

24-0728a Transcript

24-0728a - *A Holy Temple*, Scott Reynolds

Bible Readers: Kevin Woosley and Roger Raines

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A Holy Temple

Transcript (0:04 - 35:45)

Scripture Readings

1st Reader: Kevin Woosley

Acts 17:24,25

(0:04) The first scripture reading is out of the book of Acts, chapter 17, verses 24 and 25. (0:13) Acts 17, 24, and 25. (0:17) God, who made the world and everything in it, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, (0:24) does not dwell in temples made with hands, nor is he worshipped with men's hands, (0:30) as though he needed anything, since he gives to all life, breath, and all things.

2nd Reader: Roger Raines

John 14:1-6

(0:41) Good morning. I'll be reading from the Gospel of John, chapter 14, verses 1 through 6. (0:50) John 14, verse 6. (0:54) Do not let your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. (0:59) In my Father's house are many dwelling places. If it were not so, I would have told you so. (1:07) For I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, (1:14) I will come again and receive you to myself. That's where I am. (1:19) There you may be there also, and you know the way where I am going. (1:25) Thomas said to him, Lord, we do not know where you are going. How do we know the way? (1:34) Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. (1:40) No one comes to the Father but through me. (1:43) This concludes this reading.

Transcript

Preacher: Scott Reynolds

(1:50) Thank you, Roger. (1:52) Good to see everyone here, both me and our visitors. Nice to see you. (1:57) Today it's my privilege to give the lesson. (2:02) We've been talking about equipping the saints for the work of service, (2:06) and that comes from our basis scripture from Ephesians 4.11 through 13.

(2:14) And it reads, (2:15) And he himself gave some to be apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, (2:22) and some as shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of service, (2:28) for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith (2:35) and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to become mature to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (2:44) And our other passage is Ephesians 2, same book, Ephesians 2, verses 17 through 22. (2:53) And he came, that's Jesus, and Jesus came and preached peace to you who were far off, (2:59) and peace to those who were near.

(3:01) For through him we both have access in one spirit to the Father. (3:07) So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens (3:13) with the saints and members of the household of God, (3:17) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, (3:21) Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, (3:25) in whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (3:34) In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

(3:45) And in our previous lessons we noted that Paul used the building construction metaphor (3:52) in that passage we just read to express church growth. (3:56) And as we investigated this metaphor, we saw that Jesus built his church on bedrock, (4:04) the firmest material on which to lay a foundation. (4:08) And Jesus himself is the cornerstone laid on the rock that aligns the rest of the foundation, (4:16) noting that the cornerstone itself is also part of that foundation.

(4:21) So Jesus is the rock, the cornerstone, and foundation of his church. (4:29) And we wondered, once we have the foundation that has been given to us, (4:35) which is Jesus Christ, 1 Corinthians 3.11 says, (4:39) what do we build on top of it? (4:41) After all, a foundation isn't a completed construction. (4:47) So what goes on top? (4:49) Next we look at the common view of the unity of faith addressed in 1 Corinthians (4:56) where the brethren were divided.

(4:59) Paul flatly tells them, (5:02) I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, (5:06) that all of you agree and that there be no divisions among you, (5:11) but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. (5:16) 1 Corinthians 1.10 rather. (5:21) We are to love one another, live in harmony with one another.

(5:24) Romans 12.10 and 16. (5:27) And that there be no division in the body. (5:29) 1 Corinthians 12.25. (5:32) And that is definitely a major point.

(5:36) Nothing can destroy a church faster than division. (5:41) A house divided cannot stand. (5:44) I've seen plenty of churches split during my lifetime.

(5:49) We need to strive for unity. (5:54) However, the last Sunday morning that I spoke, (5:57) we looked at another view of the unity of faith that is described in the Bible (6:04) in our attempt to determine what to build on top of the foundation that is Jesus Christ. (6:11) Paul tells us that this other unity is represented by the union of a husband and wife in Ephesians 5.22-32. (6:25) And by the way, for those who do not know, if you have the newsletter, (6:33) under the heading is our website and URL.

(6:40) If you go to our website, there's a number of tabs you can click across the top. (6:46) The second one is education. (6:49) And all the sermons that we preach here are towards the bottom of the page, (6:56) listed with the name, title, and who preached.

