

God's Dwelling Place
A Holy Home for God
Nancy J. Baker

Take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and everything in it; consecrate it and all its furnishings, and it will be holy.

Exodus 40:9

The tabernacle of the Old Testament was God's dwelling place among His people as the Israelites journeyed through the wilderness and then settled in the Promised Land. God's Presence, also called the Shekinah glory, hovered over the tabernacle. **(Exodus 40:34-38)** Later, His presence filled the temple to signify that He dwelled among His people. **(1 Kings 8:10-11)**

In the New Testament, God's temple, His dwelling place, became the Body of Christ. Believers represent Jesus Christ both as a group and individually.

Most of the passages about the spiritual temple in the New Testament refer to a collection of people. We are "fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit." **(Ephesians 2:19-22)**

Paul also says that individuals are God's dwelling place: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." **(1 Corinthians 6:19-20)**

How do we honor God's presence and glorify Him in our bodies? One way is by taking good care of them. We often abuse our bodies by not eating properly, by not getting sufficient rest, or by neglecting our emotional health. Paul says to "offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." **(Romans 12:1-2)**

We also glorify God by renewing our minds, by not allowing our culture or our companions to entice us to do harmful things. Anything can become an idol and defile us if we substitute it for what only God can supply or if we allow it to rule over our lives.

Do you glorify God in your body? Are you walking with others who are part of the spiritual dwelling place of God, the Body of Christ, and encourage you to be "holy and pleasing to God?"

Dig Deeper

- Read **1 Corinthians 6:12-17** and replace the idea of "sexual immorality" with idolatry—allowing something other than God to rule us. What might you have to change in your life in order to be a pleasing dwelling place for God?
- Read **Romans 8:2-17**. The word used here for "flesh" is *sarx*, which means "mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God." What are the two laws Paul mentions? What words does Paul use to describe the flesh? Have you sought the Spirit's help to empower you?
- When we do all for the glory of God, what is included in **1 Corinthians 10:31**? How can you glorify God in these things?