

“Ye Are The Temple Of The Living God!”
2 Corinthians 6:16 - 7:1

Introduction:

1. Please Turn Back With Me In Your Bibles To:
 - 2 Corinthians 6 - Where The Apostle Paul:
 - Has Been Dealing With One Of The Primary Issues:
 - That Had Infiltrated & Closed Off The Hearts:
 - Of The Corinthian Christians!
 - Remember - In 6:11 - Paul Said His Heart Was Enlarged Toward Them! But In 6:12 - Their Hearts Were “Straitened” And Closed Off Toward Him – And Ultimately Toward The Lord!
 - And One Of The Reasons They Had:
 - Lost & Even “Left Their First Love” Was Because Of:
 - A Lack Of Christian, Biblical Separation:
 - From Unbelievers!
2. And So - From 6:14 - 7:1 - Paul Makes This Passionate Appeal:
 - For Purity In The Church!
 - He Begins In 6:14 With This Command:
 - “Be Ye Not Unequally Yoked Together With Unbelievers!”
 - This Was Part Of Their Problem!
 - They Were Entangling Themselves With The Unbelievers Around Them In “Unholy Alliances!” And This Was Choking Out Their Love For Him & The Lord!
 - They Were Being Squeezed Back Into The Mold Of The Unbelieving World & Culture Around Them!
 - Instead Of Separation:
 - They Were Joining Themselves With:
 - The Wickedness Of Unbelievers!
 - The Worldliness Of Unbelievers!
 - The World-View Of Unbelievers!
 - And Even The Worship Of Unbelievers!
 - And This Is True For Us Even Today!
 - So - He Command Them & Us - In The Name Of Christ:
 - “Be Ye Not Unequally Yoked Together With Unbelievers!”
 - Why? He Goes On - “For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? / 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? / 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. / 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, / 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. / 1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God!”
3. Now - Last Sunday - We Ended By Looking At:
 - The Five Questions Paul Asked:
 - To Show Us The Necessity Of Purity & Separation From Unbelievers!
 - It Is Because Believers In Christ Have Very Little In Common With Unbelievers Any More!
 - 5:17 - “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!”
 - And One Of The Main Reasons Paul Gives:
 - For Purity - In Your Life As A Christian:
 - And In Our Life As A Church:
 - Is Because Of This Great Truth:
 - 6:16 - “For Ye Are The Temple Of The Living God!”
 - And This Truth:
 - Will Be Our Focus This Morning!
 - Here - Paul Is Describing Our Church:

- "For Ye Are The Temple Of The Living God!"

4. Now - What Is A Temple?

- A Temple Is Often Thought Of As:

- The House Of A God!

- And In The City Of Corinth - They Had Many Gods As Well As Many Temples For Their Gods!

- They Were Quite Familiar With Temples!

- But So Were The Jews!

- The Temple Of The *Living* God:

- Was Different Than The Temples Of The False Gods:

- Because Of That One Key Word!

- "Living!"

- It Was *God* Who Told His People:

- Where He Would Reveal His Presence In A Special Way!

- Because The Truth Was / Is - "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee!" (1 Kings 8:27)

- God Is Omnipresent! Yet, In Special Places & At Special Times God Can Make His Presence Known In Special Ways!

- And He Did So In His Temple!

- Now - One Of The Primary Features Of God's Temple:

- Was Purity & Holiness!

- But What Made It Pure & Holy?

- God! And His *Presence!*

- And What Was True Of The Old Testament Temple Is True Of The New Testament Temple Of The Living God!

- Which Is His Church!

- 6:16 - "For Ye Are The Temple Of The Living God!"

- And This Is Why As A Church:

- We Are To Live Biblically Separated & Holy Lives!

- Because God Himself Is With Us & Even In Us!

- And As We Continue - He Offers:

1. *The Proof Of God's Presence!*

- With His Church - 6:16 - "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people!"

- The Proof Of God's Presence With Us As His People:

- Is Rooted In The Word Of God!

- In Fact - Beginning In 6:16 - Paul Strings Together - From Memory - Several Quotes From The Old Testament & Weaves Them Together Into A Mosaic Of Truth For Us!

- And He Does This - Because He Wants You To Know:

- That The Presence Of God With His People:

- Was Prophesied & Promised All The Way Back Even When The Old Covenant Had Been Established With The Children Of Israel!

- And Here He Looks Back To Leviticus 26:11-12 - Which A Promise Of God's Special Presence With His People!

- It Was To Be:

- A Personal Presence!

- "I Will Dwell With Them!"

- And This Is True For Us As A Church Today!

- God Dwells With Us!

- In John 14:17 - Jesus Further Explained How This Promise Would Be Fulfilled:

- Through The - "Spirit Of Truth" - Who - "Dwelleth With You And Shall Be In You!"

- God Dwells With Every Christian & Every Church Through The Presence Of His Holy Spirit!

- And In 1 Corinthians 3:16 - Paul Asks - "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

- God's Personal Presence Makes Us His Temple!

- But It Was Also To Be:

- An Active Presence!

