

Temple, Holiness, and the Liturgy of Life in Corinthians

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One persistent theme in the letters of St. Paul is his understanding of the Christian's daily life in cultic or liturgical terms—as the worship of God. In this, Paul anticipates one of the chief dilemmas of faith in the modern world—the rupture between religion and life, between liturgy and the ordinary, work-a-day world, between the “spiritual life” and “life in the world.” Paul's presentation of daily life as a spiritual sacrifice and worship of God can offer to the modern believer a global vision that enables him to overcome this division.

In this article, I would like to take up this Pauline vision and to show how it is articulated in the Corinthian correspondence. Paul's letters to the Corinthians represent a unique application of his belief in the Christian life as liturgy. In these letters, Paul's understanding of the spiritualization of sacrifice, the cultic character of Christian being, and life and action as worship, are joined to a distinctive image of the Church as a new Temple and the baptized Christian as a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Through a close reading of the texts, I hope to shed light on this Temple imagery, which Paul seems to presume as part of the original Christian proclamation. I also hope to draw out those elements of the texts that highlight the Christian life as worship, which should be of particular relevance to the biblical renewal of moral theology.¹

The idea that Christians are the Temple of God occurs three times in the course of Paul's two letters to the Corinthians.² I begin with its appearance in 2 Corinthians 6:16–7:1:

1 For a fuller treatment of these questions, see my *The Liturgy of Life: A Study of the Ethical Thought of St. Paul in his Letters to the Early Christian Communities* (Bruxelles: Desclée De Brouwer, 1970).

2 1 Cor. 3:16–17; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16. Among the studies on the Temple theme, see Bertil E. Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament: A Comparative Study in the Temple Symbolism of the Qumran Texts and the New Testament*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1965); M. Fraeyman, *La Spiritualisation de l'Idée du Temple dans les Épîtres Pauliniennes* [The Spiritualization of the Idea of the Temple in the Epistles of Paul], *Analecta Louvaniensia Biblica et Orientalia* 2:5 (Louvain: É. Nauwelaerts, 1948); Hans Wenschkewitz, *Die Spiritualisierung der Kultusbegriffe: Tempel, Priester und Opfer im Neuen Testament* [The Spiritualization of Cultic Notions: Temple, Priest, and the Sacrificial Victim in the New Testament] (Leipzig: E. Pfeiffer, 1932); Joseph Coppens, *De Spiritualisatie van de Cultus in Paulus' Brieven en in de Schriften van de Dode Zee* [The Spiritualization of Worship in Paul's Epistles and in the Dead Sea Scrolls], *Analecta*

What agreement has the Temple of God with idols? For we are
the Temple of the living God; as God said,
“I will dwell among them, and move among them,
and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them,
says the Lord,
and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you,
and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and
daughters,
says the Lord Almighty.”
Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves
from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holi-
ness perfect in the fear of God.

This passage is the clearest statement in the Pauline epistles of the transition from the notion of a material to a spiritual Temple in early Christianity. In the context of 2 Corinthians, this passage appears in an integral section in which Paul spells out the incompatibility of the Christian and pagan ways of life (“What has a believer in common with an unbeliever?” see 2 Cor. 6:14–15). At the heart of this incompatibility is the identity of the Church as the Temple of God. The dignity of the Christian community as Temple is of such importance that he explains and proves it by a series of Old Testament texts.

The Temple concept is one of unlimited richness, having its roots deep in the Old Testament. We shall therefore note briefly, *first*, the terms used to convey the reality, and *secondly*, the development of the Temple concept.

In classical Greek *naos* (“temple” or “shrine”) is a cultic term designating the dwelling of a god. It derives from *naiō*, meaning to dwell or inhabit. In a more restricted sense it meant the shrine or sacred abode of the divinity, where the sacred image was kept. In the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, *naos* corresponds either to *’ûlâm*, the portico of the Temple,³ or to *hêkal*. *Hêkal* is a word used for “the holies,”⁴ but it can also signify the whole Temple proper⁵—that is, the portico, “the holies,” and the “Holy of Holies.”⁶ *Heiron* (“sanctuary,” “temple”) was reserved by Ezekiel for pagan temples,⁷ though it, too, came to be applied to the Temple in Jerusalem.

