

The House of God - Part 3 - Revealing the Reality

by Stephen Kaung

The house of God is where God dwells with man, communicates with man, and is worshipped and served, and is a reality on earth today through the church.

Duration: 1:10:42

Scripture: John 1:14, Ephesians 2:19

Topics: "Holiness Of God", "Church Community"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses how to behave in the house of God based on 1 Timothy 3:16. He emphasizes the importance of holiness, as the house of God is holy and without holiness, no one can see God. The speaker also highlights the role of Jesus in preparing and building the house of God through his redemption and love. Jesus is presented as both a demonstration and a pattern of the house of God, showing what it is and preparing for its enlargement to include believers. The sermon encourages listeners to understand and represent the house of God on earth.

Transcript

Will you please turn to the Gospel according to John. John chapter 1, verse 14. John chapter 1, verse 14.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt, that is, tabernacled among us. And we have contemplated His glory, a glory as of an only begotten with a Father, full of grace and truth. Ephesians, the letter to the Ephesians, chapter 2. We'll read from verse 19 through verse 22.

Ephesians, chapter 2, verse 19. So then ye are no longer strangers and foreigners, but ye are fellow citizens of the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone in whom all the building fitted together increases to a holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit. Let's have a word of prayer.

Dear Lord, as we continue in Thy presence, we pray that Thou will, through Thy written Word, speak to us by Thy Spirit. We thank Thee that Thy Word is truth, Thy Word is life, and Thy Word is Spirit. So, Lord, do open our understanding and our heart and allow Thy Word to really come into us in such a way that we'll reveal Thyself to us, draw us to Thee, and be conformed to Thy image.

We trust Thy Holy Spirit to do this work. We ask in Thy precious name. Amen.

We have been meditating together on the house of God. The house of God is not a human idea. The house of God is in the heart of God, even before the foundation of the world.

It was hidden in God's heart, and yet we find He began to reveal what was in His heart to His people. And the first one that really began to see the house of God is Jacob. God revealed to Jacob in a dream a letter that joins God and man together.

And through that letter, God spoke to man, and Jacob realized this is the house of God, the gate of heaven. But unfortunately, his response was not quite full. In other words, he understood a little bit.

He understood that this is the house of God, but it is a terrible thing, a fearful thing to be in the house of God, to have the presence of God, to commune with God, and even after God promised him with such great promises, he could only take in a little bit, but at least he had a faint understanding of what the house of God is, that it is the gate of heaven. And then we also share together on how God continued to reveal the house of God through types. First we find He revealed it to Moses.

God said, build me a sanctuary that I may dwell among you. And then later on, we find God revealed the temple to David, and Solomon built it. Now we have covered these in the past, and we would like to continue on this morning and see that how God began to reveal the reality of his house at the coming of our Lord Jesus.

Now dear brothers and sisters, when God revealed the house of God to Jacob, he was not able to understand it fully, and his response was rather weak. And when God gave the house of God in types, we find that in the beginning, Moses, who was faithful in the house of God, he built everything according to the pattern on the mount. And because of this, when the tabernacle was set up, you remember, the glory of God filled that tabernacle.

But unfortunately, because of the unfaithfulness of the children of Israel, even after they got into the promised land, you remember how the ark, that is the real center of the tabernacle, was captured by the Philistines. And even after the ark returned, it never came back to the tabernacle. The tabernacle was there.

It moved from place to place, and at the time of Solomon, it was in Gibeon. And yet, the ark never returned to the tent in Shiloh. Not only it never returned to the tent in Shiloh, but the children of Israel forgot the ark altogether.

For many, many years, until David, a man after God's own heart, he found the ark in the field of the forest. And when he became king, he brought the ark to Mount Zion. And put the ark in a tent there.

So the picture you see is, even though the tabernacle was there, with the great altar, the candlestick, the table of showbread, even the golden altar of incense. But in that tabernacle, the presence of God was missing. In the holiest of all, it was empty.

David, he had a heart to build God a permanent house, a temple. God was pleased with his thought. But because he was a man of war, who shed so much blood, he could not represent the house of God, which is peace.

And yet God accepted his heart desire. God gave him the pattern of the temple. And David, out of his love for the house of God, he prepared lots of materials, gold, silver, all kinds of things for the building of the house.

But it was Solomon's wisdom that built the house. So when the temple was finished, again you find the glory of God filled that temple. But unfortunately, again you find the children of Israel became unfaithful to God.

