***The Living Temple***

**Worship Series – Week 4**

***The Living Temple***

|  |
| --- |
| **WORSHIP SERVICE OUTLINE**SEach worship outline contains all elements needed for your worship service. The order of each service presented is only a *suggestion*. No doubt changes will be needed to accommodate the flow and worship style of your corps. The outlines are flexible and allow opportunities to “cut and paste” as needed. If you are blessed with instrumental or vocal music resources, you may find there is more structured material here than needed. It is recommended that the headings of each section of the service be included in the bulletin. |

**Announcements**

***The New Temple***

**Call to Worship**

The promise of Jesus was: “I will give you a new way to come to God without all this human elaboration and human ritual. I have come to destroy this Temple in Jerusalem and to make the whole earth the Temple where it is possible to know the presence of the living God.” He had come to show people a way to come to God without any Temple at all.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SB#241 – And can it be that I should gain** | TB-498 – Sagina | HTD4-T13 (4 vs.) |
|  **Additional Optional Songs** |
| **HC#171 – Stand Up and Bless the Lord** | HC-171 | HCD16-T11 |
| **HC#161 – My Great Redeemer’s Praise** | HC-161 | HCD15-T11 |
| **HC#277 – We have caught the vision splendid** | HC-277 | HCD26-T17 |
| **SB#34 – I believe that God the Father** | TB-429 – Bethany | No CD |

**Responsive Scripture:**

**Leader:** *The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*

**All:** *And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, “Take these things away; stop making My Father’s house a place of business.*

**Leader:** It was quite certain an act like the cleansing of the Temple would produce an immediate reaction in those who saw it happening. It was not the kind of thing that anyone could look at with complete indifference. It was much too staggering for that.

**All:** *His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for Your house will consume me.” The Jews then said to Him, “What sign do You show us as your authority*

*for doing these things?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three*

*days I will raise it up.” The Jews then said, “It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” But He was speaking of the temple of His body. So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.* (John 2:13-22, NASB)

**Leader:** There is no possible doubt that Jesus spoke words which were very like these, words which could be maliciously twisted into a destructive claim. When Jesus was on trial, the false witness borne against him was:

**All:** *This fellow said, “I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three* days.’” (Matthew 26:61, NIV)

**Leader:** We must remember two things and we must put them together. First, Jesus certainly never said he would destroy the material Temple and then rebuild it. Jesus in fact looked for the end of the Temple. He said to the woman of Samaria that the day was coming when God would be worshipped neither in Mount Gerizim, nor in Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth (John 4:21).

**All:** *“You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”* (John 4:22-24, NASB)

**Leader:** Second, the cleansing of the Temple, as we have seen, was a dramatic way of showing that the whole Temple worship with its ritual and its sacrifice was irrelevant and could do nothing to lead people to God. It is clear that Jesus did expect that the Temple would pass away; that he had come to render its worship unnecessary and obsolete; and that therefore he would never suggest that he would rebuild it.

**All:** *“I will destroy this temple that is made with hands.”* (Mark 14:58, NASB)

**Leader:** What Jesus really meant was that his coming had put an end to this way of worshipping God that was made and arranged according to human design and had put in its place a spiritual worship; that he put an end to all this business of animal sacrifice and priestly ritual and put in its place a direct approach to the Spirit of God which did not need an elaborately built Temple and a ritual of incense and sacrifice offered by human hands. The threat of Jesus was:

**All:** “Your Temple worship, your elaborate ritual and your lavish animal sacrifices are at an end, because I have come.”

(*Barclay Commentary*, pages 133-137)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HC#156 – Enter In** | HC-156 | HCD14-T16 |
|  **Additional Optional Songs** |
| **SB#626 – The Savior of men came to seek and to save** | TB-540 – The old rustic bridge | No CD |
| **HC#154 – Moved with Compassion** | HC-154 | HCD14-T14 |
| **HC#151 – Fairest Lord Jesus** | HC-151 | HCD14-T11 |
| **HC#146 – Here I am to Worship** | HC-146 | HCD13-T16 |
| **HC#149 – In Christ Alone** | HC-149 | HCD13-T19 |

***A Willing Heart***

**Prayers of Worship**

|  |
| --- |
| **Drama: There is no drama for this week.** |

**Tithes and Offerings**

 ***“I Will Dwell With Them”***

**Reading:**

It is the presence of the living, risen Christ which makes the whole world into the Temple of God. *Jesus said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”* The Apostle John says that when the disciples remembered, they saw in this a promise of the resurrection.

We have here the tremendous truth that our contact with God, our entry into his presence and our approach to him are not dependent on anything that human hands can build or human minds devise. In the street, in the home, at business, or in church, we have our inner temple, the presence of the risen Christ forever with us throughout all the world.

