

Reciprocity – Psalm 27:1-5

In **verses 4, 5** and **6** David speaks of “*the house of the Lord,*” God’s “*pavilion*” and His “*tabernacle.*” Are these three things – or places – **the same?** **Most commentators** think that they are, and I agree. Well then, does David refer to the **same place** in his famous **23rd Psalm** – “*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever?*” I don’t see why we should make one “*house of the Lord*” different from the other at least in these **Psalms**.

But **what** did **David mean** when he said, I want to “*dwell in the HOUSE of the LORD all the days of my life?*” The **first answer** to come to mind, might be to the **Tabernacle of Witness** or perhaps to **the Temple**. But the **Temple** had not **yet been built** – that came during the reign of David’s son, Solomon. And it **might be argued** that the **Tabernacle** was **no longer in use** since the **Ark of the Covenant** was in **storage**. Besides, **could David**, or anyone else for that matter, literally spend his **entire life** in the Tabernacle? **Was he speaking loosely** – actually meaning, “*I’ll be at the Tabernacle every week or every other day?*” If that is his meaning, **then** David **wasn’t** being **accurate** or **honest**. He specifically said, “*I will dwell in the house of the Lord FOR EVER.*” **No one** but the most dedicated priest was **there that often**, season after season, year after year. **I don’t think** David wasn’t **speaking** about the **Tabernacle**. **John Gill**, **foolishly** said that this “*house of the Lord*” refers to the **Church of Christ**. That is **wrong**. First, the church **came into existence** during the **ministry of Jesus Christ** – not in David’s life time. **David** could not have **even guessed** that the Lord would **eventually** have a **special “ecclesia”** – “*called out assembly*” – church. David was **not even inadvertently** speaking **allegorically** of the Lord’s church. We are treading on a **slippery slope** when we try to blend the **Old Testament ministry** with the **church**.

No, David was **not speaking allegorically** of the **Lord’s church**. And yet I **do** think he **was speaking allegorically**. But he was speaking about a **different kind** of “*house of God.*” “*For in the time of trouble he (Jehovah) shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.*”

David said that **this tabernacle, pavilion, “house of God”** was a **place of divine protection** – safety. Essentially – “*the Lord shall protect me in the time of trouble.*” But was David thinking of a **specific place?** Was there some **special fortress or castle?** Was he thinking about **Zion the city of God?** Or could he have been thinking about the **Lord’s protection wherever he was** – when it was **needed?** Can’t we say, **the house of the Lord** the place where **we find the Lord?** There is **where we hide in the Lord**; where the Lord **protects us**. **Psalm 91** – “*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.*” One might say that **the house of the Lord** is a place of **refuge under His wings**. **And as such** in this house of the Lord is the **place of fellowship with God** as well. **So any time** David can **withdraw from his daily problems**, he can **visit with the Lord** in His house. **This how** David can **vow**, “*I will dwell in the house of the Lord FOR EVER.*” This is how he can “*dwell in the house of the Lord ALL the days of (his) life?*” **Fellowship with God through our Saviour** Christ Jesus is **one of the blessings** of being a **saint of God**. **But sadly very few RESIDE in this holy place**. We **may visit** from time to time, but **most don’t “dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of their lives.”**

If we could maintain a constant and perpetual fellowship with the Lord, we could say, “*I do dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*” **When** we have **fellowship** with our **Saviour** and **with all** those who **call Him their Saviour**, we are **living** in this “*house of God.*” “*If we walk in the light (or dwell, or abide in the light), as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*” **Here** in this place, **God** is our **first thought** of the day and our **last thought** at night. Here is **our headquarters** where we discover our **reason for life** and our **reason for service**. **Here** we pick up our **Christian armor** and from where we **draw power against** our **besetting sins**. Living in this house, we find ourselves **satisfied** with what He sets before us to see, to eat, to read, to know. **Here** the **Lord is our everything** – our **all in all**.

And, as David says, **in this house of the Lord** there is **safety**, so there is **no reason to fear**. Look at the **fearlessness of Peter** as he stands before the **High Priest of Israel**, proclaiming the name of his Saviour. **Peter** at that time was **dwelling in the house of the Lord**. And there is **Paul** before the **intellectuals of Athens**, or in bonds before **Herod**, or **Felix**. **Despite** being in some **palace** or **courtroom**, he was **actually abiding** in the “*House of the Lord.*” **Even** in the **prison at Philippi** or in **Roman chains** with every **expectation** of being **executed**, he might have said with David, “*For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide*

me; he shall set me up upon a rock.”

