

UPWARD CALL

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but this is my one aim: to forget everything that's behind, and to strain every nerve to go after what lies ahead. I press on toward the finish line, where the prize waiting for me is the upward call of God
IN KING JESUS.

(Philippians 3:13-14)

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Jesus—the Temple of His Body

Jesus answered them, "***Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.***" The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" But ***he was speaking about the temple of his body.*** (John 2:19-21 ESV [bold italic added])

... and gives Him, as Head over all, to ***the ecclesia which is His body***, the complement of the One completing the all in all." (Ephesians 1:22-23 CLV [bold italic added])

Are you not aware that ***you are a temple of God*** and the spirit of God is making its home in you? If anyone is corrupting the temple of God, God will be corrupting him, for ***the temple of God is holy, which you are.***" (1 Corinthians 3:16-17 CLV [bold italic added])

Paul makes it very clear to us that God has already placed Jesus the Anointed One as the one and only foundation, and no other foundation can be laid (1 Corinthians 3:11). Building on anything else, regardless of how structurally sound it might appear, if it is not built on God's Son, it is not of God. Pure and simple! The world builds on the foundation of many things, but so can and do Christians. Let us be abundantly clear—Jesus is the only foundation the Father recognizes.

Now, in the physical world, foundations speak of what physical structures are built on. If the foundation is solid and well-built, then that which is built upon it will be able to withstand adversity. But the foundation must be built of the proper materials, which is generally rock (reinforced concrete in our day). Build a foundation with sand and the structure built up on it will not last very long. Jesus gave an illustration of this in reference to hearing His words and obeying them.

"But anyone who hears these words of mine and does not obey them is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded over, the wind blew hard against that house, and it fell. And what a terrible fall that was!" (Matthew 7:26-27 GNB)

With this truth under our feet, we need to consider what God is building on the foundation of His Son. To the Jews who demanded His crucifixion, Jesus likened His physical body to the physical temple that stood in Jerusalem. As the above verses show, the Jews didn't get it when He told them that He would be raised bodily three days after His death. They thought He was speaking of Herod's temple that took 46 years to build, but He was speaking of the temple of His body. When Jesus did not rise from the grave as some disembodied spirit, He rose in a literal body, a spirit-animated body—a new creation body that joins both heaven and earth together as one. And, this new creation body is the temple of God. Of course, there is a lot packed into these few thoughts, but we must leave them for another truth given to us by Paul.

According to Paul, in the above verses, Jesus is not alone as the temple of God. Those who are in the Messiah are included in the temple of His body. *Are you not aware that you are a temple of God?*

Do you realize that if you believe in Jesus, the holy spirit of God dwells in you? You are now the temple of God. Where is the foundation that has been laid, which is Jesus Christ? It is in you who believe. It is Christ *in* you, the hope of glory. Do you not know that you have died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God, who is your life, and when Christ is revealed, you also will be revealed with Him in glory (Colossians 3:1-4)? How is this possible? Because you are a temple of God!

Anyone who attempts to destroy this temple of God will have to answer to God, for we who have believed on Jesus are a holy temple, a set-apart temple for the living God. We no longer belong to ourselves; we belong to God. This is how God views all who are *in* Christ.

But there is more; for all who are in Christ are being built together into a much greater temple.

Consequently, then, no longer are you guests and sojourners, but are fellow-citizens of the saints and belong to God's family, being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the capstone of the corner being Christ Jesus Himself, in Whom the entire building, being connected together, is growing into ***a holy temple in the Lord:***" in Whom you, also, are ***being built together for God's dwelling place, in spirit.***" (Ephesians 2:19-22 CLV [bold italic added])

We are being built together into a dwelling of God in spirit (not an if or a maybe, but a fact). God's family is growing and being built together as one body with His Son as the head and the body as many sons brought unto glory. We are not disconnected from one another but are corporately connected with every single believer on the face of the earth today and with all who are asleep in Jesus, who are awaiting the resurrection from among the dead. There is only one body, just as there is only one temple.

God is not into building great edifices of brick and mortar or any other materials from the soil of this earth. He is not interested in great man-made structures and institutions with His name on them. No; He is interested in building the life of His Son in spiritual, spirit-led people that He, by His spirit, is building together.

Each of us given the faith of the Son to believe on Jesus are *to become* like a microcosm, a miniature version, if you will, of the corporate temple of all the believers that are being built together *in* spirit. And, this temple of all believers is to be a holy temple of the Lord's body. Consequently, we should never think of ourselves as an island unto ourselves that exists apart from other brothers and sisters in Christ. Never go this way! We are all joined together under one head, which is Christ (Ephesians 1:22). As Paul wrote: *We are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ* (Ephesians 4:15). We are *to grow* (mature) into a temple of God together.

Now, here is the most amazing truth, and I pray that the eyes of your heart will be enlightened to it by the holy spirit. New Jerusalem, the city-bride of the lamb, having the glory of God (Revelation 21:10-11), is the temple of God made up of the many microcosms of the temple of God. Individually we are a temple, collectively we are Christ's body. Jesus is the temple and the corporate body of Christ is embodied in Him.

God is not going to dwell in a structure of brick and mortar or in a structure of golden streets. He is going to dwell forever in a people that have been redeemed by the blood of the lamb and have been transformed into the image of the Son of God's love. This is New Jerusalem!

Beloved in Christ, dwell on this truth until it breaks forth as glory in your heart! This is your destiny!