Louvaniensia Biblica et Orientalia, 4:2 (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1962); C. F. D. Moule, “Sanctuary and Sacrifice in the Church of the New Testament,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 1 (1950): 29–41.

3 Rarely: 1 Chron. 28:11; 2 Chron. 8:12; 15:8; 29:2, 17.

4 1 Kings 6:5, 17; 7:50; Ezek. 41:1.

5 Amos 8:3; Isa. 6:1.

6 Greek: *dabir*; Hebrew: *D’bir*.

7 Ezek. 27:6; 28:18.

The "Habitation" of God

In the New Testament *naos*, *hieron*, *oikos*, and *hagion* are used regarding the Temple. *Heiron* generally designates the whole Temple complex or the outer courts. *Naos* is used for the Temple proper. It is used of the Temple in Jerusalem,⁸ of heathen temples,⁹ and above all, it appears in affirmations about the *pneumatic* or "spiritual" Temple.¹⁰ In the New Testament as in the Old, *naos* has a pre-eminence over the other expressions and concepts for sanctuary as a richer expression more capable of development.¹¹

The Jerusalem Temple (2 Sam. 7:1–3) was conceived by David to replace the portable tent used during Israel's sojourn in the desert as the dwelling of God among his people (1 Kings 8:18–29). The Temple was filled with the glory of God¹² and sheltered the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of God's covenant and presence among his people.¹³

This "presence-habitation" of God¹⁴ is the key reality expressed by the Temple concept throughout its evolution. All the laws of holiness and cult centered about this reality. The Temple was the focus of holiness¹⁵ because the all-holy God¹⁶ caused his presence to rest on the "Holy of Holies." From the Holy of Holies, holiness spread, as it were, in growing concentric circles with diminishing intensity.¹⁷ Israel's land (Amos 7:17), the camp (Lev. 10:4–7), Jerusalem (Isa. 52:2), the Temple (Pss. 24:3; 2:6) were all made holy by God's presence. The vessels, various parts of the Temple (Num. 4:15), and especially the priests were holy. The lives of the

8 Matt. 23:16, 17, 21, 35.

9 Acts 17:25; 19:24.

10 John 2:19; 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21.

11 Otto Michel, "Naos," in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, 10 vols., eds. Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1933–1979), 4:887; Eng. trans.: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–1985).

12 The *Kabod Yahweh*, the manifestation of his presence; compare 1 Kings 8:10–11; Exod. 33:7–11.

13 Exod. 25:22; compare 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2.

14 Conveyed by the Aramaic word, *Shekinah*, which was the visible dwelling of God among his people. The Hebrew verb *šakan* (to dwell), used of God's dwelling in the midst of Israel, and *miškan* derive from it as their root. Compare Yves Congar, *Le Mystère du Temple ou, L'économie de la Présence de Dieu à sa Créature de la Genèse à l'Apocalypse* (Paris: Cerf, 1958), 26–27; 33–34; 116–117. Eng. trans.: *The Mystery of the Temple or The Manner of God's Presence to his Creatures from Genesis to the Apocalypse* (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1962).

15 1 Kings 9:13; Num. 1:51; Holiness (Hebrew: *qôdes*) is probably derived from *qâdad*, to "cut" in the cultic sense of separation from the profane, destined for the service of God.

16 Lev. 11:44–45; 19:2; 20:7, 26; 21:8; 22:32; Isa. 6:3 in the sense of transcendent, inspiring religious fear. Compare also Exod. 33:20.

17 Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament*, 23; Compare Joseph Bonsirven, *Le Judaïsme Palestinien au Temps de Jésus Christ*, 2: *La théologie Morale: Vie Morale et Religieuse* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1935), 111. English translation: *Palestinian Judaism in the Time of Jesus Christ* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964).

priests were therefore subject to special prescriptions (Lev. 21:1–23).¹⁸ It is in this context that the laws of ritual purity are understood (Lev. 17:26).

