

LET GOD ARISE!

Like a Master Builder Prayer Guide #4

Rev. Dr. Don L. Davis



The Temple of the Lord

1 Corinthians 3.16-17

The Church of the Living God in Jesus Christ

Don L. Davis and Terry G. Cornett

A People of God's possession, a Nation thru Messiah's blood,
A Body of Christ's own members, a Temple where God is loved,
We're an Army that stands in battle, the Branches of God's True Vine,
We're the Church of the Living God, in Jesus Christ.

A Witness to all the nations, a City set on the hill,
A Flame that burns for Jesus, a Dwelling where Abba lives,
We're the Flock of the Great Shepherd, a Virgin and Christ's dear Bride,
We're the Church of the Living God, in Jesus Christ.

A Chosen and Holy Nation, a Kingdom of Royal Priests,
An Ark that saves God's people, a Fold for Jesus' Sheep!
We're a Vineyard for God's Own Pleasure, the Object of His Desire,
We're the Church of the Living God, in Jesus Christ.

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The Church of Jesus Christ Is the Building of God

1 Cor. 3.5-9 - What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. [6] I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. [7] So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. [8] He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. [9] For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

1 Cor. 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.

Our Bodies Are a Temple of the Holy Spirit

1 Cor. 6.19-20 - Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, [20] for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Jesus Is the Cornerstone on Which the Temple of the Lord Is Founded

Ps. 118.22 - The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

Acts 4.11 - This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.

In the End Days, the Temple of the Lord Will Be Rebuilt

Amos 9.11-12 - "In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old, [12] that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name," declares the Lord who does this.

Zech. 6.12-13 - And say to him, "Thus says the Lord of hosts, "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord. [13] It is he who shall build the temple of the Lord and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne.



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Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV)

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And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”

Christ Builds His Church on the Rock, and Nothing Will Defeat It

Matt. 16.18 - And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Heb. 3.1-6 - Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, [2] who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. [3] For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. [4] (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) [5] Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, [6] but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.

As the Temple of God, We Ought Not Have Anything to Do with Idolatry

2 Cor. 6.14-7.1 - 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.” [7.1] Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.



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We Are God's Workmanship, Being Built into a House in Which He Dwells

Eph. 2.10 - For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

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.

The Idea of Being Built Up, of Being Properly Constructed, Is a Key Biblical Concept for Christian Maturity

Col. 2.6-7 - Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, [7] rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

Matt. 7.24-25 - Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. [25] And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

1 Cor. 3.10-11 - According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. [11] For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Pet. 2.4-6 - 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



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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.”

Jude 1.20 - But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit.

Rom. 15.2 - Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

1 Cor. 10.23 - “All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up.

1 Cor. 14.4-5 - The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. [5] Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

1 Cor. 14.26 - What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

Eph. 4.11-16 - And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14] so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [15] Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, [16] from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.



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Eph. 4.29 - Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

1 Thess. 5.11 - Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

The Church Is God's Pillar and Ground of the Truth

1 Tim. 3.15 - If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of truth.

1 Pet. 2.5 - 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. ■

DO YOU not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

~ The Apostle Paul, to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 3.16-17

How can an infinite and eternal God dwell in a finite and limited space—within our assemblies, and in our hearts?

You probably don't ask questions like this very often (and, if even if you ask them, you probably don't phrase them in this way at all!). As a theological creature through and through, my mind plays host to these kinds of questions, which fly in the open spaces of my soul, never seeming to find a place to rest. While many might think questions like this are dry, absurd, and unimportant, I rather believe that they are the key to understanding our



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desire for the advance of the Kingdom among the poor, and the revival and renewal in the cities of America and the world.

Of course, one must immediately concede that God is not handle-able, not comprehensible in terms of concepts of space and time and place. Our God is eternal, immortal, invisible, the triune majestic Lord who made the heavens and the earth, all things visible and invisible. The righteous ancients were clear on their limitations when it came to creating places which dared to call themselves the habitation of God. Look at Solomon's wise prayer at the dedication of the fabulous and worthy Temple of the Lord he built at David's insistence in 1 Kings:

1 Kings 8.23-29 - And said, "O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your servants who walk before you with all their heart, [24] who have kept with your servant David my father what you declared to him. You spoke with your mouth, and with your hand have fulfilled it this day. [25] Now therefore, O Lord, God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father what you have promised him, saying, 'You shall not lack a man to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me.' [26] Now therefore, O God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you have spoken to your servant David my father. [27] But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!"

Solomon did not confuse his grand efforts to build a place of worship for the LORD God as the actual place that would contain his majesty and splendor. In Solomon's mind, it goes without saying that not even the heaven of heavens can contain the Lord, how much less a little puny house that he built in honor of the Savior of Israel?



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Still, although fully aware that God whose majesty is beyond the contemplation of humankind and cannot be contained within time and space adequately, this great God has elected to make his people his dwelling place, to come and reside in the midst of them, to attend the place that they built in his honor, and to hear their supplications made from his temple, a building which would be known as a house of prayer for the nations:

1 Kings 8.28-29 - Yet have regard to the prayer of your servant and to his plea, O Lord my God, listening to the cry and to the prayer that your servant prays before you this day, [29] that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you have said, 'My name shall be there,' that you may listen to the prayer that your servant offers toward this place.