(7:01) So all my previous lessons that are linked to this one are there, and you can look them up. (7:10) But Paul tells us that this unity, this other unity, (7:15) is represented by the union of a husband and wife in Ephesians 5.22-32. (7:22) And I brought that up because that's something worth looking at, (7:26) and we don't have time to do it today. (7:29) We've already done it.

(7:32) Where we found mention of this mysterious union, Paul says, (7:38) Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother, and hold fast to his wife, (7:43) and the two shall become one flesh. (7:45) This mystery is profound, he says, and I'm saying that it refers to, (7:51) not the husband and wife, that it refers to Christ and the church. (7:56) This mysterious union is the union of Christ and his church, the unity of faith.

(8:05) We asked last time if the union of a husband and wife is one flesh, (8:11) then what is the union of Christ and his church? (8:15) Paul answers this question when he instructed the Corinthians (8:19) on why they shouldn't participate with temple prostitutes (8:23) in 1 Corinthians 6, verses 13-20. (8:28) I'll pick up with verse 15. (8:31) Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? (8:37) Shall I then take members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? (8:42) Never.

(8:43) Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute (8:48) is one with her in body? (8:51) For it is said, the two will become one flesh. (8:57) That's that mysterious fleshly union. (9:00) The two will become one flesh, even in an unauthorized union.

(9:07) Paul continues in verse 17. (9:11) But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. (9:17) And there it is.

(9:18) It's called unio mystica, the mysterious union. (9:23) And the answer to what is the union of Christ and his church, (9:28) we could say, and the two will become one spirit. (9:33) But Paul says it this way.

(9:35) Whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. (9:41) And then Paul makes the connection with our study on equipping the saints (9:46) that we read in Ephesians. (9:48) We are looking for what we can build on top of that foundation (9:52) that has been given to us, the foundation that is Jesus Christ.

(9:56) And Paul tells us in verse 19. (9:59) Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (10:07) who is in you, whom you have received from God? (10:13) You are not your own. (10:15) Without verse 19, we might think that verse 17 was a metaphor.

(10:21) That is, whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit (10:25) might be something like if we joined the church, became a Christian, (10:31) then we'll have the same spirit, (10:33) almost as if we're on the same sports team or business team (10:37) and we all have the same team spirit. (10:41) I've been experimenting with ChatGPT. (10:45) It's an artificial intelligence application available to the public, (10:51) asking it various questions to see how it would respond, (10:55) mostly questions about my computer or asking for a recipe, nothing very serious.

(11:01) But lately, I have been asking a variety of religious questions. (11:07) It is very aware of the religious world, and it has some good answers. (11:18) Applicable to this lesson, I asked, what is meant by team spirit? (11:25) There's its reply.

(11:28) Wait a minute. (11:29) I've got too much stuff up here. (11:35) Team spirit refers to the feelings of camaraderie, trust, and mutual respect (11:42) among members of a group working together towards a common goal.

(11:47) It embodies the collective enthusiasm, loyalty, and motivation of the team members, (11:52) often resulting in a positive and proactive working environment. (11:58) Key aspects of team spirit include, number one, cohesion. (12:04) Members feel a sense of belonging and unity.

(12:08) Number two, collaboration. (12:10) Team members work well together. (12:12) They share responsibilities and support each other.

(12:16) Number three, motivation. (12:18) The team collectively strives towards achieving shared goals and objectives. (12:25) Number four, trust.

(12:27) There is mutual trust and confidence in each other's abilities and intentions. (12:32) Number five, communication. (12:35) Open, honest, and effective communication is maintained within the team.

(12:40) Number six, respect. (12:42) Members respect each other's ideas, contributions, and differences. (12:46) Number seven, enthusiasm.

(12:49) A positive attitude and enthusiasm for the team's work and goals are prevalent. (12:55) That's a pretty good answer, actually, if we were a team or a business. (13:02) But this is not what Paul is saying when he talks about being joined (13:06) or united with Christ and being one with him in spirit.

(13:10) And, by the way, I chose to use the NIV translation for this verse (13:15) because they're the only translation that says united. (13:20) All the other translations use the word joined. (13:23) And I wanted a clearer connection to the union of Christ (13:27) and this church that we just studied about.