Throughout the history of Israel several currents of thought existed in regard to the Temple. These currents always involved a tension which was to be resolved only in the New Testament. The first current was to see the Temple perduring as the symbol of God's presence. In the messianic era all people would come to Zion (Isa. 2:1–3; Mic. 4:1–2) to pray in the Temple (Isa. 56:7). It is sometimes conceived as a Temple built by man for God.¹⁹ But simultaneously texts might speak of a Temple coming down from heaven and built by God himself.²⁰

Ezekiel speaks of the mobility of the glory of God,²¹ of a new heart given to man (Ezek. 18:31; 36:26), and of an Israel purified by God himself dwelling among his people (Ezek. 37:24–28). This latter prophecy of Ezekiel 37 takes up Leviticus 26:11, which was of paramount importance for the Jews on the subject of the Temple of the future.²² It is one of the texts used to support the affirmation of 2 Corinthians 6:16 that Christians are the Temple of the living God.

At the same time, a current of thought grew which saw the material Temple at Jerusalem as disappearing with the fulfillment of messianic prophecies (Isa. 66). The destruction of the Temple (Jer. 7:1; 21) brought to light the necessity of a more spiritual cult in accordance with the religion of the heart, when God would be present to his people in a new way (Jer. 31:31–33). It was not the building of a Temple which mattered, but a contrite heart sacrificing itself by obedience to the Word of God (Isa. 66:2).²³ The concept of holiness became gradually spiritualized. Separation from the profane became abstinence from sin and ritual purity was merged with purity of heart.

The existence of such currents explains how the Essenes at Qumran could break with the cult of the Temple, which they saw as having been defiled by the

18 Compare Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2 vols., trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper: 1962, 1965), 1:272–273.

19 Haggai saw the Temple of Zerubbabel as exceeding the former in glory (Hag. 2:6–9). Compare also Ezekiel's ideal description of the Temple, Ezek. 40–48. Herod's Temple was also part of this aspiration.

20 Ezek. 37:24. Even the prophecy of Nathan in 2 Sam. 7 conveys this ambivalence. God seems to reject David's plan by asserting that he himself will make his Temple by his dwelling, by his sovereignly active presence among his people (2 Sam. 7:14 is quoted in 2 Cor. 6:18). He then accepts the building of an earthly temple (2 Sam. 7:13). Compare Congar, *Le Mystère du Temple*, 46–47.

21 Ezek. 8:6; 9:3; 10:1, 18; 11:22.

22 Compare 1 *Enoch* 90:28; *Jubilees* 1:28, texts in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols., ed. James Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985); Bonsirven, *Le Judaïsme Palestinien au Temps de Jésus Christ*, 1:431.

23 Compare François Amiot, "Temple," in *Vocabulaire de Théologie Biblique*, ed. Xavier Léon-Dufour (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1962), 1039–1043. Eng. trans.: *Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, 2d. ed., trans. P. Joseph Cahill (New York: Seabury, 1973), 594–597. Congar, *Le Mystère du Temple*, 72–101.

wicked High Priest and his people. The abandonment of Jerusalem led to the conviction that the presence of God, his Spirit, and his cult were no longer bound to the Temple there, but rather were allied now with the true Israel, represented by the community. And we see in the Dead Sea Scrolls evidence that the Essenes of Qumran believed that their community itself had become the new Temple of God:²⁴

At that time, the men of the community will constitute a true and distinctive Temple—a veritable Holy of Holies—wherein the priesthood may fitly foregather, and a true and distinctive synagogue made up of laymen who walk in integrity.²⁵

At Qumran, we see developed a belief that it is God who builds a sanctuary for himself, a sanctuary constituted of the community in which he dwells.²⁶ This new Temple is now the center of cult, which is performed through the community's observance of the Law and through its liturgy. The true sacrifice is seen as being spiritual, offered in holy and pure lives, according to the Law, and in the prayer and praise of the community.²⁷ It is this conception of the Temple that brings us closest to the vision found in the epistles of St. Paul.²⁸

²⁴ Compare Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament*, 16. The community, however, was not unfamiliar with the idea that God would once more dwell in the Jerusalem Temple. Compare Maurice Baillet, "Un Recueil Liturgique de Qumran, Grotte 4: 'Les Paroles des Luminaires,'" [A Liturgical Collection of Qumran, Cave 4: 'Words of the Luminaries'], *Revue Biblique* 68 (1961): 195–250, at 205.

