

John 2:18 to 25. Christ Speaks of the Temple of His Body.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Christ's body was a temple, and he refused to give signs to those who did not truly believe in him, instead revealing his true nature and intentions to those who loved him.

Scripture: John 2:18-21, 1 Corinthians 6:19, Revelation 2:18

Topics: "Christ's Authority", "Indwelling God"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer delves into the significance of Jesus' authority in clearing the temple and the Jews' persistent demand for a sign, emphasizing that God gives no sign to those who refuse to believe. Jesus refers to his body as a temple, highlighting the indwelling of God within him, a concept extended to all true Christians. Despite being recognized as a true prophet by some, Jesus did not entrust himself to those who lacked genuine love for him, as he discerns the true intentions of the heart and knows all men's thoughts and deeds.

Transcript

How could the Jews desire a sign of Christ's right to clear the temple of the traders? What could have enabled him to send out these profane men but the power of God? Was not that a sign of his authority? Yet still the Jews, or the chief men of Jerusalem, desired a sign; but Christ refused to give them any, except that great sign of his own resurrection from the dead. This is God's constant way of dealing--he gives no sign to those who wish not to believe in him, and who only ask for a sign as an excuse for their unbelief.

What a remarkable name Jesus gave to his body!--He called it a temple. What is a temple?--the habitation of God. Christ's body was indeed a temple, for the Godhead dwelt in him. It is true, all real Christians form one great temple; for Paul says to them, "You are the temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them." (2 Cor. 6:16.) But Christ was a temple in a still higher sense, for he and his Father were one.

When he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," neither his friends nor his enemies understood him. Yet these words were not forgotten; they were brought forward against him by his enemies when he was judged, and they were remembered by his friends after his rising again. No doubt there are many things in scripture which we do not yet understand. Let us look to Christ to teach us what

we find to be dark and difficult. In the day of sorrow God often reveals the secret meaning of his words to his children. Some texts, in which we now see little beauty, may be our rod and staff when passing through the valley of the shadow of death.

There were some people at Jerusalem, who, seeing the miracles that Jesus did, felt convinced that he was a true prophet, but they did not love him, nor desire his love. Now observe how Jesus behaved towards these people. "He did not commit himself unto them;" (ver. 24;) that is, he did not place any confidence in them, but was on his guard when before them; he did not open to them his secrets, and tell them all the things that the Father had told him, as he did to his beloved disciples. (John 15:15.) He treated his true disciples as "friends;" but these people he knew still to be his enemies, for their hearts were not made new, and the natural heart of man is enmity against God. (Rom. 8:7.)

It is a solemn thought that Jesus knows the hearts of all men. Men often deceive each other by false professions of piety, but they never can deceive him; he knows what is in them. It is said in the book of Revelation, that his eyes are like a flame of fire. When he writes to the Seven Churches by the hand of his disciple John, (Rev. 2, 3,) he begins each letter with these words, "I know your works." There is a beautiful history contained in a tract called Jejana, in which we are told of a little Hottentot maid, who, entering a church for the first time, heard the minister preach from these words, "I know your works." In her ignorance, she thought the preacher himself was God, and tried to hide herself from his sight behind a pillar in the aisle where she was standing; for all the lies she had uttered and the thefts she had committed, rushed to her remembrance as the sentence was uttered, "I know your works." But how light was the guilt of this heathen child, compared to that of a well-instructed person who is yet unconverted! It is not only for having committed such sins as she had committed, that people in a Christian land will be condemned at last, but for having refused to believe in the Son of God, with the heart. Christ knows the heart of every one of us; he knows what is in us; he knows whether we truly love him or not. If we do not love him, we do not believe in him in the right manner, and our faith can only be a dead faith, and such as will not save us.

Let each of us ask himself, "Do I so believe in Christ, that he might commit himself unto me, that he might consider me as a friend if he were upon earth?" Can we say like the apostle Peter, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you?"

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