(13:30) The Greek word translated union, sorry, the Greek word translated united (13:36) or joined actually means glue, to glue or unite, according to Strong's Dictionary. (13:45) We are flatly told in verse 19 that the bodies of believers are temples of the Holy Spirit (13:53) and that the Holy Spirit resides in us, (13:59) which makes sense because, as we will see, a temple is a house where God dwells. (14:09) And in actuality, he told us this already in the passage that we have read, Ephesians 2, 19-22, (14:17) and I want us to focus on the next two phrases as we read the passage.

(14:22) A holy temple, a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (14:29) So, leading off with our basic scripture. (14:31) So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, (14:35) but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (14:42) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, (14:49) in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, (14:59) in him you are also being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

(15:10) Let's look at these terms that express the characteristics of the saints. (15:16) Members of the household of God. (15:19) In the Greek, that's actually the house of God.

(15:23) Like when Joshua says, for me and my house, we will serve the Lord in Joshua 24-15. (15:31) The whole structure. (15:33) Some translations say building.

(15:35) The whole building, being joined together. (15:38) Another way of saying that is being united together. (15:43) And what is the structure or building? (15:46) The house of God.

(15:49) Grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (15:54) And here's the connection. (15:55) We are a temple of the Lord, and as revealed in other passages, our bodies are temples of the Lord.

(16:04) You also, individuals and collectively, are being built together. (16:10) The idea of unity again. (16:13) And the members are united.

(16:14) But the next phrase makes it clear that the union extends to God and the Holy Spirit (16:22) into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (16:28) A place where God dwells by the Spirit. (16:31) If our bodies are a temple of the Lord, and a temple is a dwelling place of God, (16:38) then God dwells in us His holy temple.

(16:44) You, the temple, and your body. (16:48) You are the temple. (16:50) 1 Corinthians 3, 16 and 17.

(16:54) Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? (17:00) If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. (17:08) For the temple of God is holy. (17:12) Which temple? (17:14) You are.

(17:16) Your body is the temple. (17:19) It's not just an intellectual exercise. (17:24) 1 Corinthians 6, 19 and 20.

(17:27) Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, (17:33) whom you have from God, and you are not your own? (17:37) For you were bought with a price. (17:39) Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (17:46) Your essence, who you are, is not your body.

(17:53) I know it's easy to get caught up in our physicalness. (17:57) It's all we know. (17:59) But your essence is your soul.

(18:03) Doug Hamilton, the preacher at the Junction City Church of Christ in Kansas, says, (18:09) Our soul, our inner being, encompasses our sexuality, personal preferences, intentions, knowledge, and memories. (18:18) If we desire to have a steak, it's because our soul desires to eat flesh. (18:27) Deuteronomy 12, 20.

(18:30) When the Lord your God extends your border as he has promised you, and you say, (18:36) I will eat meat because your soul desires to eat meat, then you may eat meat, whatever you desire. (18:46) When we long for God, it is our soul which thirsts for him. (18:51) Psalm 63, 1. (18:54) The knowledge of being fearfully and wonderfully made is captured in the soul.

(18:59) Psalm 139, 14. (19:03) When you remember someone who has passed, it is your soul which remembers. (19:09) Lamentations 3, 20.

(19:11) Our soul is the real version of ourselves, being our inner man. (19:19) Ephesians 3, 16. (19:21) The body cannot live without the spirit of life, and neither can the soul.

(19:26) According to the scriptures, when our physical body dies, Doug says, (19:31) the soul disassociates from the body, taking the spirit of life with it. (19:36) It is the spirit of life that keeps the soul alive, eternally alive. (19:44) For it is what made man a living soul to begin with.

(19:49) In Genesis 2, 7. (19:52) The spirit of life that God has connected to our souls makes it possible to continue to eternal life or eternal damnation. (20:03) But Paul isn't the first to mention this relationship between the body and the temple. (20:10) Jesus and the temple of his body, we read about in John chapter 2, verses 13 through 22.

(20:18) I'm reading a little bit more in front of where we want to go in that passage to give some context. (20:25) The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went to Jerusalem. (20:30) In the temple, he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting there.

(20:38) And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple with the sheep and oxen. (20:44) And he poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables, (20:49) and he told those who sold the pigeons, (20:53) Take these things away. Do not make my father's house a house of trade.

