

“YOU are that Temple” (1 Corinthians 3:16–23)(5.30.21)

Paul is writing this letter to a pretty new church in Corinth. So, he is speaking to Christians. Paul is speaking to us and every Christian ever.

1 Corinthians 3:16–23 (NIV84)

¹⁶ Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? [REPEAT]¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple. [REPEAT X 2]

¹⁸ Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a “fool” so that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: “He catches the wise in their craftiness”; ²⁰ and again, “The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.” ²¹ So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, ²³ and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

The word of God for the people of God.

LET US PRAY.

Title: **“YOU are that Temple”**

INTRODUCTION:

This past Monday and Tuesday were the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference for United Methodists. On Tuesday morning, after the new appointments were read, which means the pastors getting assigned to new churches, Reverend Gina Kim delivered a “Charge” to them. In other words, she was exhorting them in their kingdom service at their new place of ministry.

Reverend Kim is the current District Superintendent of the Palisades District. On July 1st, she will be retired and moving to Georgia. Considering this sermon series on The Holy Spirit, I thought her Charge would make a great introduction. She has given me permission to quote her.

Saints, I celebrate with you as you make new transitions into new appointments, new status as provisional or full elders. I celebrate my retirement along with my colleagues who are retiring and repurposing our lives.

At the verge of retirement, I have one regret. **I could have served God and God's church so much better if I relied on the Holy Spirit more.**

John Wesley experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in very real and powerful ways. How would it have been possible for him to ride 250,000 miles on a horseback going everywhere to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and begin a movement that grew from four people in the Holy Club to over 130,000 members in England and the United States in his lifetime?

We pastors and our churches are facing many challenges. We have learned so well that we are powerless over many things this past year and half. How we long for **power from on high** to deal with issues and situations in life! Jesus told the disciples, **You will receive power when the holy spirit comes on you** and you will be my witnesses... (Acts 1:8) Oh, we need **this dunamis, the dynamic power** Jesus promised for our lives, for our church and our world.

You remember how **the disciples received the power**. They all joined together constantly in prayer and **the Holy Spirit came from heaven** with mighty sound and **fell on each one gathered** like fire. Each one was **filled with the Holy Spirit** and they were completely transformed. There was before and after the Holy Spirit. Before the Holy Spirit, they were scared cowards. After the Holy Spirit they became courageous evangelists. They became bold enough to take any challenges of ministry even to the point of death.

Our World is in agony, it needs healing, it needs hope, it needs transformation, it needs Jesus. And Jesus has no one but you. You are commissioned, appointed or assigned for God's service today. Pastors, are you ready for another year of ministry? Please respond with resounding Amen.

Are you compelled to go out of closed doors into the world and raise your voice proclaiming that it is Jesus who saves? Will you rely on **the Holy Spirit in you who will empower you to preach, teach, heal, and transform the world?** Will you **yield to the leading of the Holy Spirit** and let God do the work through you and bear fruit for the Kingdom of God? Do you know how to tap into **the reservoir of the Holy Spirit power?** Will you pray and pray up so that **the Holy Spirit may be unleashed in you and fill you with the dynamic power?** Will you regularly gather with other saints to pray together for the infilling of the Holy Spirit?

Repeat after me, "God, I need more of you." "Pour out your Holy Spirit upon me." Fill me with your power. Fill me with your love. Fill me with your life. Amen. Amen. Amen.

BODY:

Last week, I shared a little from the book, *The Holy Spirit (The Key to Supernatural Living)* by Bill Bright. You will remember he was the founder of Campus Crusades for Christ International, which is a world-wide ministry, having expanding its mission well beyond college campuses.

I confess that as I began reading it, I was not impressed. Where is something new? What is the key to the success of his life-work? There was no bombshell. When Bill Bright shared about one young man who could not accept his message because it was too easy, I identified with that young man. As I read, I thought, "I have preached all this to Emmaus Church. What is the key that I have missed? What have I overlooked?"

