



The Church - The Temple of God

Key idea:

The Church is God's Temple, where He dwells by His Spirit as His people gather to worship and live in holiness and unity.

Key text:

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 NIV2011

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

Catechism Question 70:

What is the Church?

The Church is the Body, Bride, and Temple of Christ, the community of all true believers for all time.

Key points:

1. Paul says that the Church is the Temple of God, the place where God's manifest Presence dwells by His Spirit.
2. The Spirit not only dwells in individual believers but especially among the Church as it gathers for worship and walks in unity and holiness.
3. There are many implications of the reality of the Church as the Temple including:
 - a. The Church is the ONLY Temple of God in the New Covenant
 - b. The Church is the house of worship where God meets with His people
 - c. The Church is one, unified Temple (so we must walk in unity)
 - d. The Church is a holy Temple (and so we must walk in holiness)

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. What does it mean to say the Spirit dwells in the Church? If God is everywhere, how does He "dwell" in the Church?

3. What does it mean to say the Spirit dwells in the Church? If God dwells in individual believers (1 Corinthians 6:19), what is unique about how He dwells in the Church as a whole?
4. What is the relationship between the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple and the Church today? Should we expect a physical Temple to be rebuilt? Why or why not?
5. What does worship consist of in the Temple of the Church today? How am I called to worship God as part of the New Covenant?
6. Why does Paul say that God will destroy anyone who destroys His Temple? How were some in Corinth in danger of destroying the Temple? Why was this so egregious to Paul?
7. Why must the Church as the Temple be a holy place? If a church refuses to walk in holiness should it expect God's manifest Presence in its midst? Why or why not?
8. Which of the implications of the Church as the Temple are in common with the Church as the Body of Christ or the Church as the Bride of Christ? What does this tell me about the importance of these areas for the identity and life of the Church?
9. Is it possible for the Spirit to fill the gathering of the Church and for me to individually miss God's Presence? What could prevent me from experiencing the Presence of God when His people gather?
10. How do I prepare to gather with the church for worship? What things do I practice to make sure my time of gathering with the church is fruitful? What could I do to make sure I am prepared for worship and receiving from God when we gather?
11. Who will I call or see to encourage this week? Who can I encourage to gather with the Church for worship this coming Sunday?