²⁵ *1QRule of the Community* [1QS] 9:5–7. Compare also 1QS 8:4–9; 5:6; 11:8. Text in *The Dead Sea Scriptures in English Translation*, rev. and enlarged ed., trans. with intro. Theodor Herzl Gaster (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1964).

²⁶ *4QFlorilegium* [4QFlor] 1:6.

²⁷ Compare 1QS 8:9; 9:3; 4QFlor 1:6. Compare Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament*, 18, 30, 44–46.

²⁸ Even in comparing the Pauline conception to that of Qumran, we should not overlook some important differences which exist amid the resemblances. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor points out three of these fundamental differences: First, both Qumran and St. Paul attribute a sacrificial value to the lives of the members of the community (Rom. 12:1; Phil. 2:17; 1QS 9:3–5). However, for Paul it is the presence of God which is primary as constituting the Christians a Temple by his dwelling in them collectively and individually. This is why the Christian life has a liturgical value. By contrast, for the community at Qumran, the movement of thought was rather from sacrifice to the conception of the community as a Temple. Since they could no longer associate themselves with the meaningless worship (*Damascus Document* [CD] 6:17–20) offered in a profaned sanctuary (CD 5:6) by unclean ministers (CD 4:17; 5:6–11), the sectaries separated themselves to form a community where God could be truly worshipped by the sacrifice of a perfect life and the sacrifice of prayer (1QS, 9:3–6). It was thus that the community was conceived as the true spiritual Temple. Secondly, even though the spiritual sacrifices of Qumran were considered superior to the decadent Temple worship of the time, the sectaries never gave up hoping for the time when bloody sacrifices would again be offered in the Temple of the new Jerusalem in conformity with the prescriptions of the Law. Finally, while for Paul the Temple is holy because of God's presence (compare also Ezek. 42:13; 44:2; Ps. 5:7), at Qumran. the

In Jesus the diverse currents of Old Testament thought and belief are resolved and fulfilled. Though respectful toward the Temple of Jerusalem,²⁹ Jesus predicted its imminent ruin (Matt. 23:38; 24:2) and the end of the old cultic regime—signified by the rending of the veil of the Temple at his crucifixion.³⁰ It is the body of Jesus which becomes the new sign of the divine presence among men (John 1:14). His resurrected body is the new definitive Temple “not made with hands.”³¹ His body, risen and filled with the plenitude of the divinity, has become the new cultic center of messianic times, characterized by the effusion of the Spirit.³² In him the time is fulfilled for adoration “in spirit and in truth”³³

The Temple in Primitive Christian Teaching

It is surprising, then, to find in Paul's epistles only vestiges of the affirmations regarding Christ as the Temple of messianic times.³⁴ What we do have, as very clearly expressed in 2 Corinthians 6:16, is the presumption that the Church, the community of the faithful, is the Temple of God. This suggests that this belief was a fundamental article of the primitive Christian catechesis.³⁵ This further suggests a development of belief in the primitive Church—the realization that Jesus was the new Temple, the new cultic center and dwelling of God, led to the understanding that Christian believers themselves were built up with him and by him into one and the same Temple.

The Christian community then became the convergence and fulfillment of the forces and elements which formed the Temple concept throughout its history. This is shown in the concatenation of Old Testament texts that Paul puts forward to explain and prove this idea to the Corinthians.

“For we are the Temple of the living God.” By characterizing the Temple as belonging to the living God, Paul evokes an idea cherished by the Jews. Their God is always a living and active God as opposed to dead and inert idols.³⁶ He is

holiness of the Temple is attributed to the presence of the holy angels in the congregation (*IQS* 2:8–9). See Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul on Preaching* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1963), 292–293.