And because of their unfaithfulness, eventually you find the temple was destroyed by Babylon. The children of Israel were taken captive into Babylon. And they were there for 70 years.

It was the mercy of God that stirred up the spirit of some of those in captivity to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. But after the temple was rebuilt, there was something missing there. That temple that was rebuilt had no ark in the holiest of all.

But all the services went on. We had the priesthood there. We had the sacrifices there.

Everything seemed to go on as usual. But the most important thing, the ark, the presence of God, was not there. When our Lord Jesus came into this world, the temple in Jerusalem was enlarged by King Herod.

It was adorned with beautiful stones and the gifts, consecrated gifts of people. It was a glorious temple. You remember even the disciples of our Lord showed our Lord Jesus and said, Behold this temple.

It was the pride of the children of Israel. And yet there was no ark. The presence of God was not there.

In other words, the very meaning of the house of God was not there. But thank God, man's failure only brings out God's glory. Not because of the weakness of man.

God gave up what he had in his heart. No. We find that God even bringing more glory at the failure of man.

So in the fullness of time, we thank God. God sent his only begotten son into the world to be a man. The word of God became flesh.

And when he became flesh and dwelt among man, the word dwelt is the same word as tabernacle. In other words, when Jesus came into this world, the house of God appeared on the earth. And we beheld the glory.

Even the glory of the only begotten. Full of grace and truth. In other words, here you find a man.

He was God. He became a man. And he became the tabernacle.

The house of God. The real house of God on earth. And full of grace and truth.

You remember when our Lord Jesus was 30 years old? After he was baptized, he went into the temple. And he saw what happened there. And he cleansed the temple.

And he said, this is my father's house. And you make it a house of merchandise. And because of this, he was challenged.

What sign do you give that you do such a thing? And our Lord Jesus said in John chapter 2, destroy the temple. And in three days, I will build it up. Now when the Jews heard about that, they were so surprised.

They said, don't you know that this temple has been building for 46 years? And you say you destroy it? And in three days to raise it up? They didn't know that our Lord was referring to his own body. How they destroy his body. The house of God.

But in three days, he was raised from the dead. So dear brothers and sisters, we find in spite of the failures of man, God is faithful to himself. He cannot deny himself.

What he had in his heart, even before the foundation of the world, he will have it for himself. And here you'll find, he sent his own son into this world to be a man, to accomplish what he had in his heart. When our Lord Jesus was born, or before he was born, after Virgin Mary was conceived, Joseph was thinking of getting rid of her quietly.

And then in a dream, the angel of the Lord came to him and said, this is the fulfillment of prophecy. A virgin shall give birth to a child, and his name shall be called Emmanuel. In other words, Mary, a virgin, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and this child is Emmanuel.

And Emmanuel simply means God with man. Now brothers and sisters, that is the very meaning of the house of God. God with man.

In him, God and man are brought together. Brothers and sisters, here in Jesus, in Christ Jesus, we have a demonstration, a revelation, of what the house of God really is. He is the house of God.

The perfect sample. Now if you look into the life of our Lord Jesus, you discover that how he demonstrates to the world that he is truly the house of God. Let me put it in a very simple way.

First of all, we find that the house of God is where God dwells with man. That is the house of God. And our Lord Jesus is the house of God because God dwells with man, Emmanuel.

But this dwelling is not just an outward thing because we find that God dwells in him and he dwells in God. It is an in-dwelling when Philip said to our Lord, show us the Father and we will be satisfied. And our Lord said, Philip, you have known me so long and yet you do not know that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.

Don't you know that when you see me, you see the Father? Brothers and sisters, throughout the life of our Lord Jesus, you find that God dwells in him and he dwells in God. It is a mutual dwelling. The Father never left him and he never left the Father.

Only a very short time when he was on the cross for the first three hours, God still dwells in him. He still dwells in God because he can pray and say, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. And the Father sustained him.

But the last three hours of his crucifixion, God left him. The house was deserted. He cannot address God as Father.

He said, my God, my God, why do you forsake me? I still want you. But why do you forsake me? Brothers and sisters, in that last three hours, he suffered eternal death. He tasted hell, separation from God for our sake.

But throughout his life, the temple was there, so glorious, so beautiful, admired by people. And it was empty. God was not there.