(*Barclay Commentary*, pages 133-137)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HC#89 – Knowing You** | HC-89 | HCD7-T19 |
|  **Additional Optional Songs** |
| **HC#199 – I Stand in Awe** | HC-199 | HCD18-T19 |
| **HC#186 – When I Look into Your Holiness** | HC-186 | HCD17-T16 |
| **HC#110 – He is Here** | HC-110 | HCD9-T20 |
| **HC#279 – Draw me nearer** | HC-279 | HCD26-T19 |
| **HC#49 – Be Still, for the Presence of the Lord** | HC-49 | HCD3-T19 |

**Message – Where is the Temple?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HC#175 – The Heart of Worship** | HC-175 | HCD16-T15 |
|  **Additional Optional Songs** |
| **HC#159 – Spirit of the Living God** | HC-159 | HCD14-T19 |
| **HC#125 – I Draw Near to You** | HC-125 | HCD11-T15 |
| **HC#133 – Breathe on Me** | HC-133 | HCD12-T13 |
| **HC#110 – He is Here** | HC-110 | HCD9-T20 |
| **HC#279 – Draw me nearer** | HC-279 | HCD26-T19 |
| **SB#342 – O God of love eternal** | TB-246 – Aurelia | HTD3-T3 (3 vs.) |
| **SB#580 – Dear Lord, I do surrender** | TB-246 – AureliaTB-249 – EwingTB-259 – Penlan | HTD3-T3 (3 vs.)HTD9-T3 (4 vs.)HTD2-T11 (3 vs.) |
| **SB#881 – Not my own, but saved by Jesus** | TB-389 – Not my own | No CD |
| **SB#623 – Take my life, and let it be** | TB-282 – HendonTB-279 – Consecration Hymn | HTD8-T6 (4 vs.)No CD |

**Benediction: (Congregation in unison)**

*But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgression. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.* (Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-10, 19-22)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HC#198 – In Jesus’ Name** | HC-198 | HCD18-T18 |
|  **Additional Optional Songs** |
| **HC#76 – Shout to the Lord** | HC-76 | HCD6-T16 |
| **HC#112 – The Potter’s Hand** | HC-112 | HCD10-T12 |
| **HC#109 – Total Praise** | HC-109 | HCD9-T19 |

***The Living Temple***

**Worship Series Sermon – Week 4**

***Where is the Temple?***

**Text:** John 2:13-22

A story is told of a father and son who went to church one Sunday morning. A little bored by the worship service, the son asked, “Dad, what are those plaques on the wall? They have lots of names and dates written on them.”

“Those are the men and women who died in the service,” the father answered.

The boy thought about that for a few minutes, then had another question. “Was that the 9:00 service, or the 10:30 service?”

Sometimes, we wonder about worship. Whether we are kids or grown adults, there are many unanswered questions we have about meeting with God:

* Is there a correct way to pray?
* How do I know God hears me when I pray?
* Why do people go to church every week?
* If God hears my prayers, why don’t I seem to be getting any answers?
* What happens to the money I give in the offering?
* Does God have something in the Bible for what I am going through in life?
* If God is everywhere, why don’t I feel him closer to me right now?
* If God loves me, why is he letting me go through this difficult time?
* If I offer myself to God, how soon will I have to pack my bags and move to Africa?

These are all fair questions, and they are OK to ask. It’s even alright to get angry with God, as long as we’re still talking with him.

But sometimes, we get worship all wrong. Maybe it’s because someone has selfish motives. Or someone made up some rules that aren’t in the Bible about how to approach God. Or we don’t think God will accept us as we are.

For those times when it’s an honest misunderstanding, God understands. He will send people to teach and correct along the way.

Jesus came to the Temple one day and was upset about what he saw going on. In an effort to make money off those who came to worship, some people created a marketplace, selling animals for sacrifice. They exchanged money from people of different lands with a markup. When Jesus saw this, he became angry. He turned tables over and drove people out of the temple area. He said, “Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market!” (John 2:16)

Jesus knew what the Temple was for. And he knew what activities were acceptable there. He also knew that the wrong activities made a difference in the quality of worship. And he knew that he needed to change things at once.

Take a moment to look around you this Sunday morning. Look at the room we sit in to worship God. What is it about this room that makes it special? What about this room signifies that this is a place to meet God? Is it the furniture? Is it the banners and signs on the walls? Is it the Bibles we carry with us and read? Or is it something more?

Is our chapel set up to invite God’s presence or to remind us of God’s presence? Does what we do in this room through the week make a difference in how we use it during a worship service? There are some churches that worship in schools, movie theatres, people’s homes, and even bars and restaurants. They make use of a space that is unoccupied on Sunday morning, and is used for many other activities through the week.

What makes our chapel a place of worship?

The Temple was simply a place to meet with God. It is a place for us to come to him, and a place for him to meet with us. When we look at the Bible, we realize that the word “Temple” can mean many different things.

First, it can mean a physical structure. Like the Tabernacle that Moses used or Solomon’s Temple, our corps building can be called the Temple of God. So it can be a building.

Second, the Temple can mean a room. For example, this chapel is a special room in our corps, set aside for worship. Even though the whole building could be considered a Temple, this room is a unique room that is a Temple.

Third, as we will soon see, the Temple can refer to a person.

