

Summit Woods Baptist Church  
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

This week's passage is short, but that means that more of the questions will challenge you to think harder. So, remember to begin your study early in the week so that you have time to really think (and keep thinking) about the passage without being rushed.

❖ Day 1

Read 1 Corinthians 3:16-17.

<sup>16</sup>Do you not know  
that you are God's temple  
and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

<sup>17</sup>If anyone destroys God's temple,  
God will destroy him.  
For God's temple is holy,  
and you are that temple.

1. To whom does 'you' refer to in these verses?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. To whom do they belong?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Paul uses the phrase "do you not know that ..." ten times in this letter. Briefly look at the other instances in 5:6; 6:2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 19; 9:13, 24. Are these things that the Corinthians should already know?
  - a. What effect does Paul expect their knowledge to have on their lives?

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4. Current scholarship has shown that it is more accurate to define 'holy' as 'consecrated to' or 'devoted to', rather than as 'pure' or 'separate'. Therefore, we could read verse 17b as "For God's temple is *devoted to God*, and you are that temple." Throughout the Bible, God jealously defends what is consecrated to Him (e.g. 2 Sam 6:7, Psa 2). So, who should be warned by this threat and who should be comforted?
  
5. In 3:10-15, Paul mentioned two categories of people who built upon the foundation of Christ: those who built well and those who built poorly. What in this week's passage lets you know that Paul is now speaking about a third category of people? (How can you tell that the one who "destroys God's temple" in verse 17 is a different category from the one who builds poorly in verses 12-15?)
  
6. What might it look like for someone to destroy God's temple?

### ❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 again.

7. What do you think of first when you hear the word 'temple'?

#### ➤ Temple meditations:

In order to think more deeply about the significance of Paul saying that they are God's temple, we will take a glimpse at the development of the temple as God's dwelling place from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

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The chart below lists three purposes of the temple and includes a few verses to show how each of these purposes transitioned from the Old Testament *through* the person and work of Jesus to the New Testament church. Look up all of the verses and then answer the questions below.

Purposes of the temple	Development from OT to NT: from the tabernacle/temple through Jesus to the church
God's glory seen on earth amidst His people	Ex 40:34-38 God's glory (presence) filling the tabernacle; their visual evidence of God's presence with them
	2 Chron 7:1-3 God's glory filling the temple
	John 1:14, 14:8-10a Jesus equating His presence with the presence of God
	Col 1:15, 19 the fullness of God dwelling in Christ
	Acts 2:1-4, 16-17 God's Spirit filling the church
	<i>*1 Cor 3:16 God's Spirit in His people</i>
Where sin is dealt with	Lev 1:3-4 the people bringing a blood offering to the altar to atone for sin
	John 2:18-22; Matt 12:6 Jesus calling Himself the temple, and even greater than the temple
	Heb 9:11-12 Jesus as the final offering for sin
	(This purpose has been completed in Jesus.)
Where God meets with His people and His people worship Him	Ex 25:8 God's command for them to build the tabernacle as His dwelling place among them
	Ex 29:43-45 God declaring the tent of meeting as His dwelling place among them where He would meet with them
	2 Chron 29:27-29 the people worshipping together at the temple in Jerusalem
	Ezra 6:19-21 the people celebrating the Passover at the temple in Jerusalem
	John 4:20-24 Jesus separating the worship of God from the temple in Jerusalem
	2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:18-22; 1 Pet 2:4-5 God's people as His temple and the dwelling place of His Spirit
	Matt 18:20 Jesus' presence with His gathered people
	Heb 10:19-25 God's people not neglecting to meet together for worship

8. How do these passages enrich your understanding of the significance of Paul calling them God's temple?

9. What difference does this make in how you view yourself and our congregation?

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❖ Day 3

Read 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 again.

10. This is the third of three metaphors that Paul uses to describe the church in 3:5-17. What are the other two metaphors and which verses describe each of them?
11. Think about all three metaphors together. What is Paul trying to teach the Corinthians about the church through these metaphors?
12. What is the main problem that Paul has been addressing so far in the letter?
13. How does Paul's warning in verse 17 show the magnitude of the issue?
14. How should these metaphors, especially this third one, correct the Corinthians?

In preparation for Sunday, pray that we would know and understand what the Bible teaches and live accordingly. Pray that we would be more conscious of God's presence in and among us every day and that we would live our lives fully consecrated to God.