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# BIBLE TALK

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This week we continue with the question from last week: **What does the church mean to God?**

We are trying to see from the scriptures how God views the church. We noticed several things in our first study:

- We noticed the church was in the eternal plans of God (Eph. 1:3-5).
- That Jesus came to the earth and died for the church (Acts 20:28).
- And we noticed that the tabernacle and the temple of the OT was given to symbolize the church. Because they were symbols of the church, only the finest materials were allowed to be used.

Please notice the passage that teaches the temple symbolized the church:

## **Hebrews 8:2**

<sup>2</sup> [Jesus is] a Minister of the sanctuary and of **the true tabernacle** which the Lord erected, and not man.

Again:

## **Hebrews 12:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> But you [i.e. Christians] have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,  
<sup>23</sup> to **the general assembly** and **church** of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,

- The most valuable material was used because the church was being pictured!
- Utmost care and greatest craftsmen were used.
- Pattern given by God Himself (1 Ch. 28:12, 19).

### **1 Chronicles 28:11-12, 19**

<sup>11</sup> Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat;

<sup>12</sup> and the plans for all that he had **by the Spirit**, ...

<sup>19</sup> "All this," said David, "**the LORD made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me**, all the works of these plans."

Church is the most precious / valuable institution God ever devised and so ... the temple (symbol) must be:

- Most valuable
- Most precise
- Most beautiful

Temple was:

- Built on Mt. Moriah – highest part of Jer. to show it was most prominent / significant. **(Apply to church)**
- Had its own wall around it – symbol of God's care and protection. **(Apply to church)**

Everything in temple symbolized something about NT church.

- Table of showbread = communion
- Altar of incense = prayer (Rev. 5:8)
- Candlestick = word of God (Ps. 119:105)
- Laver = baptism (cf. Tit. 3:5)

## **MISTAKE OF ISRAEL**

**Israel made a terrible mistake: They did not see the temple as a symbol of the church.**

- All they could see was their beautiful building.
- They thought God **did** dwell in buildings on earth.
- They thought a temple made with human hands could make them close to God.

But isn't this what people think today? Don't people today tend to think:

- That a beautiful, expensive, elaborate building will impress God?
- That God dwells in manmade buildings on earth?

Ask some people who have such elaborate buildings: Why this extravagant, beautiful, expensive building?

Some might say: God's temple in OT was elaborate, expensive. Thus our building is also.

- They fail to see the purpose of OT temple.
- They, like Israel, cannot see the physical temple of Solomon symbol of NT church.

## **SUMMARY**

The church of Christ is not a physical building.

- In OT days it was symbolized by a physical building.
- Church = God's people who submit to His terms of pardon.

### **1 Peter 2:5**

<sup>5</sup> **you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house**, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Do not underestimate the church. Outwardly it may not appear very impressive, but it is the Lord's people!

Remember Jesus:

- He did not appear to be very impressive (cf. Isa. 53:2).
- He was poor (Mt. 8:20).
- He was not found among the upper echelons of society (Lk. 15:2).

Is it any marvel that His body would be the same way?

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Well ... thanks for listening to our message this week. We invite you to visit our website [www.WillOfTheLord.com](http://www.WillOfTheLord.com). There you may download the notes and the audio file of the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on ***Bible Talk***.