1-2

Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But **put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires**. Romans 13:11-14 (Also see Matt. 25:1-13)

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of

God. But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, **self-control**; against such things there is no law. And **those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires**. Galatians 5:19-24 (Also see Gal. 3:27.)

For the **love of Christ controls us**, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that **those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised**. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

Peter also connects the redemption of our bodies with our exercise of the fruits of the Spirit. Needless to say, a person who is not born again (saved) cannot save themselves by obeying the Lord. We MUST believe in order to please God and to receive the power (via the Holy Spirit) needed to overcome this world and its temptations. (Heb. 11:6, Phil. 2:12-16, 1John 5:2-4, Gal. 5:24, 1Cor. 10:13, Jude 1:17-23, 2Tim. 3:1-5, 1Cor. 15:33-34, 1Pet. 2:15-16) And those who love Jesus obey Him, are filled with His Spirit, and bear good, abundant fruit. (John 14:15-26, 15:1-21, Matt. 5:13-16, 29-30, 13:18-23, 36-43, 47-50, 7:12-29, Mark 4:21-25, Luke 6:43-49, 8:19-21)

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. 1 Peter 1:14-19

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with **self-control**, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an

entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things. 2 Peter 1:3-15

*Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to **live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.** For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 1 Peter 4:1-5*

My point is NOT about being afraid of what will happen if we aren't "perfect"—there is no such thing this side of heaven. But neither should professed believers seek assurance that it's not necessary to please God, which means obeying Him. (Mark 12:28-34 - remember, we're under the law of liberty in this age. Jam. 1:25, 2:12-13) We reveal whether or not we truly believe in and love Jesus as our Lord and Savior by whether we sincerely desire to please Him or not—according to the Spirit. (1John 4:18, Rom. 10:8-10, Gal. 6:2, Rom. 7:4-6, Phil. 2:12-16) That's why Jesus often said His words were for those "with ears to hear." (Matt. 11:15, 13:9, 13:14-17, 13:43, Mark 4:9, 4:21-25, 8:18, Luke 8:8, 14:34-35, Rev. 2, Rev. 3, 1John 4:5-6, John 15:20) He will not force anyone to believe or to obey. We choose who and what we love most, and show it by our actions. (1John 2:15-17, 2Cor. 6:14-7:1, Rom. 6, 8, 16:19)

A word to the wise (those "with an ear to hear"): We have been warned not to follow the crowd in these troubling times. They do NOT know where they are going. (Luke 6:39-40) We don't need to seek the advice of "experts" (taking donations, selling us books and DVDs, etc.) in order to find God's will for us. We will each answer for ourselves alone, and we have His Word and Spirit to help us stand firm in the truth. (John 14-17, Gal. 6:4-10, Rom. 2:1-11, Heb. 4:12-13, 2Tim. 3:12-17, Matt. 5:10-12, Luke 6:26, 8:15, Jam. 5:10-11, 1Pet. 3:13-17, 4:3-5, 12-19, Heb. 13:13, Eph. 6:10-20, Psa. 111:10, 119:105) Now is a good time to draw near to God and away from anything that comes between us and Him. (1Thess. 5:5-11, Rev. 2:2-7, 2:16-29, 3:2-6, 3:15-22, 16:15)

*But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be **lovers of self**, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive,*

*disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, **without self-control**, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, **lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God**, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. 2 Timothy 3:1-5*

*"Enter by the narrow gate. **For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.** For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not **bear good fruit** is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.' Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a **wise** man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a **foolish** man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it." Matthew 7:13-27*

Let's dedicate each and every day to the Lord, seeking to glorify and honor Him in ALL we do—to know and do His will for us instead of our own—not under compulsion, but with joy, recognizing the great privilege it is to belong to Him. (Rom. 8:13-25, 12:1-2, 14:17-19, 15:13, Heb. 12:1-13, Phil. 2:1-16, Col. 1:11-13, Jam. 1:2-4, 1Pet. 1:8-9, 1John 1:4, John 15:11) That's what we'll be doing for eternity, so why not start now? Could anyone be more worthy of all of our love and devotion than Him? Most certainly not! (John 14:24, 15:10, 2Cor. 5:14-15, 1Tim. 1:5, Rom. 13:8-14, Mark 12:28-34)

Written by Tricia Berg, (March 2019, updated April 2019), 7 pp. If you have been blessed by this article, you are free to share but do not claim as your own or sell, and do not make modifications and attribute them to me. You can download as many free pdf devotional articles as you wish from my blog: <http://layoutfortoday.blogspot.com/> (The most recent articles are at the bottom of the page after you click on the "free pdf downloads" link.) You can also read this article at my other blog: <http://clotheyourselves.com/>), where the Bible verses should pop up when you hover over the cites.