

Pictures of the People of God

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22)

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Sept 25th

Isaiah 55:8,9 reminds us that God sees churches differently than we tend to see ourselves. Because of this, God must reveal himself to us in order for us to "see" (understand) Him, *and even ourselves*. The Bible reveals many different truths & pictures that enable us to do this.

Precious Pictures: Buried Treasure (Mt 13:44); Pearls of Great Price (Mt 13:45,46)

Progressive Pictures: Clay in God's hands (Jer. 18:1-6; Is. 64:8); God's Sheep (Ps. 23; 100; Jn 10)

Personal Pictures: Part of His Family (Eph 2:19; 3:14-21); The Bride of Christ (Rev 19:7,8; 2 Cor 11:2)

Practical Pictures: Part of His Body (Ro. 12; 1 Cor 12); His Garden (1 Cor. 3:9; Jn 15)

This morning I'd like to look at a very POWERFUL PICTURE God uses to describe us

A "PALATIAL" TEMPLE. Eph. 2:20-22

"And (ye) are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. "

1. THIS DESCRIBES OUR POWER (Acts 1:8)

A. This "Power" is related to His Presence . *"Christ in you, the hope of Glory."* (Col. 1:27)

1) At the dedication of the Temple (2 Chr 5:13-14) *The Priest's couldn't stand when God showed up.*

B. Since we have His Spirit, (Presence) We have access to His great power!

1) Power for Presenting Truth (Service) Acts 1:8 *"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, And ye shall be witnesses unto me..."* (See also Mt. 28:18,19; and Eph. 3:19-21)

2) Power for Protection. 1 John 4:4 *"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."*

3) Power for Production Jn 15:4 *"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."*

2. THIS ALSO DESCRIBES OUR PRAISE. (Rev. 4:11)

A. The Levites were the original Praise and Worship leaders for the Temple. 2 Chr 20:19

"And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high."

1) The phrase: *"To the chief musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah"* is found repeatedly in the Psalms. (Ps. 42, 44,45,46,47,48,49, 84,85,87,88)

B. We're called to worship and Praise the Lord.

1) God commanded this. Ps. 100; Eph 5:18-20; Heb. 13:15

2) The Early church modeled this. Acts 2:46-47

3) Heaven will perfect this. (Rev. 4:10,11)

3. THIS ALSO DESCRIBES OUR PURITY. (1 Cor 6:19,20) *“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”*
(1 Cor 3:9) *“For we are labourers together with God: . . . , ye are God’s building.”*

A. Remember why Jesus Purged the temple (2x)? *“My house shall be called. . . a house of prayer.*
Proseuchē’: worship, supplication

1) The Priests neglected their primary purpose and corrupted the Temple effectively turning it into:
“ . . . ye have made a den of thieves ” Mt 21:13; Jn2:15
Mt 23:38 *“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.”* (Icabod: The Glory is departed!)

2) Do you think Jesus may have similar emotions about His “Purchased possessions” (you and I) behaving as if their lives (Temple) were their own! 1Cor 6:19,20 *“ye are not your own. . . ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”*

1 Cor. 3:9 *“we are laborers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. . . .*
10 *But let every man take heed how he builds thereupon.*

Vs 11-15 talks about the day of Judgment (Bema)

16 *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

17 *If any man defile (phtheiro) the temple of God, him shall God destroy; (phtheir’ō: corrupt, waste) for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”*

The Temple analogy not only speaks of Power, Prayer, Purity

4. BUT ALSO DESCRIBES OUR PRIVILEGED PURPOSE! 1 Peter 2:9

“ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;
(peripoi’ēsis: precious, purchased possession)

that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”

5. IT ALSO REPRESENTS OUR PERSISTENCE!

(2 Tim. 4:7,8) *“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”* (See 1 Jn 2:28)

(See also Mt 25:21; 1 Cor 15:58; Gal. 6:9; Heb. 10:35-39)

Rev. 3:11,12 *“Behold, I come quickly: (Tachu: suddenly) hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh (nik-ah'-o ; conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory) will I make a pillar in the temple of my God! ”*

Conclusion:

The Pillars in St Mark’s Cathedral in Venice are alabaster; Making them as durable as granite, and yet translucent, so that the light appears to glow through them. (Mt 5:14-16)

They are an emblem of what all true (priestly) pillars of the church should be:

Tough: In their faith... and Transparent: In their character.

Application:

Eph. 2:22 *“In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”*

Are you cooperating with God’s Spirit as He seeks to cultivate God’s Power, Praise, Purity, Purposes and Persistence in you?