- “And Walk In Them!”
 - God Is Not A Passive Or A Static God!
 - No - He Walks With His People!
 - And Works In & Through His People!
 - And He Always Points The Way!
- In Revelation 2:1 - Jesus Himself Is Described:
 - As The One - “Who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks!”
 - And He Continues To - “Walk With Me & Talk With Me Along Life’s Narrow Way!”
- God’s Active Presence Makes Us His Temple!
 - But It Was Also To Be:
- A Gracious Presence!
 - “And I Will Be Their God!”
 - This Means That All That God *Meant* Himself To Be For His People:
 - He Will Be!
 - As Our Gracious Provider & Protector!
 - God’s Gracious Presence Makes Us His Temple!
 - But It Was Also To Be:
- A Special Presence!
 - “And They Shall Be My People!”
 - God Has Made A Special Choice For You:
 - To Belong To Him!
 - 1 Peter 2:10 - “Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy!”
 - All That Was Prophesied & Promised In The Old Testament:
 - Has Been Fulfilled In The New:
 - And Especially In His Church!
 - And When You Put Your Faith & Trust In Jesus Christ As Your Savior:
 - “Ye Are The Temple Of The Living God!”
 - And You Receive & Can Enjoy:
 - All That God’s Presence Has To Offer!
 - And The Primary Feature Of You:
 - As God’s Temple - Is To Be Purity & Holiness! Which Is Why Paul Goes On In 6:17 To Describe:

2. ***The Power Of God’s Presence!***

- 6:17 - “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing!”
 - This Verse Is An Echo Of Another Old Testament Passage:
 - Isaiah 52:11 - Which Was Addressed To The Priests Who Were Heading Home To Jerusalem:
 - After Their 70 Years Of Captivity In Babylon!
 - And Here - Paul Applies It To *All* Of God’s Priests! The Church Is Not Only God’s New Temple / Christians Are Now God’s New Priests!
 - And So - As God’s Priests - We - “Must Take Steps To Separate Ourselves From All That Is Unclean And To Be Free From Unholy Compromise!” (Phillip Hughes)
 - And To Do This - We Must Avoid:
 - The Unclean Fellowship Of Unbelievers!
 - “Come Out From Among Them, And Be Ye Separate!”
 - Sometimes There Needs To Be:
 - A Decisive & Deliberate Separation From Those People That Will Draw Us Away From Fellowship With The Lord!
 - Even Though It May Be Very Difficult!
 - This Points Back To The Principle In 6:14:
 - Where We Need To Separate Ourselves From:
 - Unholy Alliances With Wickedness / Worldliness / World-View / And Worship Of Unbelievers!
 - But Also - We Must Avoid:
 - The Unclean Fruit Of Unbelievers!
 - “And Touch Not The Unclean Thing!”

- Remember - This Is God's Word To Us!
 - As His People! His Church! His Temple!
 - God Wants Us To Be Pure & Holy Even As He Is Pure & Holy!
- This Is Why Jesus Came!
 - Ephesians 5:26-27 - "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, / That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish!"
- Just As The Old Testament Priests:
 - Were Not To Carry Back With Them:
 - Or Even Touch The Idols Of The Babylonians On Their Way Back Home:
 - As Christians - We Are To - "Have No Fellowship With The Unfruitful Works Of Darkness!" (Ephesians 5:11)
- Because There Are Some Things In This World:
 - That We Are Not Meant To Use:
 - In Our Service For Christ!
 - It Is Poisoned Fruit!
 - "Ye Are The Temple Of The Living God!"
- And It Is The Presence Of God:
 - As His Holy Temple On This Earth:
 - That Will Provide The Power For Us:
 - To Live In This Way!
 - To Avoid The Unclean Fellowship & Unclean Fruit Of The Unbelieving World Around Us!
 - Now - When We Live In This Way:
 - We Will, Most Likely, Not Be The Most Popular People In This World!
 - The World Does Not & Will Not Like The Light & The Salt Of True & Faithful Christianity!
 - And That Is Why Paul Continues With:

3. ***The Promises Of God's Presence!***

- Looking Back Once Again To The Old Testament - Paul Applies These Promises To Us - 6:17b - 18 - "And I will receive you, / And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty!"
 - Sometimes - When We Make Biblical Separation:
 - A Priority In Our Lives As Christians & As A Church:
 - We Think That We Might Miss Out On Something!
 - But In Truth - We Discover - As One Writer Put It - "Separation From The World Leads To Fellowship With God!"
 - And When You Live As The Temple Of God:
 - That You Are - You Will Experience The Great Fulfilment Of These Precious Promises!
- The Promise Of His Own Fellowship!
 - 6:17b - "And I Will Receive You!"
 - Sometimes We Are Concerned With What We Might Lose:
 - When We Live As God's Pure & Holy People!
 - But Consider What God Himself Offers You!
 - His Own Divine Favor & Fellowship!
 - "I Will Receive You!"
 - He Will Sympathize With You!
 - He Will Support You!
 - And He Will "Supply All Your Need According To His Riches In Glory By Christ Jesus!" (Philippians 4:19)
 - What A Promise! But Even More - He Offers:
- The Promise Of His Own Fatherhood!
 - 6:18 - "And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty!"
 - It's Fathers Day Today!
 - And It Is A Great Time To Think About & Give Testimonies About The Fathers God Has Given To Us!
 - But Our Thoughts Should Always Go To Our Heavenly Father!
 - Who Is Our Perfect Father!

