

# THE CHURCH IS THE TEMPLE OF GOD

YEAR: UNITE / FOCUS: LIVING IN COMMUNITY  
SERIES: GOD'S PEOPLE ARE THE CHURCH

## BIG TRUTH: THE CHURCH IS THE TEMPLE OF GOD

2 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Corinthians 3:17; Hebrews 8:10; Revelation 21:3; 1 Peter 2:5

## BIBLE VERSE: 1 CORINTHIANS 3:16

*"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?"*

## BIG IDEAS

- God's presence is no longer limited to a physical space.
- God's Holy Spirit dwells within His people.
- The church grows in its awareness of and communion with God's Spirit as it walks by the Spirit.

## BIBLE PASSAGE: EPHESIANS 2:17-22; 1 CORINTHIANS 6:11-20

## UNITE: LIVING IN COMMUNITY

The Unite year is an exploration of what it means to be united in Christ as the family of God (Romans 12:5). When we are saved, we are brought into the family of God- seen throughout the Old Testament as "God's People" and in the New Testament and today as the church (Exodus 6:7; Colossians 1:18). We are set free from our sin to walk in freedom in Christ (Galatians 5:1) and use our influence to call others to do the same.

## SERIES AIMS



### Every student should know...

- God has always been making and keeping a people for Himself
- In this age, the church is God's people
- Being a part of God's people should inform every aspect of our lives



### Every student should feel...

- Love for God and the people of God
- Accountable to God and to the church to pursue holiness
- Responsible to use their influence to make much of God alone



### Every student should strive to...

- Study the connections between God's people in the Old Testament
- and the church in the New Testament
- Memorize the Bible verse each week
- Invite others into God's people, the church



### Every student should want...

- Be marked by their faith
- Talk about God every day, in every setting and circle of influence
- Live as a faithful member of their local church

## GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



Property of Tri-Cities Baptist Church  
171 Promise Land Dr. Gray, TN 37615

**BIBLE VERSE: 1 CORINTHIANS 3:16**

*"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?"*

---

**God's people are His temple.**

*"Do you not know that you are God's temple..."*

- Before the coming of the Messiah, the Spirit of God was present with His people in different ways. God's presence dwelled in the physical building of the temple rather than in men and women who followed Him. After the coming of the Messiah and the Day of Pentecost, this changed.
- The Spirit of God indwelt His people, and they became His temple as we see in 2 Corinthians 6:16. God's people collectively are His church. The church is not a building or location. It is His people. He lives inside of them and works through them.

**God's Spirit dwells in His people.**

*"...and that God's Spirit dwells in you?"*

- Because God has placed His Spirit in His people and His people make up His church, He is present in His church. God's presence in His church is evident through the attitudes and actions of His people. As His people worship and praise Him, His presence is made visible in their acts of adoration to Him.
- God is present in His church through their obedience to Him and service to others. God's people are His temple, and His Spirit lives in them. As they obey His Word and follow His commands, their obedience to Him reveals His presence. As they serve others and Him, they reveal that He is present in them.

**The church is marked by God's presence.**

*"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?"*

- God's presence marks His people and His church. When His people live in awareness of His presence in them, they live set apart for Him. Living set apart for Him means living holy lives, in obedience to Him and His commands. This makes His church different from the world and other groups.
- The church is marked by God's movement as He works in their lives. God uses His church to do His purposes. He does mighty and great things through His church. This work marks God's church as His people set apart for His will and glory.

**BIG IDEA #1: GOD'S PRESENCE IS NO LONGER LIMITED TO A PHYSICAL SPACE.<sup>1</sup>****[ THIS ]**

When God called Abraham and made a mighty nation out of him, He marked His people with His presence. His presence was seen in pillars of cloud and fire as well as hovering over the ark of the covenant in the temple. After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, God sent His Spirit to live inside of His people. No longer was God's presence found in one physical place. Instead, it was found inside of His people. In Paul's letter to the Ephesian church, he writes of the church's unique status as God's chosen people set apart by His presence. In Ephesians 2:17-22, he reminds the Ephesian believers that they are fellow citizens with the other saints and members of the household of God. Believers are joined together, built on the cornerstone of Jesus, and made into a dwelling place for God's Spirit. God's presence dwells inside of each individual believer and collectively inside of His church as they gather as His body.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**Read Ephesians 2:19-20. Based on Paul's words, what responsibility comes with having God's presence?**

God's church is built upon the foundation of those who have gone before us. As we live for Jesus, with God's presence in us, we have a responsibility to live obedient, faithful lives for Him because we are His temple. Living for Jesus requires obedience and faithful living because God's presence is with us.

**[ THIS ]**

Because God's presence is no longer manifested in a physical space, but He is present in each of His followers, His church is His temple. In the Old Testament, as God's people moved through the wilderness and into the Promised Land, they would move the temple with them. The temple was the place that the ark of the covenant would rest, and God's presence would hover on the ark of the covenant, signifying that God was with them. Now, God's people have His presence in them and wherever they are, He is there. In 1 Peter 2:4-10, Peter writes of this truth. He notes that God's people are a chosen race and a royal priesthood. Today, instead of God's presence residing in a physical temple, He resides in His people.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**How does the gospel expand because God's presence isn't limited to a physical space?**

In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus gives His followers what is known as the Great Commission. In this commission, He commands them to carry His gospel to all the world and He tells them that He will be with them. Because His presence isn't limited to a physical space, Jesus followers carry the gospel to the ends of the world.

**How can a lack of awareness of God's presence affect the Jesus follower?**

In 2 Corinthians 6:17, we see that God's people are not to participate in the same unclean things that the world participates in. When we fail to abide in Christ daily, we will lack a daily awareness of God's presence and set ourselves up to defile the temple of God.

