



Blackfoot Church of Christ

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House of Prayer or Den of Thieves?

Sword Tips #1906

by Joe Price swordtips

45 Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it, 46 saying to them, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" (Luke 19:45-46, NKJV)

The corruption of God's house of prayer is on full display as Christ's indignation raged against those who had turned temple worship into an oppressive and lucrative business enterprise (Matt. 21:12-13). Jesus used Isaiah 56:7 to expose and condemn their unholy treatment of God's house and God's people. Now, the church is God's holy temple (Eph. 2:19-22). Despite Christ's pointed warning against defiling God's house, people continue to defile God's house of prayer, the church. The reconfiguration of the church constitutes a departure from the faith the Spirit expressly warned would happen (1 Tim. 4:1-3; Gal. 1:6-10). Over time, the church's worship became polluted with rites and rituals not found in the covenant of Christ. The church's organization was turned into an ecclesiastical hierarchy ruling over independent congregations of saints. The church's work became contaminated by material pursuits as people made merchandise of the gospel (2 Cor. 2:17). Jesus does not look on approvingly while the will and wisdom of men corrupt His church (Col. 2:8, 20-23). The church does not belong to us; it belongs to Christ. Christ's gospel continues to disrupt the innovations that defile God's house under the guise of progress and advancement (1 Tim. 6:20-21; 2 Jno. 9).

The Temple of God #1807

Sword Tips #:1807

By Joe Price

47 But Solomon built Him a house. 48 However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says: 49 ‘Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? says the Lord, Or what is the place of My rest? 50 Has My hand not made all these things?’ (Acts 7:47–50, NKJV)

Humans have invested untold blood and treasure to build, maintain, and secure temples, cathedrals, and sundry edifices as testimonies to their faith, zeal, and devotion to their deities. Under the guidance and approval of the Lord God, King Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem for Israel (1 Chron. 28:6, 11-13; 1 Kings 5-8). Yet, God was not contained by that temple built with hands, nor would that temple timelessly endure (Matt. 24:1-35). As Sovereign over heaven and earth, the Almighty is not defined or confined by structures of human art and design (Acts 17:24-25). Today, His temple is the church His Son built (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:19-22). The church is the “true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man,” over which Jesus Christ serves as High Priest at the right hand of God (Heb. 8:1-2). The church of Christ is not an afterthought of God. It is the fulfillment of His eternal purpose to redeem sinners in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph. 3:10-11). Christians serve God as priests in God’s temple (1 Pet. 2:5). As such, we must be holy, as He is holy (1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2:9). Praise God for such a habitation of holiness!

A Wall of Separation #1553

Sword Tips

by Joe Price

He measured it on the four sides; it had a wall all around, five hundred cubits long and five hundred wide, to separate the holy areas from the common. (Ezekiel 42:20, NKJV)

Ezekiel’s visionary temple (Ezekiel 40-43) was measured by a man whose appearance was like bronze and who had “a measuring rod in his hand”

(Ezekiel 40:3). Ezekiel was to look, listen, and fix his mind on everything God showed him in the vision so he could tell the house of Israel everything he saw (Ezekiel 40:4). This is not a literal temple to be built sometime in our future. It is a figurative, prophetic description of the temple of God that exists today, the church (Ephesians 2:19-22). The description of this temple was to cause Israel to “be ashamed of their iniquities” as they “measured the pattern” (Ezekiel 43:10, 11). Notably, Ezekiel’s temple is distinguished by the presence of God’s glory and by its holiness (Ezekiel 43:1-5, 12). The wall surrounding the temple marks a separation between holy places and what is common or profane (Ezekiel 42:20). God, who is holy, demands that His people are also holy (1 Peter 1:15-16). Defiled priests could not serve in Israel’s tabernacle and temple (Leviticus 21). Neither can Christians (who are priests in God’s house) serve God with defiled hearts, hands and lives (1 Peter 2:1-12). To dwell with God we must come out of sin and live separately unto Him (2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1).

Image Worship

By Ross Ward

When we look at the remnants of ancient civilizations we find thousands of statues and memorials. It seems ancient man was fascinated or even obsessed with seeing, preserving, and even idolizing their image. It is arguable that this was done to promote praise and honor towards the subject and to preserve their presence for future generations. This brings to mind the nature of the one true God of the bible. From early in biblical history, God condemned creating and worshiping images, Exodus 20:4, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,” This not only forbid making images of a non-god, but this also applied to any images made to represent God himself. We probably all remember the story of the golden calf and the consequences of this great sin from Ex 32:4-5. It reads in part, “These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt... Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.” Arron called the golden calf, Elohim, the Hebrew word used in reference to the God. Even though Israel saw this image as being the God that brought them out of Egypt, God was greatly displeased. So it seems man has always been obsessed with being idolized. The true God condemns this, even if it is an image representative of Him.

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Larry, Leukemia diagnosis
- Melissia Ward (Ross' Sister-in-law) mother passed away last night
- Scott Boucher (Sparks NV) widespread cancer
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines

Sunday Services Information

- Zoom Conferencing
- Call in: 720 707 2699; then enter meeting ID

Worship Assignments

Today

Song Leader – Chad Mitchell
Lord's Table – Ray Mitchell

Wednesday

Song Leader – Ray Mitchell
Invitation – Chad Mitchell

Blackfoot Church of Christ
370 North Shilling Ave.
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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