

# MIDWEEK EVENT

This week's main point is: The Holy Spirit lives within us, so what we invite into our hearts and how we live matters.

**SCRIPTURE** | Matthew 6:22-23; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 10:31; 1 Peter 1:15-17

## THEOLOGY CONNECTION | TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit indwells the church, both individually and corporately (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 12:13). As the temple of the Holy Spirit, we live our lives differently than before, bearing the fruit that comes only by the indwelling work of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). This indwelling work of the Spirit also equips individual members of the church with gifts for the work of the ministry (1 Cor. 12:11).

## CHRIST CONNECTION

God has always desired to dwell with His people. Jesus—Immanuel, God with us—dwelt with humanity to be a substitute for the penalty of sin. He dwells with us still through the presence of the Holy Spirit within us.

## 1 MATTHEW 6:22-23; ROMANS 12:2; 1 PETER 1:15-17

### TEMPLES ARE MEANT TO BE HOLY PLACES.

In the wilderness, Moses set up a tent outside of camp called the “Tent of Meeting.” This was a temporary, portable “temple” where God met with His people. While all people could go there to worship God, it seems that only Moses was allowed inside the tent. Later, they would build a tabernacle tent at the center of their camp, constructed with specific instructions from God (Ex. 25-40).<sup>1</sup> After the kingdom of Israel was established, David wanted to build a permanent temple for God, but God said that honor would go to Solomon—and David praised God for that. Through David’s seeking God and planning, God gave specific instructions for the construction of the temple as well (1 Chron. 28). The temple had three main areas: the courtyard, where anyone could enter; the holy place, where only the priests could go; and the holy of holies, where only the high priest could enter once a year.<sup>2</sup> As we’ve studied, believers—as the church body and as individual Christ followers—are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). So, we are to be holy too (1 Pet. 1:15-17). Being holy, though, isn’t just about what we do, but it’s also about what we let into our lives (Prov. 4:23). We have to pay attention to what we consume, whether that’s food, ideas, content, conversations, or even negative thoughts about ourselves. What we let in affects every piece of us, for better or worse (Matt. 6:22-23). Since we’re temples of the Holy Spirit and meant to be holy ourselves, we must be mindful that the content we allow in renews and transforms our minds to know the will of God rather than the way of the world (Rom. 12:2).

- › HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE THE WORD “HOLY”?
- › WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS FOR A PLACE TO BE HOLY?
- › HOW DOES THAT CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON OUR IDENTITY AS TEMPLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?
- › IN WHAT AREAS OF YOUR LIFE ARE YOU STRUGGLING TO PURSUE HOLINESS? HOW CAN OUR GROUP HELP?

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## 2 ROMANS 12:1; 1 CORINTHIANS 6:20; 10:31

### WE LIVE DIFFERENTLY BECAUSE WE ARE TEMPLES.

In Romans 12:1, Paul wrote something that might sound a little strange to us at first. He said, “present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.” Because our minds might go straight to animal sacrifices when we hear the word “sacrifice,” understanding the meaning of “living sacrifice” is crucial. To sacrifice means to offer or surrender something we value. While Paul also says that our “old self was crucified with Jesus” (Rom. 6:6), the call in Romans 12 doesn’t mean we’re giving up our bodies physically. Instead, living as a sacrifice to God means to dedicate all that we are and all that we have to serving and honoring God because we are new creations in Him. Or, as 1 Corinthians 6:20 says, we’re to “glorify God with our bodies.” We’ve already discussed that this means not just our physical actions but our thoughts and emotions too (Phil. 4:8). Now, this doesn’t mean we give up everything we love, but we don’t allow anything to take over God’s place as most important in our lives. It also means we give up the things we love or want that don’t honor God. When we give our lives to Jesus, we get more than we could ever need, and more than we’ll ever understand. But we do also give up things like crude jokes, foul language, gossip (Eph. 4:29), lying, lust, sexual sin, physical violence, anger, and so on. We won’t do this perfectly, but the Holy Spirit will help us live life God’s way as we lean on Him and listen.

- › **WHAT’S YOUR INITIAL REACTION WHEN SOMEONE TELLS YOU TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENTLY?**
- › **HOW DOES IT HIT YOU WHEN YOU REALIZE YOU’RE DOING SOMETHING THAT DOESN’T HONOR GOD?**
- › **WHICH DO YOU STRUGGLE WITH MOST: HONORING GOD WITH YOUR PHYSICAL ACTIONS, YOUR THOUGHTS, YOUR EMOTIONS, OR YOUR WORDS? EXPLAIN.**
- › **WHY DO YOU THINK IT’S SO HARD TO GIVE UP THINGS WE LOVE THAT DON’T HONOR GOD, EVEN IF WE KNOW JESUS GAVE UP EVERYTHING FOR US?**

## WRAP UP

On a whiteboard or poster at the front of the room, write out Holy vs. Unholy. Invite students to call out unholy or ungodly behaviors they struggle with and write those under the “Unholy” column. You could also allow students to come up and write them out. Then for each of those items, ask students to call out holy behaviors they could pursue instead. Write those ideas in the “Holy” column next to the unholy behaviors. Explain that holy living is only possible because of the Holy Spirit living within us. As you end your time together, pray over students that they would be living sacrifices who listen to the Holy Spirit’s leading and honor God with every area of their lives. And pray that when they don’t, they’ll be quick to recognize their sin and repent.

### SOURCES

1. Chad Brand et al., eds., “Tabernacle or Tent Of,” in *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1550–1551.
2. M. Pierce Matheney, “Temple of Jerusalem,” in *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. Chad Brand et al. (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1562.