

# The Body as a Temple

## 1 Cor 6 v 9 -20

### God's relationships with man throughout scripture.

Gen 1 v 26 "let us make man in our image after our likeness". Man was created different from the rest of creation so that God might enjoy fellowship with him. Man was created in God's image and after His likeness.

In Gen 3 v 8 we read "the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day". Sadly Adam's sin led to his expulsion from the place of enjoying divine fellowship. Sin will always be a barrier between God and man be he unsaved man or a believer. In Gen 12 we read of the beginning of Abram's relationship with God. V 7 in that chapter is one of many times "the Lord appeared unto Abram". In Gen 18 when God will reveal his plan to destroy Sodom we read that "Abraham stood yet before the Lord" v 22. Another example of an individual in the old testament to enjoy such a relationship with God was Moses. In Exodus 3 God reveals himself through the voice at the burning bush. In ch 19 we have recorded details of events at mount Sinai v 19 "Moses spake and God answered him by a voice" v 20 "the Lord came down upon mount Sinai on the top of the mount and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount". In ch 33 Moses will ask "shew me thy glory" v 18 and will be placed in the "clift of the rock" v 22. God will pass by and "will take away mine hand and thou shalt see my back parts but my face shall not be seen" v 23. In a day when others will complain against Moses God will again declare "with him will I speak mouth to mouth" Num 12 v 8.

God's dealings are not confined to individuals and he will instruct Israel "let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them" Ex 25 v 8 and when the tabernacle is constructed we read "a cloud covered the tent of the congregation and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" 40 v 34. This is repeated when Solomon builds the temple. See 1 Kings 8.

Such fellowship is also not confined to old testament. In John 1 when the saviour is asked "where dwellest thou" v 38 he will say "come and see" and those who responded "abode with him". As companies of believers when we meet together we lay claim to His promise "where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them" Matt 18 v 20.

Such fellowship is not only for times past or present but also for the future. When John looks into heaven in Revelation he will write "in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man" 1 v 13 and "in the midst of the throne .... stood a Lamb as it had been slain" 5 v 6.

### The Special Position of Believer's To-day

However we have a special relationship unique to our day. While God made these promises to be with or among people we note now the teaching that Christ dwells in the believer. "I **in** them and thou in me" John 17 v 23. "Behold I stand at the door and knock .....I will come **in** to him" Rev 3 v 20. "Christ **in** you the hope of Glory" Col 1 v 27. This was true of the company at Colosse but must have been true of individuals within that company. This today takes the form of the Holy Spirit which indwells every true believer. Paul writes "now if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of His" Rom 8 v 9 he will continue "if (since) Christ be **in** you" v 10 and "if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell **in** you" v 11. He will further write of his own experience "Christ liveth **in** me" Gal 2 v 20 and "my little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed **in** you" 4 v 19.

If this is the case we do well to heed the challenge of Peter “what manner of persons ought ye to be” 1 Peter 3 v 11.

Peter will answer this question for us “be ye holy in all manner of conversation (behaviour)” 1 Peter 1 v 15 and then he adds the standard v 16 “Be ye holy for I am holy”. Since God indwells every believer we need to be very conscious of anything that will offend His holiness.

To-day we are very body conscious. Health clubs and health promotions abound. Fitness is so very important physically. Diets and vitamin supplements are taken and some have cosmetic surgery. All with a few to the physical man. What about our spiritual or internal man? Am I as careful or considerate and always take into account what will offend the one who dwells within.

In our reading we note:

V 9 “the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God” – a list of practices follow. Paul will make it clear that such a life style was typical of days prior to conversion v 11 “such **were** some of you : but ye are washed”. Salvation must be evidenced by a change of life style or there is no external evidence of that internal work.

V 12 “all things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient (profitable)” Paul will indicate that we can abuse our new position of liberty and by doing so be brought back into bondage. The Lord Jesus spoke of the real liberty that comes to those who believe on him “if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” John 8 v 36. When considering any activity or course of action we need to apply these two tests: 1. Is this profitable for my spiritual life? 2. Will this enslave me i.e. be addictive.

V 13 / 14 teaches that creation gives us an appetite whether in the realm of food or any sexual matter. But there are very clear limitations. The body does require food but in the matters of a sexual nature God and his word must have priority.

V 15 / 16 “your bodies are the members of Christ”. Membership of any organisation involves abiding by the rules of that organisation. One may have to dress in a certain way, behave in a certain way, attend a number of meetings organised and in many other areas abide by the terms of membership. How much higher a privilege for the Christian to be “the members of Christ”. In this verse Paul will make clear that anyone using the services of a prostitute is incompatible with the principle of Christ indwelling the believer. The language is strong “God forbid”. While some may think that it is a one off act it is clear that such a union is seen as only appropriate in marriage.

V 17 our union is with “the Lord”. We are bought v 20, washed v 11 and now united.

V 18 “flee” the danger is urgent and requires immediate action. The principle is to get as far away from the danger as quickly as possible. Joseph is a great example in Gen 39. Paul will teach at other times of other dangers “flee from idolatry” 1 Cor 10 v 14, “flee these things (love of money)” 1 Tim 6 v 11 and “flee also youthful lusts” 1 Tim 2 v 22. We are also taught in this verse of the severity of any misuse of the sexual act. Some matters are external and could be stopped without damaging that lasting union with Christ however fornication is deemed to violate the whole person. Our body belongs to Christ and to violate it is to violate Him.

V 19 / 20 teach very clearly that the Spirit dwells within “your body is temple of the Holy Ghost”. In our old testament the temple was always associated with God dwelling among His people. It was the place that was to be holy because He was there. For approach to Him the High Priest had to cleanse himself and come with offerings into such a holy place. Details of such are found in Lev 16. People could not behave how they liked as is clearly demonstrated in Lev 10 in the case of Nadab and Abihum who were judged for bringing “strange fire”. David in providing for the temple building gave gold for the things of gold. Such gold again would speak of the holiness of our God. How careful must I be as one indwelled by the Holy Spirit. Good to acknowledge “ye are not your own for ye are bought with a price”. The price was Calvary for the Lord Jesus. As one who belongs to Him I will guard myself against things that He would be offended by.