Yes, God elected in his sovereign will to make the place of the Temple of Israel his dwelling place, a place from which prayers to his mighty name would be made and heard, and where his splendor and presence would be known.

The story of the *shekinah* glory (splendor) of God leaving the Temple is one of the great tragic narratives of the Old Testament. Because of injustice, oppression, idolatry, and iniquity, the people of God were taken into captivity by the Assyrians and the Babylonians respectively, the Temple was destroyed, and the glory of God left the land of Abraham. Although after seventy years of captivity and the return of a remnant back to the land of Israel, the former glory was never attained or experienced.

After nearly 400 years of prophetic silence, John the Baptizer emerges and awakens the sleeping nation to the prospect of the Messiah's entrance into the land, and the inauguration of the Kingdom of God begins with the manifestation of the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. In his preaching, healing, exorcisms, and personal majesty, the glory of the Father and his Kingdom



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are again manifest to God's people, and the Word "tabernacles" among us once more. And despite the fact that his own people rejected him and consigned him to death by crucifixion, he rose again from the grave on behalf of humankind. Having ascended to the Father's right hand, he sent the Holy Spirit, illumined the Gospel to the nation of Israel and to Gentiles, even to the ends of the earth. Now, God has formed one new body where Jew and Gentile distinctions are obliterated. Now through faith in Jesus Christ, a new people has been formed, a new temple has emerged, and a new dwelling place has been manifest where the Lord again can make his glories known to the world.

The amazing claim that Almighty God now dwells in the gathering of his people is everywhere affirmed in the New Testament teaching of the apostles. Paul's affirmation of this truth to the Ephesians represents one of the great truths of the faith itself:

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.

After carefully showing how the work of Jesus ended the hostility and division between Jews and Gentiles through his shed blood, Paul issues forth an analogy, a metaphor which enables us to understand the presence of God in the midst of his people. We are now together "members of the household of God," with the apostles and prophets serving as the foundation, with Jesus Christ himself being the Capstone, the Cornerstone of the edifice, and all saints together growing into a holy temple in the Lord. Now, through the Holy Spirit we are being built together into a dwelling place where the Lord himself resides. We are the "crib of the Lord!"



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Knowing that every gathering is an instance of this temple, how we ought to thank God for Christian assembly and fellowship, “not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Heb. 10.25). The revival we pray for and seek for the city is nothing less than the manifestation of the presence of God in the communities of the cities of America and the world. When God shows up, the devil is bound, evil is removed, praise is rendered, blessing is present, and life is experienced. What does the city need except merely the manifestation of the presence of God in the midst of its neighborhoods, alley ways, business districts, and corridors of power? What can transform our cities better than the manifest presence of the One whose name alone is holy! This is what we seek and desire in our prayers for the cities of the world.

In one sense, God is everywhere present, or, in the words of theologues like myself, “ubiquitous.” This is underscored by Jeremiah when the Lord declares this of himself through him:

Jer. 23.23-24 - Am I a God at hand, declares the Lord, and not a God afar off? [24] Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the Lord.

Yes, indeed, God is a God at hand and a God afar off. What we are seeking, what we plead for this month and every month, is *an extraordinary manifestation of the presence of God that results in the visible display of his glory and his Kingdom advance in the city!* This is our desire and heart, and our passion. During this season of Lent, with all of its wondrous emphasis on the meekness and lowliness of Christ, we must acknowledge our need for his presence, his power, his splendor, and his grace. Without the Lord’s presence among us and without his Holy Spirit working through us, nothing worthwhile or valuable will occur for the Kingdom’s sake.



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Like the ol' song suggests, "If we ever needed the Lord before, *we sure do need him now, we need him everyday and every hour.*" Won't you commit this month to seeking with unveiled heart the presence of the Lord—in your home, in your marriage and family, in your small group, in your congregation, in your ministry, in your neighborhood and city? Only if God indwells us, can he then work through us. As disciples of the humble Nazarene, who experienced the Spirit's presence without limit or measure, let us ask the Lord to come to us, to reveal himself to us, to make us *in experience and in our lives* the Temple of the Lord.

Where God is, there is liberty, love and life. May God come to us in order that he can work through us, all for his glory! ■

The Season of Lent: The Temple of the Lord

1 Cor. 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.

Biblical Principle of the Month

During this Lenten season, as we journey to the Cross with Jesus of Nazareth, let us pine for and long for his renewal and life-giving presence. In his presence is fullness of joy, protection from the enemy, grace for the journey. Only if we experience the indwelling of the Lord can we be empowered to follow in the steps of the Lord, and be strengthened to endure all that we must to be true to his Cross. With the Holy Spirit dwelling within our gatherings, let us without shame or fear affirm the presence of the Lord in our midst, and seek his grace as we dwell before him in love and truth.

1 Pet. 2.4-6 - 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



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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.”

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.



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