

**Devotional Thoughts :: God's house? -philpot**

God's house? -philpot - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/10/23 11:00

God's house?

In the New Testament Scriptures, we find mention made in several places of "the house of the God." The New Testament never, in any one instance, means, by "the house of God," any material building.

It has come to pass, through the traditions received from the fathers, that . . .
buildings erected by man,
collections of bricks and mortar,
piles of squared and cemented stones,
are often called "the house of God."

In ancient Popish times they invested a consecrated building with the title of "God's house", thus endeavoring to make it appear as though it were a holy place in which God specially dwelt. They thus drew off the minds of the people from any internal communion with God, and possessed them with the idea that He was only to be found in some holy spot, consecrated and sanctified by rites and ceremonies.

The same leaven of the Pharisees has infected the Church of England; and thus she calls her consecrated buildings, her piles of stone and cement, "churches," and "houses of God."

And even those who profess a purer faith, who dissent from her unscriptural forms, have learned to adopt the same carnal language, and even they, through a misunderstanding of what "the house of God" really is, will call such a building as we are assembled in this morning, "the house of God."

How frequently does the expression drop from the pulpit, and how continually is it heard at the prayer meeting, "coming up to the house of God," as though any building now erected by human hands could be called the house of the living God.

It arises from a misunderstanding of the Scriptures, and is much fostered by that priestcraft which is in the human heart, inciting us to believe that God is to be found only in certain buildings set apart for His service.

Re: God's house? -philpot - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/10/23 11:29

1Co 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

1Co 3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

2Co 6:16 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.

Re: God's house? -philpot - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2005/10/23 11:53

I was just reading something this week that illuminates this term "God's house", I thought I would share it here...

A Household

The second phase of this wonderful word "house" is union with Christ as a household. That is a slight enlargement of the conception. You will understand what I mean, or what that means, if I remind you that in the Old Testament you have such phrases as "the house of Jacob" or "the house of Israel," or, in the New Testament, "the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). In Germany you had the House of Hanover; in England you have the House of Windsor.

A household denotes two things - a single progenitor and a family name. For example, the house of Jacob - Jacob was the progenitor, and the house takes his name; or the house of Israel - one man gave his name to a whole line, the house of Israel. And then consider the household of faith. This household of faith - we know who the progenitor is. "I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20), said the Apostle. We are of those who are of the faith. It is the collective thoughts of one household, and brings in immediately the conception of the Church as a family, Father, Son and children.

Now here I want to say something which is to most of you by no means new, but which is of very great importance. We must not take these things as abstract truths and ideas. We can, of course, have all the teaching on the house of God; we can know what the Bible says about the house of God and get the whole technical conception - and yet it can mean nothing of practical value. This house of God must be expressed locally; it must be found in existence locally. What we are going to say in this connection shortly, under another phase, makes it quite clear that this thing must be in EXISTENCE in order to satisfy God's requirements. There must actually and literally be, in locations, that which corresponds to the union of living stones - be it even so few as two, the irreducible minimum - to provide God with this.

But it is not, let me say it again, an ecclesiastical building called the house of God. Our Christian mentality is all astray. There are people, who really ought to know better - for they are under the sound of the teaching all the time - who, when they come into gatherings, still say, in prayer or in worship, that they are glad to have come to the house of the Lord, meaning that they have come to a PLACE. They do not mean that they are glad to have come into the presence of the Lord's people - though of course that may incidentally be true. The house, for them, is still this other idea of some place, of something external. But that is not it. It is not an ecclesiastical thing - to say nothing about architecture. It is not any particular place or any particular form. We can kill the house of God by starting with its technique - demanding the technique of the house of God. Whatever comes along that line must come organically and spontaneously, as we shall see at another time. We do not begin by constituting something according to a form. We are present together in a place, a location, as living stones, livingly expressing this house of God and fulfilling its vocation, bringing God into that area, making God available. Perhaps that will be better borne out as we go on.

Well, this family conception, this household idea, speaks, firstly, of purity of strain or pedigree. You remember that in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah a very severe test was applied to everyone who had any place at all in recovering and reconstituting the house of God. He had to show his pedigree, because there were a lot of people who wanted to have "a finger in the pie," who wanted to come into that thing and have a place there, and because a lot of people had come in and there had been a mixture of seed, everyone must now show his pedigree. "Now, then, your birth certificate, please; where were you born, when were you born, what is your parentage, how far back does it go?" If I asked you this, what would you say? When were you born?

Now, perhaps you do not have to be able to say the precise day, hour, moment, when it happened, but you must at least be able to say, Yes, I know that at a certain time in my life something happened, and that happening was nothing less than a new birth. You must be able to do that to be in the household. And what is your parentage? Where were you born?

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Now you would be quite wrong if you said, I was born again at such-and-such a place. The only answer is, I was born in heaven, from above; my citizenship is in heaven, my franchise is in the city of God. "This one was born there" (Psalm 87). "All my fountains are in thee" - I take my rise and my support from up there, the heavenly city. Where were you born, and how far back does your pedigree go? Ah, blessed be God, it goes back beyond time, altogether outside of time. In Christ, we are not children of Adam; we are children of eternity. We are chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.

So this household must imply absolute purity of strain, of pedigree; there must be no mixture here.

-from *Union With Christ* by T. Austin-Sparks