29 Luke 2:41–50; John 2:14; Matt. 5:23; 12:3–7; 21:12–17; 23:16–22.

30 Mark 15:38; Matt. 27:51; Luke 23:45.

31 Mark 14:58; John 2:19, 21; compare also 2 Cor. 5:1, where “not made with hands” means “risen.” See also Congar, *Le Mystère du Temple*, 176, n. 1; Moule, “Sanctuary and Sacrifice in the Church of the New Testament,” 33–34.

32 Zech. 12:9–10; 13:1; 14:8–9; Ezek. 47:1; John 7:38; 19:37; 4:14.

33 That is, in a true adoration in the Spirit of which one must be reborn in order to enter the Kingdom. Compare John 3:7–8; see also Heb. 9:11; 12:18.

34 Col. 2:9–10; Eph. 2:20–22; 1 Pet. 2:4–8.

35 Compare “Do you not know ...” which prefaces the statements on the Temple in 1 Cor. 3:16 and 1 Cor. 6:19. Also Michel, “*Naos*,” 4:810.

36 On the living God, compare Exod. 3:14; Num. 14:21, 28; Deut. 32:40; Josh. 3:10; Isa. 37:4, 14; 49:18; Jer. 4:2; 5:2. On dead idols compare Isa. 2:18; Jer. 2:27–28; 10:3–5; Bar. 6.

a God who has intervened in history, the God who brought the chosen people out of the land of Egypt (Exod. 20:2). He is the God of the prophets promising a new covenant (2 Cor. 6:16b), leading the way out of a hostile land (2 Cor. 6:17), and calling his people to adopted sonship (2 Cor. 6:18). In posing a living community as Temple in relation to a living God, Paul suggests a cultic relationship which at the same time is a call to a profound personal attitude of conversion and total renewal.

The network of texts that Paul puts forward in support of the Temple idea is a studied literary composition composed of three strophes. The first (verse 16b) is given as a justification for the assertion: "We are the Temple of the living God." The second strophe (v. 17) is put forward as a consequence: "You are obliged to keep the purity of priests." And finally, the third strophe (v. 18) returns by way of inclusion to the original idea of God's presence among his chosen people.

"As God said: 'I shall dwell (*enoikēsō*) among them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people'" (2 Cor. 6:16). The first quotation sets the tone for the others. It is inspired by Ezekiel 37:27 and Leviticus 26:11–12, which were frequently used in relation to the Temple of messianic times. The context of the passage from Ezekiel is God's solemn promise that he will bring the Israelites back to their own land in a new Exodus. He will re-establish national unity, the Kingdom of David, and an everlasting covenant of peace.

"I will set my sanctuary (*ta hagia mou*) in the midst of them forevermore. My dwelling place (*kataskēnōsis*) shall be with them (*en autois*); and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."
(Ezek. 37:26–27)

It will be noticed that Paul replaces *kataskēnōsis estai* by the verb *enoikēsō*. The verb is never used elsewhere in the Greek Bible for the dwelling of God among his people, or in the Temple. But it provides an excellent paraphrase of the idea in both the Ezekiel and Leviticus texts. In Ezekiel 37:27 *kataskēnōsis* corresponds to *miškān* (dwelling) in the Hebrew text. *Skēnēn* in Leviticus 26:11 also coincides with *miškān*.³⁷ All these words refer to the "presence" or the "dwelling," the *Shekinah* or glorious presence of God which was linked particularly to the meeting tent and the Temple. This is the "presence" that Paul refers when he writes: "I shall dwell among them," as a scriptural proof that Christians are now the new Temple.³⁸ The people of God³⁹ among whom he walks has become the Temple in which he dwells.

37 Lev. 26:11: "I will make my abode (*miškān* = *skēnēn*) among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people."