But here was a man, a man of Galilee, despised, rejected, and yet God dwells in him and he in God. No separation, but only for our sake. There was a separation for three hours.

But thank God, before he died, the Bible said, he commit his spirit to God. In other words, there was a reunion because the work is done. Dear brothers and sisters, what is the house of God? The house of God is where God dwells, in man, and man in God.

Secondly, not only God dwells in man and is an indwelling, but we find that God communicates with man. Now that is what the house of God is because you remember when God commanded Moses to build the tabernacle, he said in Exodus 25, verse 23, there, that is in the tabernacle, in the wholeness of all, there I will meet with you and I will speak to you. In other words, the house of God is where God communicates himself to man.

Not only God communicates with man, but man communicates with God. Now that is the house of God. Now in our house, what is it? If in the house there is no communication, say, you have the husband and wife there, but they never speak to each other.

There was no communication. You cannot say this is a house. It's empty.

Just as if they were not there. Brothers and sisters, here we find in Christ Jesus that communion, that communication was unceasing, uninterrupted, sweet, harmonious, glorious. The Father always speaks and the Son always speaks to the Father.

There was perfect communication. You remember our Lord Jesus? His whole life was governed by the will of God. How does he know the will of God? Even his timing.

He will not even go to the feast and he tells his brothers, you go there because your time is always ready. But my time has not yet come. Why? Because the Father hasn't communicated to him.

He waited for the Father and yet later on he knew and he went. In other words, you find his whole life is in communion with his Father. Now in the Bible you will find many instances when our Lord Jesus prayed.

Early in the morning he went to the wilderness to pray. Late in the night, deep in the night he was praying. And all these are but indications.

But even when he was not outwardly, as we're praying, there was that communion going on. Day and night, unceasingly, because he is the house of God. God spoke to him.

Three times the heavens opened and God spoke, this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. Hear him. There was perfect communion in that house.

And not only that, but thirdly, God was worshipped and served. This is what the house of God is. The house of God is where God is worshipped.

Now what is worship? Worship is not a formality. Worship simply means you put God in his rightful place and you stand yourself in your proper place. Now that's worship.

No one on earth puts God in his rightful place as our Lord Jesus did. When he came into this world, the Bible tells us how he emptied himself of the glory and honor of being God, the Son of God. He emptied himself of all these things and he took up the form of a born slave.

Now a born slave is one who has no right of anything. He does not possess anything. He is possessed.

He has no right even to his life. His life of death is the hand of his master. And our Lord Jesus coming to become a man and the form he took was the form of a born slave.

He gave up every right and he allowed God to be all to him, to be his Lord, to master. And throughout his life he obeyed. He was obedient even unto death and that death of the cross.

Brothers and sisters, that is worship. His whole life is a worship. Giving God his rightful place and standing on the ground of a born slave.

Worship. And not only worship but serve. You'll find that throughout his life how he served God.

How do you serve God? You serve God by serving his will. If you serve and serve your will according to your will but not serve the will of the one whom you serve you are not serving. You are serving yourself.

You are not serving God. And you remember even in Psalm 40 there was a prophecy about the Lord. In Psalm 40 it says sacrifice and offering.

God you do not desire but you prepare me a body. Lord I come to do your will because your will is in my heart. It is my pleasure.

To do your will. And this prophecy was fulfilled in our Lord Jesus because we find it in Hebrews quoting the same thing concerning our Lord Jesus. So you'll find his whole life is service.

Even though he was serving man but in serving man he was serving them according to God's will. Our Lord Jesus on earth is a perfect example of the house of God. Brothers and sisters God gave us such a revelation such a demonstration in the life of our Lord Jesus that we cannot fail to understand what the house of God really is.

But our Lord Jesus as the house of God is a demonstration. God wants to demonstrate to man what kind of a house that he will be pleased to dwell and rest. But God's purpose is to include us.

So in a sense you'll find that our Lord Jesus is not only a demonstration he is a pattern. He is the pattern of the house of God. And he came into this world to prepare for it.

Not only to show what it is but even to prepare for his enlargement if I may put it that way. Because God wants to include man, us into that house. So when our Lord Jesus was on earth what was he doing? What was he looking for? The apostle John always went to the very heart of God.

So there in the gospel of John we are told that our Lord Jesus came into this world to seek for his bride. He is the bridegroom. Because John the Baptist said I'm the friend of the bridegroom.