(21:01) His disciples remembered that it was written, (21:04) Zeal for your house will consume me. (21:08) So the Jews said to him, (21:10) What sign do you show us for doing these things? (21:14) Jesus answered them, (21:15) Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. (21:20) The Jews then said, (21:22) It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days? (21:28) He was speaking about the temple of his body.

(21:34) When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, (21:39) and they believed the scripture and the words Jesus had spoken. (21:45) That's interesting. (21:47) I didn't truly understand what was being said here until last night while I was still working on this sermon.

(21:56) Maybe you saw it, and good for you if you did. (21:59) Two temples are under discussion here. (22:02) The Jews speaking of one temple, and Jesus is speaking of another temple.

(22:07) That's obvious. (22:09) His body. (22:10) Jesus is not speaking about the temple.

(22:13) In this conversation, Jesus is not speaking about the temple in Jerusalem that was built after the return from the seventy years of captivity. (22:25) He's speaking the entire time about his body. (22:31) Verse 21 says that.

(22:33) The temple of his body. (22:35) But verse 21 is not restricted to Jesus' body after the resurrection. (22:40) That is, in three days I will raise it up.

(22:45) That's what I always thought. (22:47) He's talking about the temple at his resurrection. (22:52) And the Jews.

(22:54) But he's also talking about his body when he says, destroy this temple. (23:02) He's not talking about this temple. (23:06) Destroy this temple.

(23:10) His body. (23:13) And the Jews will be the ones, through the manipulation of the Romans, that will kill Jesus. (23:21) Destroy the temple of his body.

(23:24) What else is interesting here is that the temple is where God dwells. (23:32) And Jesus' body is a temple. (23:36) And God dwells in the body of Jesus.

(23:40) And isn't that what Paul tells us? (23:44) Isn't that what Paul tells the Colossians? (23:48) Colossians 2 verse 9. (23:52) Excuse me. (23:55) For in Jesus dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (24:03) Ever wonder why the word bodily was there? (24:07) How about when Jesus put on flesh and the Godhead including him, he's in the Godhead, including him, (24:16) dwelt in his body, his body becomes a place where God dwells.

(24:22) A temple. (24:25) What do you think? (24:28) And this brings up another very interesting point. (24:32) Temples made with hands.

(24:35) Paul in Athens at the Areopagus, before the intellectual elite of his day, made this argument in Acts 17 verses 24 and 25. (24:49) It was read, (24:52) God, who made the world and everything in it, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands, (25:04) nor is he worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, since he gives to all life, breath, and all things. (25:15) So we are told here that God doesn't dwell in man-made temples, houses, structures, or buildings.

(25:21) So where does he dwell? (25:24) Maybe in temples he made, as Paul tells the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 6 verse 16. (25:33) And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? (25:38) For you are the temple of the living God, as God has said. (25:44) And he's going to quote from the Old Testament, five different passages he makes four statements from.

(25:54) I will dwell in them, Exodus 29.45, and walk among them, Leviticus 26.12. (26:02) I will be their God, Jeremiah 31.33, and they shall be my people, Jeremiah 32.38. (26:11) So God dwells in temples he has made, not in those that man has made, made with hands. (26:20) Acts 17, 24, and 25 is not the first mention of temples made with hands. (26:27) Stephen, before the consul and high priest, giving his defense, just before he's done, says in Acts 7 verses 48 through 50, (26:39) Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands, as the prophet says.

(26:48) Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool. (26:52) What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? (26:59) Did not my hand make all these things? (27:04) Doesn't this sound like what Paul said in Acts 17? (27:08) Notice the event, Stephen's defense before the consul. (27:12) He will be stoned after his defense.

(27:16) He will be stoned to death. (27:18) And the Scripture says this about that event in Acts 7 verses 57 through 59. (27:26) Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran at Stephen with one accord.

(27:33) And they cast him out of the city, and stoned him. (27:37) And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. (27:50) And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

(27:56) Saul, later called Paul, was there. (28:02) He witnessed the speech and the stoning of Stephen. (28:07) I wonder where he got the idea that God doesn't dwell in houses or temples made by hands.

(28:21) Just saying. (28:23) The tent that is our earthly home. (28:26) Last point, and then we'll close.