In John 2, we see all these ways of thinking about a Temple. It tells an interesting account of Jesus cleansing the Temple. In verse 14, Jesus sees people in the temple selling animals for sacrifice and exchanging money. This temple is the larger building. This money changing probably happened in the outer court of the temple.

Then, in verse 19, Jesus uses another word for “temple.” The word he uses refers to the “holy of holies,” which is the most sacred part of the Temple. It was a place that only the high priest could go, and only once a year. It was the place where God’s presence was. It was such an honored, feared place that when the high priest made his annual offering for the sins of the people, a rope was tied around one ankle and bells to his feet. That way, as long as the bells were ringing, everyone knew he was still alive. But when the bells stopped, they could pull him out by the rope.

If our corps building could be compared to the larger Temple, this chapel is like the holy of holies. It’s the special room that we set aside for worship.

The third meaning for Temple is a human body. In fact, in verse 19, when Jesus used the term for “holy of holies,” John points out in verse 21, “the temple he had spoken of was his body.” Jesus said, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” Not too much later, they did destroy the temple of his body – on a cross. Then Jesus rose again three days later.

Jesus knew what he was talking about. And not just in prophesy, knowing in advance that he was going to be killed and three days later rise from the dead. Jesus knew what his body was.

It was a Temple:

* A place to meet with God.
* A place for God to dwell with us.
* A place to worship God.

Until now, the Temple was a place you went to. If you wanted to worship, you needed to go somewhere. Moses had to go to a tent of meeting, or Mount Sinai, or the Tabernacle. Priests in Solomon’s day had to go to the Temple. That’s why the Israelites of ancient times and the Jews of today make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. It’s so they can feel closer to God. It’s so they can come to the Temple, or to the place where it once stood. That place is holy ground because it’s where worship happens. It’s where sins are forgiven. It’s where offerings are made. It’s where prayers are offered.

Now, Jesus presented a new way of worship. Since his body was the Temple of God, he could worship wherever he was. It’s like the most ultimate portable Temple that went with him wherever he went.

A couple of chapters later, Jesus talks with a woman about worship. The conversation Jesus had with the woman at the well is recorded in John chapter 4, and has many lessons about how we interact with God and how he ministers to us.

But today we will focus on the passage starting with verse 19:

19“Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. 20Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

This woman was hung up on the location of worship. She was talking with Jesus about the confusion, the debate about what the best place was to worship God.

But Jesus introduced a different approach. Let’s read Jesus’ response to her starting in verse 21:

21Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

Jesus wanted her to change her thinking. She was thinking about the location of worship. Jesus wanted her to concentrate on the manner and attitude of worship.

Each one of us gets this confused sometimes. We think that if we just get to church, if we can just attend the service, that everything will be alright in our spiritual lives. After all, I went to church, didn’t I?

But Jesus wants us to change our thinking as well.

He wants us to know that he is the Temple of God. But he also wants us to know that we ourselves can be God’s Temple. The Apostle Paul understood this principle when he wrote his friends in Corinth. Let’s turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 3. This is what Paul says about you and me:

16Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? 17If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

Did you see that? “You yourselves are God’s temple.” This was part of God’s ultimate plan to dwell among his people. He was going to allow us to become the very Temple of God. This makes a few differences in how we worship.

First, we know that God lives inside us. His presence guides us when we have a choice to make. His presence convicts us if we stray from his commands. And his presence comforts us when we feel the effects of the cold, lonely world we live in.

Second, we can worship God at any time, and in any place. Because we are portable temples, we can pray in an instant and know that he’s there listening to us. We can walk through the day, whether at work, school or play and be aware of his love and strength in our lives. In the 1600s, a monk named Brother Lawrence was a cook for his monastery. He realized that he was God’s temple, so he did something he called, “Practicing the Presence of God.” When he prepared meals for his fellow monks, he made every activity an act of worship, constantly being aware of God in his thoughts and actions.

So, God lives inside us, and we can worship him at any time, and in any place.

The third difference being God’s temple makes in our lives is that we become more effective ambassadors for him. The Temple becomes a place of outreach, where those outside God’s kingdom get a taste of what it’s like, and receive invitations to hand their lives over to God. Just as the physical building became a testimony of faith for those who came near, you and I become a living testimony to those around us. Because God lives in us, we become his ambassadors to the world around us.

Can Jesus be seen in you? Have you allowed God to be such a part of your life that those around you can’t help but notice? Have you become a portable place of worship, being constantly aware of God’s presence throughout the day?

Is there something in your Temple that Jesus is not pleased with? Is there a motive that is impure? An activity that happens during the week that makes it unfit for God to dwell there? Is there something that haunts you from the past that makes it difficult or impossible to worship?

Jesus is here today. He’s here right now. And he wants to minister to you – one Temple to another. He wants to come in and cleanse your temple. He wants to drive out the things that do not honor God and help you start out fresh. He wants to give you the power of the Holy Spirit in your life to make you pure, whole and complete. He wants to help you become a pure, fit Temple so that he can dwell with you and walk with you through the day.