I'm not the bridegroom. When I hear the voice the sound of the bridegroom I'm happy. He must increase.

I must decrease. In other words our Lord Jesus came into this world as a bridegroom looking for his bride. Looking for his like.

Looking for people whom he can join together with. Feel them and express himself to be the real house of God in eternity. But when he was on earth if you read the gospels you'll find the people he was in touch with sinners, deaf, blind, crippled, dead that's all he could find.

They were not his like. They could not be joined together with him to be the house of God as an expansion enlargement of himself. So he had to prepare.

He had to save. To redeem. To discipline.

To train. To provide the material for the building of the house of God. Now that's what our Lord did when he was on earth.

So not until very late towards the end of his ministry you remember in Matthew 16 he said on this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And then again in Matthew 18, 20 he said where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them. That is the house of God.

It's preparation. And thank God for Calvary for the cross because there on the cross he redeemed a people. Out of every people, every nation, every tribe, every time God called out a redeemed people unto himself.

And on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came down and in one spirit they became one body. And we'll all drink of one spirit. That's where we are.

So brothers and sisters here you'll find on earth today there is the house of God. Not in type but in reality. When Christ was on earth he was the only one that really represents the house of God.

But after his death burial, resurrection, ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit we find from that time onward until now there on earth is the reality of the house of God. What is the church? In 1 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 12 and verse 13 The body is one and has many members. There are many members but one body.

So also is the Christ. For in one spirit you were baptized into one body whether of Jew or Gentile bondman or freeman and you were all made to drink of one spirit. Brothers and sisters the Holy Spirit makes no mistake.

The body is one but has many members. Many members but one body. We know what that is.

That's the church. But the Holy Spirit said so also is the Christ. So what is the church? The church is the Christ.

In other words it is Christ in his corporate expression. It is the enlargement of Christ. It is the fullness of Christ who fills all and in all.

That is what the church is. In other words whatever Christ is that is what the church is to be. Nothing less nothing more.

It is the Christ. Thank God where two or three are gathered together in my name. Thank God he has given us his name.

You remember in the last discourse of our Lord with his disciples before his crucifixion he promised a few things. One of the things he promised is I will give you my name. You have never prayed in my name but now I give you my name.

If you ask the Father in my name he will do it for my sake. So dear brothers and sisters even though our Lord Jesus today is not physically here he is in heaven but he left his name with us. We are all called by his name where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.

That's the house of God. When we really take up the name of our Lord Jesus his name is above every name. It's not a formality.

It is real. If we gather together in his name that is to say we all put ourselves under his name. Under his authority.

Under his headship. We are assured of his presence. Every time when God's people come together representing the house of God we should experience the presence of God.

You remember in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 when the church gathered together and when people came in and heard they said God is in your midst. That is the house of God. The house of God is not an empty crushed building.

What if we meet together and the glory of the Lord does not fill the house? What if we meet together and the Lord is not there? We lose the very meaning of our existence. The reason why we are together is not to have a social time. It's not to have a good time.

It's not to satisfy ourselves. Get something for ourselves. The reason why we are together is we are together with the Lord and the Lord is together with us.

Not physically but spiritually. And spiritual is more real than physical. The presence of the Lord.

If the presence of the Lord has left you remember when the ark was taken Eli's daughter-in-law gave birth and he said the glory has departed. The glory of the Lord has departed. If that's the case it's emptiness.

So brothers and sisters what we look for is the presence of our Lord. His very presence in our midst. But there is a condition.

We have to gather together in his name. That is we have to put ourselves down and allow him to be our head. Allow him to express himself through us.

Nothing satisfies God or satisfies us than his presence. That is what the church is. It is not an external thing.

It is a reality. Every time when we come together we need to be able to say thank God he's here. And not only that but the house of God is the place of communion of fellowship.

Therefore the church is a fellowship and fellowship is sharing something in common. Now what do we have in common? Naturally speaking we are so different. And yet thank God there is something we have in common.

We have Christ. We have his life. We have his word.

We have his spirit. And we come together to share with one another. Nobody is so selfish as to keep everything unto himself and will not share.

And nobody is so proud as to think they themselves are sufficient. The church is a fellowship. As we fellowship with the Father and with the Son out of that fellowship we fellowship with our brothers and sisters.

Communication. Fellowship. Not only vertically it begins with that and horizontally.