(28:30) 2 Corinthians 5, 1 through 7. (28:36) This comes about, this is a study I've been doing. (28:40) This comes about looking for how the word temple is used in the New Testament. (28:50) And this is part of the study where it talks about temple not made with hands.

(28:57) And that's why this one's included. (29:02) 2 Corinthians 5, 1 through 7. (29:07) For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, (29:14) we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (29:22) For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling as if we were it.

(29:30) Put it on. (29:32) If indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked, (29:37) for while we are still in this tent we groan being burdened, (29:43) not that we would be unclothed but take off our fleshly body, (29:48) but that we would be further clothed so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. (29:59) He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, (30:05) who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

(30:09) So we are always of good courage. (30:12) We know that while we are at home in the body, (30:15) we are away from the Lord, (30:19) for we walk by faith and not by sight. (30:23) So look at these terms.

(30:25) Tent, earthly home, building from God, a house not made with hands, (30:31) put on our heavenly dwelling, unclothed, further clothed, mortal, life, (30:37) at home in the body, away from the Lord. (30:41) We walk by faith, not by sight. (30:46) You know, there was a Russian cosmonaut who made a big thing about being out in space (30:52) and he said, declared, there is no God, I can't see Him.

(30:57) I looked around, can't see Him. (30:59) We cannot see. (31:01) It's no wonder.

(31:03) We cannot see the spiritual realm. (31:06) We walk by faith, not by sight. (31:09) Creed by God.

(31:11) We see from 2 Corinthians 5, 1, and 6, (31:15) that there's this tent, this earthly home, that we're at home in the body. (31:20) So the tent is the earthly home, is the body. (31:25) They're all the same thing.

(31:26) Our body is the mortal tent where our soul dwells while on the earth. (31:34) 2 Corinthians 5, 1 and 2, we have a building from God is a house not made with hands, (31:42) is our heavenly dwelling. (31:45) Our heavenly dwelling is an eternal house not made with hands (31:50) in which our soul will be further clothed.

(31:55) This dwelling, we are clothed with this dwelling. (31:59) We put it on. (32:02) So this idea of a tent is interesting to me (32:05) because it's another association we can make between the temple and the body.

(32:13) Our body is a temple, we're told. (32:16) Our body is a tent. (32:19) God's house built by Moses is a temple, God's house.

(32:25) Being directed by God and with plans from God, we're told, (32:30) in Hebrews chapter 8, is a tabernacle. (32:35) He didn't build the temple. (32:38) Solomon built the temple.

(32:40) He built a tabernacle, a tent. (32:47) God's house on earth is a tent. (32:52) Our bodies on earth are a tent.

(32:59) Here's the sign. (33:01) If our earthly body is a tent, then me, that mansion God is preparing for us, (33:09) is that immortal body Paul talks about, 1 Corinthians chapter 15. (33:17) What do you think? (33:21) And as I said before, this is a work in progress.

(33:24) The series studies on the equipping of the saints is a work in progress. (33:29) While I knew we and our bodies were a temple of the Lord, (33:34) I wasn't aware that we being a temple had anything to do with the equipping of the saints (33:41) or the growth of the church. (33:43) It seemed just like a label, like any of the other religious terms that we know, (33:49) you know, like Christian, justified, a royal priesthood, those kinds of things.

(33:55) Ephesians chapter 2, 19 and 22. (33:58) But it does have something to do with our spiritual growth (34:02) and can be seen in our basis scripture. (34:05) One more time.

(34:07) So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens (34:13) with the saints and members of the household of God, (34:16) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, (34:19) Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, (34:23) in whom the whole structure being joined together, (34:27) and here it is, we grow into, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (34:36) In Him, and again, we are being built into. (34:41) We are a work in progress, it seems.

(34:46) You also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (34:55) I'm just pretty much at the beginning of looking into our role as the temple of the Lord. (35:00) I exhort you to do your own study into it also.

(35:06) Jesus has tasked the leadership of the church to equip the saints. (35:11) It's our responsibility as saints to become equipped for our work of service, (35:18) for building up the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of faith (35:24) and the knowledge of the Son of God, (35:26) to become mature to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ, (35:32) and with God's help and through our Lord Jesus Christ may we do just that. (35:38) The invitation is being extended to anyone who is subject to it.

(35:43) Come, while we stand and sing.