

Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

You Must be Born Again!

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He Tabernacled Among Us

December 15, 2019

Sermon Text: John 1:1-14

Scripture Reading: Exodus 29:37-46

Joh 1:1-14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) He was in the beginning with God. (3) All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

(4) In him was life, and the life was the light of men. (5) The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (6) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. (7) He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. (8) He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. (9) The true light,

which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

(10) He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. (11) He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. (12) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, (13) who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (14) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Most of you will remember way back in 2011 when we traced the major theme of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation in sermon series called “In My Father’s House.” We traced the theme of the tabernacle and temple, specifically noting this repeated statement from the Lord:

Leviticus 26:11-12 ESV (11) I will make my dwelling among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. (12) And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people.

It is this theme that Paul is pointing to here in Ephesians:

Ephesians 2:19-22 ESV(19) So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (20) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, (21) in - 12 - whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (22) In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Incidentally, our friend Rene put this sermon series together in an illustrated and condensed way some years back and I have always wanted to be able to publish it so that it would serve as a very good tool to help people understand what the Bible is all about. Jessica is helping me now to put it into a format for publishing and it looks like that is going to happen before long.

Now, stay with me and I will show you what all of this has to do with John chapter 1.

As you move through the Bible, what you see is God's purpose of "walking among us" and we being His people and Him being our God, dwelling among us just as He did with Adam and Eve in Eden, playing out. In fact, by tracing the theme of the *temple* from Genesis to Revelation, you can clearly see that the Lord is moving us back to Eden where His Temple will not be in one locale, but will be everywhere in the New Heavens and Earth because Christ is the temple. Better than Eden.

And it is what happened at that first Christmas, at the nativity of Jesus Christ, that plays such a vital and central role in the Lord accomplishing His purpose. *I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people.* What sin separated, the Lord in Christ is reconciling.

Now, look at this 14th verse of John 1 again:

Joh 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Now, that word "dwelt" is our concern. The word for tent, dwelling place, and the word used for the Lord's tabernacle in the wilderness is *skene*

and the verb form, which we have here in verse 14 is *skenoo*. In other words, “to tent, to dwell, to tabernacle.” The Word became flesh and tabernacle among us (which is the way it is worded in the KJV for instance). To take up residence.

Knowing then that the major theme of the Bible and the chief purpose of God, for His glory, is that He dwell among us and we would be His people and He would be our God, this word “dwelt” leaps right out at us. It tells us that at the birth of Christ, the purpose of God took a huge leap forward.

- Eden, the original temple
- The tabernacle in the wilderness
- Solomon’s temple
- The rebuilding of the temple under Ezra and Nehemiah
- But then, that night in Bethlehem, Immanuel came and dwelt among us – God with us.

It was no longer just the high priest once a year who could go into the presence of God in the Holy of holies, but now everyone who would, could come to Him.

This is why Jesus referred to Himself as the Temple:

Joh 2:19-21 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” (20) The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” (21) But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

A temple, you see, is where man meets God and when Jesus was here on this earth, He is where you met God. Not in the Jerusalem temple anymore. No longer would the Lord command His people to build a building to serve as His temple.

But the Lord’s purpose doesn’t stop there, does it? No. He keeps drawing closer and closer and closer to us:

Eph 2:19-22 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (20) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, (21) in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (22) In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

1Pe 2:4-9 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, (5)

you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

(6) For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” (7) So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” (8) and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

(9) But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

See it? The Lord once dwelt in a tent, then in a building, separated from us by a heavy veil which no one dare go past except the high priest once each year and he had to meticulously follow the prescribed purification. Why? Because the Lord is holy, holy, holy.

But now, this thrice holy God whose presence would instantly consume the

sinner, *is dwelling in us!* That is what this is all about:

Act 2:14-18 But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. (15) For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. (16) But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: (17) ““And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; (18) even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

God Himself, by His Spirit, came upon His church and took up residence IN them. So that now the New Testament tells us over and over that WE are the temple of God! How can that be? Why are we not consumed immediately? Because in Jesus Christ, the Lord has made us holy. He has cleansed us. Washed away our sins. Justified us so we are without guilt.

1Co 3:16-17 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that 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.

Rom 8:11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

And it was the Son of God coming into this world to take our sins upon Himself at the cross who made it possible for His Father to take one step closer to us, and be in us.

Christ's body, His church, is now His Temple. We are citizens of His new creation. And one day, when He comes again, this old creation is going to be burned up, all evil is going to be done away with forever, and the New Heavens and New Earth will be here, and we in it. The entire thing, all that is new, will be the Temple of the Lord.

Rev 21:22-27 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. (23) And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. (24) By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their

glory into it, (25) and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. (26) They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. (27) But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Now, because of these things, Christmas should remind us of this:

1Pe 1:14-19 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, (15) but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, (16) since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." (17) And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, (18) knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, (19) but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

And again:

2Co 6:14-18 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with

lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? (15) What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? (16) What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (17) Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, (18) and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”

Rev 21:7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

Christmas you see, is very much about all of these things – God come to dwell among us and make us His own possession.