



EKKLESIA

Swartz FBC Leader Discussion Guide



SCRIPTURE: *1 Corinthians 3*

SERIES: Ekklesia

TITLE: *The Temple*

BIG IDEA: The Temple of God is the people of God indwelt by the Spirit of God protected by the hand of God for the Glory of God.

SUMMARY

There are multiple illustrations in Scripture for the church (ekklesia). God refers to the church as the bride of Christ, the body of Christ, the temple, etc. The Temple motif is interesting in that it reflects the fact that we are built and unified by our Gospel purpose. The other striking feature is that the temple illustration shows that the people, not a physical building, is the dwelling place of the Spirit of God. We do not have sacred shrines or physical temples we adorn or visit to seek the presence of God. God has chosen to dwell in His people collectively. The temple now is comprised of the people of God, indwelt by the Spirit of God, protected by God, for the glory of God.

*“The most crooked tree will make timber for the temple,
if God be pleased to hew it.”*

Thomas Fuller

TEXT

1 Corinthians 3

But I, brothers,^[a] could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ²I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? ⁴For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?

⁵What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. ⁹For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

¹⁰According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled^[a] master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. ¹¹For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— ¹³each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

¹⁶Do you not know that you^[a] are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? ¹⁷If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

¹⁸Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. ¹⁹For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," ²⁰and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile." ²¹So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, ²²whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, ²³and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

¹⁶Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

1. THE TEMPLE IS PEOPLE.

- How does this verse inform our understanding of the church?
- Why is it important to see that the church is not a building?
 - o What are practical ways that the church shows that it is not a physical building but the people of God?
- Why is it important to see that the new temple (the church) is plural, not singular?
- What does this say about Jesus' love for the church?
- How does this truth organically change the heart position of believers?

*Application Question: Are you the dwelling place of the one true God
or the dwelling place of a god you created?*

2. THE TEMPLE IS FOR THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

- If the temple was for the presence of God and we are now, as the church the collective temple of God, what does this tell us about our spiritual responsibility?
- The temple was for God's presence and His worship, nothing else. What does this mean for us?
- If God's Spirit dwells in us, what evidence in us helps others become aware of this truth?
- What does it tell us about God's kindness, grace, and sovereignty that we are deemed worthy to be His Temple?
- How does this truth help us to experience the love of God?

Application Question: Does your life look like God's Spirit dwells in you?

¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

3. GOD PROTECTS THE TEMPLE FROM VANDALISM.

- How does God protect us (His Church)?
- What/who do we need protection from?
- What is spiritual vandalism towards the church (God's Temple)?
- What does it mean that the church is holy?
- How does this truth alleviate anxiety?

Head / Heart / Hands

- What does this text teach me?
- What does it tell me to feel?
- What does it tell me to do?