Right now, I would like you to take out the bulletin insert with the salvation question: According to the Bible, if you died today, would you go to heaven? Please check one of the boxes, NO names please...{Collect them. Tally them.}

Campus Crusade for Christ International has surveyed millions of church members across the world. They found 50-90% of those surveyed were not sure of their salvation. When a pastor of a successful 1500 member fashionable church heard these statistics, he didn't believe them. This pastor had been at his church for 15 years and when he conducted his own survey, he was amazed by the results. Over 75% of his members indicated they were not sure of their salvation.

The next week, he shared the booklet, "The Four Spiritual Laws." Let us do that now. I will give you several reasons for us to go over them.

1. If you have not been born again, the Holy Spirit may guide you into the faith.
2. You may need to reinforce why you are a Christian.
3. Bill Bright says in several places that when we are living the Supernatural Life, the Holy Spirit will bring people to you with whom you can share your faith. We are going to be buying these booklets and they will aid you in sharing the truth of the gospel.

CONCLUSION:

Chapter 2 of *The Holy Spirit (The Key to Supernatural Living)*, is titled "You Can Escape Spiritual Poverty." In it, Bill Bright shares the story of Ira Yates and his sheep ranch in Iraan, Texas. [Iraan is a city in Pecos County. The city's name is an amalgamation of the first names of Ira and Ann Yates, owners of the ranch land upon which the town was built.](#)

"Because of Yates' inability to make enough money on his ranching operation to pay the principal and interest on the mortgage, he was in danger of losing his ranch. With little money for clothes or food, his family, like many others during the depression years, had to live on government subsidy.

Day after day, as Yates grazed his sheep over those rolling West Texas hills, he no doubt was greatly troubled about how he would be able to pay his bills. Then a seismographic crew from an oil company came into the area and convinced Yates there might be oil on his land. They asked permission to drill a wildcat test well, and Yates signed a lease contract.

At 1,115 feet, the drillers struck a huge oil reserve. The first well came in at 80,000 barrels a day. [The gross income from that one well would be millions of dollars every single day.] And that was only the beginning!

Many more wells came in – some more than twice as productive as the first. Then, after oil had been pumped for more than 30 years, a government test of just one of the wells showed that it still had a potential flow of 125,000 barrels of oil a day. And the onetime sheep-rancher Yates owned it all!!! The day Yates purchased the ranch, he very likely was more interested in grazing land for his sheep than he was in the oil and mineral rights which were also a part of the purchase. There he was, living on government subsidy, but sitting on a mammoth underground lake of incredibly valuable oil. He was a potential multimillionaire living in poverty!

What was his problem? It was simply that he did not know the oil was there.

How many frustrated, defeated and fruitless Christians are living in spiritual poverty, not knowing the vast resources of God available to them? Like Ira Yates before the oil discovery, they are unaware of the inexhaustible riches of God that are available to them and which are theirs for the taking.

Could it be that you are one of those? Do you find yourself suffering and wasting away in spiritual poverty? Would you like to escape to freedom? To tap God's vast resources and live supernaturally? To know and experience the joy and fulfillment of being a Spirit-filled Christian?

The wonderful truth is that every Christian has the **potential** of entering into the joy of supernatural living. The moment you become a Christian – a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ – you become an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ.

As a result, all of God's possessions are automatically available to you. Everything you need – including wisdom, love, grace and power – to live an abundant, supernatural life as a child of God and to be fruitful witness for Christ is available to you."

Human wisdom resists these amazing promises. Human wisdom also struggles to truly believe that God the Holy Spirit lives within us; that we are the tabernacle of God. This supernatural life is what I want for myself. I want it for each and every one of you. And, imagine the life of this church filled with believers living supernatural lives.

God promises this life. Faith activates this life. Joy fills this life. Are there obstacles? There can be. Is there an Enemy? Most certainly; but, Jesus already defeated him.

Join me as we will continue this exploration of the Holy Spirit filled life in the weeks to come.

Amen and amen. Let us pray.