How can someone be in **two places at once**? In prison and in the House of God? It is **possible when** that person is **both a natural man** and someone who is **spiritually alive**. The **saint** of God, with **his 2 natures**, can experience **both the physical** and the **spiritual** at the same time. It is **somewhat parallel** to what Jesus said to His disciples, **“At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.”** **How** could **Christ** be in the **Father and in us** while at the same time we are in Christ? **Maybe I can’t explain it**, but I **can believe it**, because **Christ said it** and the **Bible recorded it**.

Have **you ever** been sitting in **this auditorium** but with your **mind at home**? Has your ear **been listening** to the Word of God, but your **brain been thinking** about some **problem**? **Can a mind** be occupied with **two thoughts** at once? I have heard it argued that no **one really multi-tasks** – does more than one thing at the same time. Rather, I am told, our **minds only skip back and forth** between the things we are doing. For some that back and forth is **so quick and seamless** it seems like they are doing two things at once. And then **there is me**, who can **hardly do one thing well** at any given time. **How** can I be both here in **this auditorium** – in this House of the Lord and in **David’s House of God**?

Would you **permit me to answer** with the word **“reciprocity”**? For the next few minutes you **may think** I’m **getting off track**, but I’m only taking the **scenic route** to get to my destination – **“the House of God.”** **Reciprocity**. What is reciprocity? The dictionary says it is **“the practice of exchanging things for mutual benefit.”** **John 14:20** – **“At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.”** The Bible teaches the existence of **spiritual reciprocity**, with the **benefit primarily going to us**.

How can I live in David’s version of the House of God?

Isn’t it a **part of what Paul says** in **Galatians 2:20**? **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”** One way to understand **salvation** is through the **doctrine of imputation**. **The sinner lays his hands** on the head of the **sacrifice, transferring or imputing**, by faith, his **sins** and their **guilt** to the victim. And the **innocence of the animal**, or more specifically the **righteous of Christ**, is imputed to the sinner. **Who died on the cross**? Christ did. But at the same time **“I am crucified with Christ.”** **Christ arose** from the grave, and, Paul says, **“I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”** The **Christian life** is essentially **“Christ living in me.”** Don’t we have here a very special, spiritual **reciprocity**?

If the **House of God** in David’s **Psalms** is the **presence of God** with all His **blessings**, how can I live in Post Falls and there with God at the same time? The simple answer is – **I can** live in the House of God, if **the God of that House is living in me**. Perhaps more accurately, **I can enjoy the blessings** of that House if I am **filled with the blessings of Christ**. And that, beloved, is **something for which our Saviour prayed**. As we eavesdrop in the Saviour in **John 17** we hear – Father, **“the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”**

There are at **several scriptures** which speak of **different varieties** of this **reciprocity**, bringing us into God’s house – His presence.

For example, there is the reciprocity of FELLOWSHIP.

The Lord Jesus said in **John 6:56** – **“He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.”** **Whatever else** is contained in these mysterious words about eating and drinking, at the very least this is talking about **an intimate relationship** between the Saviour and the believer. **As we take in more** and more of the Lord, **the more He presents Himself to us** as He dwells in us. And doesn’t **“dwelleth in me”** take our minds back to the words of David. **“I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.”**

We as Christians have a **choice every morning** – if not every hour of the day. We can **choose to dwell** in the House of the Lord or to dwell in the world. We can **go out when the dew is still** on the roses and **collect the Lord’s manna** to feast on throughout the day. **We can breakfast** on the Lord and then **snack** on Him for the next 18 hours, **because not only** do we, as God’s saints, **dwell in Christ** – but **He dwells in us**. **Reciprocity**. We don’t have to go through the **Beautiful Gate** into the temple in order to find God – **“Christ liveth in me.”** We don’t have to **go to the Cathedral** or even the **church building to meet the Lord**, if we are determined to live our day in the light of His presence – in His house. Christ said, **“He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I IN HIM.”**

“And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.”

Thinking about your house – do you have any RULES?

You know the kind I mean – **close the door** – don’t slam it. Put the **toilet seat down** – put the toilet seat up. **Make your bed**. Put your **dirty dishes** in the sink or dishwasher. Do you have a rule about **taking your shoes off** at the door? **If we want** to be on the **best of terms** with mom or grandma, we need to **follow her rules**. And if **worse come to worst**, we may end up **in the dog house** rather than the main house.

Does the **house of God have any rules**? Are any of God’s **blessings conditional**? Well, **if there are**, then **how** can any of us **enjoy those blessings**? Did you know there is some **very helpful reciprocity** when it comes to **Christian obedience**? **I John 3:13** – *“And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in (the Lord), and he in him.”* I realize that this **might sound like** – **if we obey God**, He will **dwell** in us – but that is not the case. **We who dwell** in the Lord, **keep his commandments**, **BECAUSE** the **Lord dwells in us**.