Now if we do not have fellowship with the Father and with the Son we have nothing to report to our brothers and sisters. But the apostles they have much to report Why? Because they have such sweet fellowship with the Father and with the Son. So it is so important brothers and sisters being the house of God if there is no fellowship only social that's a club.

That's not a church. That's not a house of God. So we want to encourage brothers and sisters to fellowship.

Now fellowship is not just talking about everything under the heaven. There is a time for it, yes. Fellowship is sharing Christ.

And by sharing Christ we encourage we enlarge one another. It's a fellowship of love. Do we love one another enough to be willing to share what Christ means to us.

And not only that just as our Lord Jesus is where God is worshipped and served so as the house of God this is where he is worshipped and served. Is he really worshipped? Do we really put him in his rightful place? Every knee shall bow. Every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord.

That's worship. Do we really worship him in our singing? If we sing with our voice but not with our heart there is no worship. Do we worship in our prayer if we just want God to do what we want and not want what he wants? Is that prayer? Is that worship? If we are thinking of ourselves all the time and not of the Lord is that worship? Who is worshipped? Not only our life should be a worship.

This is the time when God's people come together our worship ascends as incense towards God satisfying his heart. Brothers and sisters I often feel when we come to the Lord's table are we here to be satisfied? Or are we here to satisfy him? After we have the Lord's table will our Lord say today I'm satisfied? Or just we say well this worship time is not good I'm not satisfied. Worship give him the rightful place together not just in your personal life but together let's give him the rightful place and we stand in our proper place as born slaves with no right of any kind and serve.

Serve. Serving him simply means doing his will. If we are doing our will that's not serving him.

We are serving ourselves. So when we come together brothers and sisters when we serve we serve according to his will by his strength by his spirit not by our own self not by might nor by power but by my spirit says the Lord. Our service is unto him not just unto me.

Sometimes I'm thinking you know every group has a chance to serve to clean this place on Saturday once in a few weeks. I thank God that brothers and sisters served so on the last day when we come we find the place is clean and the chairs are there but my question is when you are doing these things not to say those people who are not doing them when you are doing these things do you do it as unto the Lord or as

unto man? If it is unto man that's not service. If it's unto God thank God because even when you are putting the chairs there there is a spirit behind it.

The Lord will bless that action and will remember it even in eternity. Brothers and sisters what a privilege we have. So many opportunities to serve God by serving brothers and sisters.

If you just have your heart open there is no lack of places to serve. We don't need to go to Africa to serve. Right here there is lots of opportunities to serve God if we have the heart.

So brothers and sisters this is what the house of God is. And finally you remember in 1 Timothy 3.16 the apostle Paul told Timothy he wrote these words to him that he may know how to behave in the house of God which is the base and pillar of the truth. So knowing what the house of God is we need to know how to behave how to conduct ourselves in the house of God.

And I will just briefly mention three things. One is from the personal point of view. How should I conduct myself in the house of God? I will say one word holy.

Because the house of God is holy. Without holiness no one can see God. Be holy because I'm holy.

In other words we need to be separated. It doesn't mean that we need to leave the world. It doesn't mean that you go to the mountain and be a monk.

That's no separation because the world follows you in the monastery. It is a spiritual reality. We need to be separated from everything that is not of God.

Not only separated from the world from sin from our flesh from our self. Holy unto God because he is holy. So how we need in our daily life to learn by the grace of God to be separated.

The world will tell us the spirit within us will show us we need to be a separated people unto God. Now corporately we need to keep diligently the unity of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace. How do we keep our unity? By putting ourselves all under the headship of Christ as Colossians 2, 19 put it in a positive way.

Holding fast the head that all the members of the body will be ministered to and united together. And there will be the increase of God. And then from the family point of view because the house of God is a family.

The house of God. There is nothing more important than love. Even in the last supper you remember our Lord Jesus washed the feet of the disciples.

And then he told them love one another as I have loved you. This is my new commandment. So dear brothers and sisters thank God that in spite of all the failures throughout the centuries of man God is able to reveal even more glory not only in Christ but in the church as the house of God.

Dear Lord we are really awed by thy glory. Who are we that thou should have such a glorious thought concerning us that thou want us to be thy house. O Lord pray that we may really see it in our heart that we may really be able by thy grace to represent thy house even today on earth.

Lord we want thee to enter into rest. We offer ourselves afresh to thee for this purpose. In thy precious name we pray.

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