

Theme: The Spirit is working to join us to the Church to be the place where God dwells.

I. Intro – The Optional Church?

- A. Local people who think church harmful to Spirit's work
- B. Revelation by Barna – church totally optional
- C. Pagan Christianity – Church is actually pagan in practice
- D. Rash of others coming out
- E. James White – quote on Vanishing Ecclesiology
- F. Is Church optional for Spirit filled life?
- G. Is Church harmful for Spirit filled life?
- H. What is relationship between Spirit and Church?

II. Our New Position in Christ

- A. Three metaphors for our new place (v19,21)
 - 1. Citizens – not foreigners or resident aliens
 - 2. God's family – not estranged from God
 - 3. God's Temple – He lives in us! (vv21-22)
- B. Glorious truths – which declare unity of God's people
 - 1. Jew and Gentile are one new man – one body
 - 2. Worked out in local churches
 - 3. No other option – except disobedience

III. Church: United Temple Where God Dwells

A. The Church – the Temple where God dwells

- 1. Temple where God dwells (vv21-22)
- 2. Church is Temple – 1Co 3:16-17; 2 Co 6:16
- 3. God dwells in Church by His Spirit (v22)
- 4. Bible emphasis Church as Temple – not individual

B. The Church - united

- 1. One foundation, cornerstone, building, temple (20-21)
- 2. Phil 2:1-2; Eph 4:1-6; 1 Co 12:13
- 3. Unity - people built together (21-22)
- 4. 1 Pet 2:4-5

C. Necessity of the local church to be built together

- 1. Can't be joined with universal church – local
- 2. All other “unity” is deceitful games
- 3. Present tense – continuing work – Eph 2:22; 1 Pe 2:5
- 4. “One anothers” – only local fulfillment possible
 - a. Eph 5:18-21 – Spirit filled; teach, sing, submit
 - b. Rom 12:16 – live in harmony
 - c. Eph 4:32 – kind, compassionate, forgiving
 - d. Heb 13:17 – obey, submit; they keep watch

IV. Applying the Word

- A. Do we understand that the Church is the Temple?

1. Not a building – here or Israel – the Church
 2. Emphasis not individuals – gathered community
 3. The Spirit dwells in the Church
- B. Do we see the necessity of the local church?
1. Not an option or a luxury – command & essential
 2. Spirit filled apart from local church unscriptural
 3. Analogy – sponge in bucket of water
- C. Am I walking unity with the local church?
1. Can't fulfill many commands apart from LC
 2. Remember means of grace/Spirit filling happen in LC
 3. Disunity – repent, forgive, restore, etc.
 4. Drop into the bucket – and get filled!
- D. Communion

The Spirit and the Church

Ephesians 2:19-22

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Communion

Romans 15:5-6

“Now the very idea of a local church owning a rightful piece of the kingdom economy is being challenged.... The doctrine of ecclesiology is being radically revised apart from biblical moorings, or being dismissed as if not a part of biblical orthodoxy at all.” (From Crosswalk, 8/9/2006).

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

¹⁶ What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? **For we are the temple of the living God.** As God has said: "I will live **with them** and walk **among them**, and I will be **their God**, and **they** will be **my people.**" 2 Corinthians 6:16

¹ If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any **fellowship with the Spirit**, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being **like-minded**, having the **same love**, being **one in spirit and purpose.** Philippians 2:1-2

¹ As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ² Be completely **humble and gentle**; be **patient, bearing with one another** in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the **unity of the Spirit** through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is **one body and one Spirit**-- just as you were called to **one hope** when you were called-- ⁵ **one Lord, one faith, one baptism**; ⁶ **one God and Father** of all, who is over all and through all and in all. Ephesians 4:1-6

¹³ **For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body**-- whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free-- and **we were all given the one Spirit to drink.** 1 Corinthians 12:13

⁴ As you come to him, the living Stone-- rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him-- ⁵ you also, like **living stones, are being built into a spiritual house** to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:4-5

¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be **filled with the Spirit**, ¹⁹ **addressing one another** in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ **submitting to one another** out of reverence for Christ. Ephesians 5:18-21 (ESV)

¹⁶ **Live in harmony with one another.** Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Romans 12:16

³² **Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other**, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 4:32

¹⁷ Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Hebrews 13:17

BENEDICTION

5 May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:5-6