From where does the **strength, ability**, and even **the WILL to obey the Lord, come**? It **doesn’t** come **FROM** us, but **rather from WITHIN** us. How many times when we **know what we ought** to do to please the Lord, we **end up not doing it**? **We can beat ourselves up**; we can **chew** ourselves out; we can **rebuke** and **berate** ourselves. We can **vow** and **determine** to do better tomorrow. But we find ourselves to be **just as weak the next day** – and even in **the next hour**. If we **really intend to obediently serve** the Lord, we need to **recognize** that we are **totally helpless**. But we have an **internal ally** – **the Lord Himself**.

Please notice once again how we are coming **back to David’s Psalms**. *“He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in (the Lord), and he in him.”* We can be in **the world, helping** a sick neighbor, **witnessing** to a grieving widow, or **trimming the grass** at the church building, and at the same time be **“dwelling in the house of God.”** You **may or may not** become **aware of the presence** of the Lord as you serve Him. **Whether you do or not**, like Paul in prison or Peter preaching to the crowd in Solomon’s porch, **God is there** and you are in **“His House”** because this is **the sort of thing** which is **done in God’s house**. For Christians, in a very special way, *“In Him we live and move and have our being.”*

There is also reciprocity in CONFESSION.

“Confession” is one of those words which has **more than one very different meaning**. And perhaps I should make a **point** right here about **confessing** and **apologizing** to mother for breaking her house rules. Is there any **need for Christian confession** before the Lord in order to enjoy the blessings of His house? Is the sun hot? Is ice cold? But that is **not the kind of confession** where **reciprocity is to be found**. **The Lord has nothing to confess to us**. This is speaking of a **different kind of confession**.

I John 4:15 says – *“Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.”*

There were **periods in history** when those **confessing Christ** became **martyrs** in the ultimate sense – they died. **Those days** may, for the most part be **gone**, except in a few Muslim/ ISIS countries, **but the difficulty of confessing** the Saviour before lost people **still remains**. There is a **natural proneness** toward **fleshly embarrassment** which **gags** and **chokes** our confession. **From where** does the **wisdom** and **will come** to speak up for Christ? **From the Lord who dwells within**. If you want to insist, it is **God the Holy Spirit**, I won’t argue with you.

How can I become **more bold** in my witness of my Saviour? Why not **recognize where you dwell**. *“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. I will fear no evil; for thou art with me. Thou anointest my head with oil. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell – no, I do now dwell – in the house of the Lord, both now, and for ever.”* **Why can’t I boldly confess my true residence**, as quickly as I repeat my **cell phone number**? **Is it because I don’t contemplate** and **meditate** on my spiritual home as I should – the house of God? Perhaps it is a **lack of faith on my part**. Is it a **lack of understanding God’s love**? **Paul** prayed for the **Ephesians** – *“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may DWELL in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God”* – **Ephesians 3:14-19**. Through saving grace, we have been invited to dwell in God’s House – not

when we eventually die – today. **David purposed** to make **God's home his home**, teaching us to take up that **same purpose**. And it was Paul's' prayer *that Christ may dwell in (our) hearts by faith, being rooted and grounded in love.*"

And speaking of LOVE, there is a reciprocity there as well.

Love is one of the **primary requirements** to the enjoyment of God's House. Again it is **John who tells us** about this – **I John 4:10** – *"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, **God DWELLETH in him, and he in God.** And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."*

It is **not an easy thing to love people** with whom we have **no natural affinity**. That man **may not behave** in a manner which is **pleasing to us**, but we are to **love him anyway**. **That woman said something** which cut us to the core, but we are to love her. There are **people who chafe us**, who **provoke us**, **annoy** and **irritate us**, but we are to love them.

How can I obey the Lord in this, when it is so contrary to my flesh? **Go home and take a look around**. I'm not talking about your home in Idaho or Washington, but to that **house of God where you dwell**. **He who is indwelt** by the Holy Spirit of God, **should move into in the House of God**. If you **can't remember who indwells you**, remember **where you dwell** and perhaps the rest will fall into place. **You were loved** when you were **unlovely** and **humanly unloveable** – therein is love. And now you have a **room in God's home** – His temple – **let His love flow** through you. Let his love **speak through your voice**, and **look through your eyes**, and **empower your fingers**. Christians can and must **learn to love with His love**. *"You can do all things through Christ that strengthened us."*

Conclusion:

None of these things I have mentioned tonight can be **maintained or carried out in our own strength**. We can't **love, confess, obey** or even **fully enjoy the Lord** without bringing into operation that **reciprocity of indwelling** which is found in these verses. Just as *"we love Him because He first loved us,"* we **serve Him** and **fellowship** with Him, because He **dwells in us** and **fellowships with us**.

We have to **be like David** – **determined** to make our **hearts His home, while we dwell in His**.