- The Father Who Chose Us!
 - Ephesians 1:5 - "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will!"
- The Father Who Loves Us!
 - 1 John 3:1 - "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"
- And This Precious Promise Applies To:
 - Any Man Or Any Woman:
 - Who Is Trusting In Jesus!
 - See - In Many Places In The New Testament:
 - We Are Called The Children Of God:
 - Or The Sons Of God!
 - But Here - "Sons *And* Daughters" Are Mentioned!
 - To Reveal His Relationship & Compassion To The Women Who Many Have To Separate Themselves From Unbelieving Communities That Seemed To Really Care About Them!
- No Matter How Hard & Difficult It Might Be:
 - To Practice Biblical Separation:
 - You Will Find - Whether You Are A Man Or A Woman - That The Lord Is Enough For You!
 - And Will Fill Any Void!
- Because He Is - "The Lord Almighty!" (6:18)
 - You Can Be - "Fully persuaded that, what God has promised, he is able also to perform!" (Romans 4:21)
 - As The Almighty God:
 - He Has The Might & Strength:
 - To Help You - To Follow After Him & His Commands!
 - To Hold You - When It Seems Like You Are All Alone!
 - To Handle Anything & Everything That Might Try To Harm Or Hurt You As You Pursue After His Holiness & Purity In Your Life!
 - Because God Is With You!
 - "Ye Are The Temple Of The Living God!"
 - And Then - To Sum It All Up:
 - Paul Reminds Us About:

4. ***The Purity Of God's Presence!***

- 7:1 - "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God!"
 - As You Look Back To These "Exceeding Great & Precious Promises" That Pertain To God's Presence With You:
 - As His Temple! As His People! As His Children!
 - This Is How You Need To Respond!
 - With:
 - A Fresh Desire!
 - "Let Us Cleanse Ourselves From All Filthiness Of The Flesh And Spirit!"
 - Another Call To Purity & Holiness!
 - And To Avail Ourselves Of The Cleansing That We Have In And Through Our Lord Jesus Christ!
 - We Need To Remember That It Is:
 - 1 John 1:7 - "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son [that] cleanseth us from all sin!"
 - But We Need To Avail Ourselves Of His Cleansing!
 - Each & Every Day!
 - We Do This By:
 - Responding!
 - Responding To God's Examination & Conviction In Our Hearts & Lives!
 - When We Hear His Word, We Heed His Word!
 - Repenting!
 - With A Godly Sorrow & Desire To Live For Him & To Live As He Would Live!
 - Requesting!

- The Forgiveness That He Alone Offers & Provides!
- Rejoicing!
 - In The Grace & The Faithfulness Of God!
- Relying!
 - Upon His Grace & Strength To Obey Him & Live In Christian Purity & Holiness!
- Is This Your Desire Today?
 - Begin - Psalm 139:23-24 - "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: / And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!"
 - Also Need To Respond With:
- A Fresh Direction!
 - "Perfecting Holiness!"
 - Once Again - It Is God Himself Who Promises:
 - Philippians 1:6 - "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ!"
 - But We Have A Responsibility As His Church:
 - And As His Temple - To Pursue After:
 - This Perfect & Complete Holiness!
 - 1 Peter 1:15-16 - "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; / Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy!"
 - Not Just In The Big Things:
 - But In The Little Things!
 - Not Just In The Visible Things!
 - But In The Invisible Things!
 - In Every Thing!
 - None Of Us Are As Pure & Holy:
 - As We Ought To Be!
 - As We Can Be - By God's Grace!
 - As We Will Be!
 - Pursuing Holiness:
 - Ought To Be The Daily Desire & Direction Of Our Lives!
 - "For Ye Are The Temple Of The Living God!"
 - Also Need To Respond With:
- A Fresh Devotion!
 - "In The Fear Of God!"
 - The Proper Fear & Reverence:
 - Of Our Holy God!
 - We Must Never Forget:
 - The Refrain Of The Cherubims In Heaven:
 - Isaiah 6:3 - "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory!"
- And With This Fresh Devotion:
 - The Purity & Holiness Of God:
 - Will Be Like The "Refiners Fire" - Purging Us:
 - And Making Us More & More Fit:
 - For His Presence With Us As His Temple!

Conclusion:

1. Remember This Truth - "Ye Are The Temple Of The Living God!"
 - Because God Himself Is Present With You!
 - Let His Presence Today - Be The Fuel & Fire In Your Heart:
 - To Pursue After His Purity & His Holiness!

Grace Baptist Church
Stephen Elmer, Pastor
4245 North 200 West
Greenfield, Indiana 46140
317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com