

THE FATNESS OF THE LORD'S HOUSE

REDEEMING OUR TIME BY REMAINING IN THE LORD'S HOUSE

In Psalm 27:4 David said, “One thing I have asked from Jehovah; / That do I seek: / To dwell in the house of Jehovah / All the days of my life, / To behold the beauty of Jehovah, / And to inquire in His temple.” The only thing that David was seeking was to dwell in the house of Jehovah for his entire life. In Psalm 84:10 the psalmist said, “A day in Your courts is better than a thousand; / I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God / Than dwell in the tents of the wicked.” The best way to redeem our time is to keep ourselves in the courts of the Lord. One day there is better than a thousand days. Some people may criticize you by saying that you are wasting your time, but actually you are not wasting your time. You are gaining your time one thousandfold by remaining in the Lord's house in the enjoyment of the Lord.

THE MINGLING OF DIVINITY WITH HUMANITY

The Lord's house in the Old Testament was first the tabernacle and then the temple. In the tabernacle and the temple there were two main materials—acacia wood and gold. The wood was overlaid with gold and united, knit together, by the gold. Forty-eight standing boards of acacia wood formed the main part of the tabernacle. All of these forty-eight boards were overlaid with gold. There were golden rings on each board which served to unite the boards (Exo. 26:24). In addition there were bars made of acacia wood overlaid with gold running through the boards to connect them (26:26-29). The acacia wood signifies the human nature, and the gold signifies the divine nature. The divine nature and the human nature have to be built up together and mingled together as one. Thus, the dwelling place of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, is the mingling of divinity with humanity.

The first mention of the house of God is in Genesis 28 with Jacob. Jacob had a dream of a ladder set up on the earth with the angels of God ascending and descending on it (v. 12). When Jacob awoke, he said, “This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (v. 17). Verse 18 says, “And Jacob rose up early in the morning and took the stone that he had put under his head, and he set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it.” Jacob then called this place Bethel, which means “house of God” (v. 19). The stone with oil poured upon it is Bethel, the temple of God, the house of God. We are the stone, and God is the oil. Thus, in this picture we again see the principle of the mingling of God with man. The house of God, the temple of God, is the mingling of divinity with humanity.

When God was incarnated, the divine nature was mingled with the human nature. Jesus, the incarnated God, was the mingling of the divine nature with the human nature, and He told us that He was the temple (John 2:20-22). Through the Lord's death and resurrection, this temple was enlarged to become the church, the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 3:16). The church as the temple of God is the mingling of God with man in a corporate way. There was not just one board in the tabernacle but forty-eight boards overlaid with gold. This mingling of God with man is the mutual abode, the dwelling place of God and the dwelling place of His seeking ones. God's seeking ones are His abode, and He is their abode. Through the death and resurrection of Christ, the mingling of God with His chosen and redeemed people to produce the mutual abode has been accomplished.

THE ENJOYMENT AND EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST

Today's religious system has distracted us from the enjoyment of Christ. Religion has teachings, rules, and rituals for people to worship God, to serve God. The teachings in religion deal with how to adjust a person's character and how to improve his behavior. In today's Christianity there are many teachings and gifts, but the sad thing is that the central thought of God revealed in the Scriptures has been greatly missed and even lost. The central thought of God is that God wants to be our enjoyment. We have to partake of Him and enjoy Him, not just to know Him with a certain amount of objective knowledge but to know Him in our subjective experience. We have

to taste Him as David charged us to do in Psalm 34:8—“Taste and see that Jehovah is good.” In Psalm 36 we are told that we need to be saturated with the fatness of the Lord’s house, enjoying the fountain of life in the Lord’s light. This describes the enjoyment of the Lord and the experience of the Lord Himself. It is not enough to have some objective knowledge about the Lord and to learn many doctrines and teachings concerning the Lord. We must experience the Lord and taste the Lord.

The seeking one in Song of Songs said, “As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, / So is my beloved among the sons: / In his shade I delighted and sat down, / And his fruit was sweet to my taste” (2:3). This indicates how precious the Lord is to the seeking one. He is like an apple tree providing the seeking one with shade and rich fruit. We can rest under His shadow and enjoy His fruit, which are all His riches for our enjoyment. The apple tree is not for the scientific study of the seeking one but for her to rest under its shade and enjoy the fruit. We need to experience and enjoy the Lord in such a way.

For many years I have been taught, helped, and even strengthened to enjoy the Lord in such a way. This is why we should not focus on the doctrines, the teachings, and the gifts, but we should focus our entire being on the Lord Himself. We should learn to enjoy Him, to contact Him, to eat Him, to partake of Him. The Lord said, “He who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me” (John 6:57). We must learn to know the Lord in such an experiential way, day by day tasting Him and being satisfied with Him. We need to be saturated with the fatness of His house, saturated and permeated with His sweetness.

THE ISSUE OF OUR ENJOYMENT OF THE LORD

If we enjoy the Lord in this way, this enjoyment will create a deep hunger within us for the Lord’s heart’s desire, His dwelling place. This enjoyment will stir us up to pray, “Lord, bring me fully into the experience of the church life. Keep me in Your courts and in Your house all the days of my life.” The enjoyment of the Lord will bring you into the church life, and the church life will cause you to enjoy Him even more as the fountain of life and the source of light. Sometimes people asked us where we received all our light from. They wondered what books we studied to get this light from the Word. Actually, the light we have received is from the living Lord Himself in the church. In the church the Bible is an open book. The church is typified by the tabernacle. Within the tabernacle is the table of the bread of the Presence, which is the source, the fountain, of life, and the lampstand, which is the source of light. Life and light are both in the house of the Lord, in the church, God’s building. This life and light are inexhaustible in the church. In the Lord’s house the light even floods in, as the psalmist said, “In Your light we see light” (Psa. 36:9).

The issue of the enjoyment of the tree of life is the tabernacle, the house of the Lord. If we enjoy Him in such a living and real way as the tree of life, we will have the tabernacle, and we will be in the house of the Lord. At that time we will be able to say that we are saturated with the fatness of the house of the Lord. We will enjoy Him as the fountain of life and the source of light. We will only desire to dwell in His house all the days of our life and will have a full realization that a day in His courts is better than a thousand. We will be like the sparrow that has found a house and the swallow that has found a nest for herself where she may lay her young at the two altars of the house (84:3). The church life will be our resting place and a nest to take care of the younger ones whom we have brought to the Lord. Thank and praise the Lord for the fatness of His house.