1. 1 Peter 2:4-10: When Jesus died on the cross, the curtain that separated man from the presence of God in the temple was torn. Now, God's presence lives in man and not in a singular physical space.

**BIG IDEA #2: GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT DWELLS WITHIN HIS PEOPLE.<sup>2</sup>****[ THIS ]**

Throughout the Old Testament, God's presence was evident to His people through His interaction with them and through the remarkable ways that the Holy Spirit worked in the world. When the Israelites left Egypt and wandered for forty years in the desert, the Holy Spirit manifested Himself as pillars of cloud and fire. God's presence was also made visible to them through thunder and lightning as He spoke to Moses. When Jesus came, He promised that the Holy Spirit would come to be the Helper of God's people. He promised that even as He was ascending to His place at the right hand of the Father in heaven, the Holy Spirit would come and dwell inside of God's people. The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost to indwell every believer and since that day, every person who experiences saving faith receives the Holy Spirit. This miraculous indwelling is not explained by human means, nor is it understood fully with human minds, but it is God dwelling with His people, fulfilling His promise to live in them and be with them.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**Why is it important to know that the Holy Spirit lives inside of His people?**

God indwells His people because they are His church. They are His chosen people and His temple. 1 Peter 2:9, Ephesians 2:10, and Galatians 2:20 help us see that God sets His people apart for His purposes. It's important for His people to know this and remember that the Holy Spirit lives inside of them so they live as His chosen people on the earth.

**[ THIS ]**

As God's church, believers today live called and set apart for Him because God's Holy Spirit indwells every person who expresses saving faith. The church is God's chosen vessel to do His work on earth and to propel His gospel to all the earth. In Ezekiel 36:25-28, God speaks through the prophet, declaring the work He will do in the nation of Israel when He puts His spirit in them. By putting His spirit in them, He will give them a new heart that enables them to obey Him and live for Him. The same is true of the Holy Spirit inside of believers today. The Spirit enables believers to obey God and be His church. Believers today can live individually and collectively for God, obeying His Word and carrying out His mission as His chosen people. Having the Holy Spirit transforms God's people. The Holy Spirit works in God's people to make them more like Christ.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**What behaviors of the church set it apart from other groups in the world?**

The church is different from other groups in the world because she has the Holy Spirit. Colossians 3:16, Psalm 95:6, and Hebrews 10:24-25 help us understand that the church comes together to worship and serve God, unlike other groups whose functions are different.

**What are the gospel benefits of the church to individual believers?**

The church benefits individual believers because it is God's people gathering as one. Matthew 18:20 tells us that God is present where His people are present. Psalm 34:3 and Colossians 2:2 teach us that gathering to worship and serve God results in a building up and edifying of the saints. This serves to encourage individuals as well as the collective body.

---

2. 2 Corinthians 3:18: Those who have believed receive the Spirit and are being transformed into His image.

## BIG IDEA #3: THE CHURCH GROWS IN ITS AWARENESS OF AND COMMUNION WITH GOD'S SPIRIT AS IT WALKS BY THE SPIRIT.<sup>3</sup>

### [ THIS ]

In Paul's letter to the Ephesian church, he writes of the work of the Spirit in believers. In Ephesians 2:17-22, he describes the indwelling of believers with the Spirit and the building up that occurs because of this indwelling. For this growth to occur, believers must live with an awareness of God's Spirit inside of them. As they individually live aware that the Holy Spirit is at work in them, they will grow in righteousness and holiness. As individual believers grow in righteousness and holiness, the church grows up and matures in Christ. Galatians 5:16-26 speaks of this process as walking by the Spirit. When a person walks by the Spirit, he or she is daily aware of the presence of God inside of them and chooses to be led by the Spirit instead of by their fleshly desires or worldly things. The more a person is led by the Spirit, the more spiritually mature that person becomes, learning each day to obey God's Word.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### **What daily habits help a person live with an awareness of God's Spirit?**

John 15:4 and Colossians 2:6 teach us that abiding in Christ produces an awareness of Christ. Abiding in Christ means dwelling in His Word and commandments. Romans 12:2 and Philippians 4:8 teach us to have the mind of Christ by taking our thoughts captive and considering what we think about. Doing these things and training ourselves in this way helps us to live in an awareness of God's Spirit.

### [ THIS ]

As the church is led by the Spirit, it grows in its communion with God's Spirit. Communion with God's Spirit is intimacy with God's Spirit. Daily walking by the Spirit results in communing with the Spirit and living aligned with God's Word and commandments. As the church grows in its obedience to God's Word, it grows in communion with the Spirit. The church's behavior and worship will resemble that of Christ more and more as this communion grows. The church is the temple of God, and it should look like and act like Christ. No part of the church should resemble the world or reflect the desires of the flesh. Instead, the church should be a place that seeks to be holy because God is holy and God's Spirit dwells in it.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### **What temptations draw the church away from communing with the Spirit?**

It is easy for the church today to fall prey to trusting in and upholding the traditions of man over the commandments of God. Mark 7:8 serves as a warning to not do this because it doesn't produce a communion with the Spirit. Proverbs 29:15 also warns us not to fear man but to fear God. When a church fears the opinions of man more than God, it doesn't grow in communion with the Spirit.

#### **How can a church seek to grow in an awareness of and communion with God's Spirit?**

As the church seeks to edify, equip, and build up its members, it will grow in an awareness of God's Spirit and communion with the Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Romans 14:19, and Hebrews 3:13 help us understand the importance of encouraging one another as believers to grow spiritually. This individual growth helps the entire body grow.

3. Galatians 5:16-26: Walking by the Spirit keeps us from giving into the desires of our flesh and helps us to grow in our righteousness.