38 For God's dwelling among Christians see also John 14:23; Rev. 21:3.

39 Compare Lev. 26:12; Ezek. 37:27; 11:20; 36:38; Jer. 31:33; Zech. 8:8; 13:9.

“You Shall Be My Sons and Daughters”

“And I will be a father to you and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:18). This text makes us think of 2 Samuel 7:14,⁴⁰ which is part of the famous prophecy of Nathan to David. The prophecy speaks of the construction of the Temple and of a perpetual covenant which God makes with David. It also refers to the dwelling of God, who is always with his people by an active and saving presence.

In this context God promises through Nathan: “I will be a father to him, and he shall be my son” (2 Sam. 7:14). Again, Paul alters the phrase to accommodate the sense of the passage in 2 Corinthians. The phrase: “you shall be my sons and daughters” has probably been influenced also by such Old Testament passages as Isaiah 43:6, Jeremiah 31:9, and Hosea 2:1–2. Nathan’s prophecy is fulfilled first of all in Christ.⁴¹

Before God, all sonship is concentrated in Christ, through whom Christians participate in Christ’s own sonship so as to become sons and daughters of the Father.⁴² Thus we see, woven into the notion of the Christian community as Temple, all the tenderness of the Father’s presence and saving love for his children. In turn, the cult of this new Temple must become a loving response of sons and daughters in the service of the Father.

“Therefore come out from them and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; and I will welcome you” (2 Cor. 6:17). The middle of the three strophes is a free version of Isaiah 52:11.⁴³ In its original form it is an instruction to priests and Levites (those “who bear the vessels of the Lord”). And its context in Isaiah is the promised restoration of Israel, its return from exile in a new Exodus from out of Babylon. The Lord will return to Zion, going before his people. And he commands his people: “Depart, depart, go out thence, touch no unclean thing; go out from the midst of her, purify yourselves, you who bear the vessels of the Lord.”

In the original text, *akathartou* referred to legal impurity,⁴⁴ as it does in so many of the Old Testament texts. It occurs most often in the holiness code of

40 Compare also 1 Chron. 17:13. “Says the Lord Almighty” is found in 2 Sam. 7:8.

41 Luke 1:32–33 and Heb. 1:5, where the exact words of the prophecy are applied to Christ.

42 Compare John 1:12; also Rom. 8:14–17; Gal. 4:5–7; This fact of sonship constitutes a notable difference in the notion of God’s presence as conceived in the Old and New Testament. The Old Testament speaks more of a presence of action. God is considered to dwell where his action is most constant and favorable. In the New Testament, God dwells in the Christian by transforming him into the image of his Son through grace. See Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul on Preaching*, 290.

43 See also Jer. 51:45.

44 See John L. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah*, Anchor Bible 20 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), 124. Albert-Marie Denis points out that the idea of purity in this context takes on an ideal messianic value, “L’Apôtre Paul, Prophète ‘Messianique’ des Gentiles,” [The Apostle Paul, the ‘Messianic’ Prophet of the Gentiles], *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 33 (1957): 245–318, at 280. For the

Leviticus.⁴⁵ It is true in these contexts that the reference is to taboos which cause ceremonial uncleanness. But the essential point about the ceremonial uncleanness is that the unclean person cannot approach God, enter his Temple, or share in his worship (Lev. 22:3). *Akathartou* is “that which makes it impossible for a person to come into the presence of God; it shuts him off from God.”⁴⁶ In the Old Testament, the notion also underwent a process of moral spiritualization. It is used of sexual impurity (Hos. 2:10), of the moral uncleanness which destroys a nation (Mic. 2:10), and of sin generally (Ezek. 36:29).⁴⁷

The theme of both cultic and moral purity was paramount in the Essene community at Qumran. Certain aspects of the priestly ideal were made general conditions for membership in the community—that is, the standards of purity originally applied only to the Levites, on certain occasions, were applied to all.⁴⁸ But the purity demanded did not stop at Levitical standards, but came to include inner purity from sin.

Unclean, unclean he remains so long as he rejects the government of God and refuses the discipline of communion with him.
... Only by the submission of his soul to all the ordinances of
God can his flesh be made clean.⁴⁹

For the Essenes, priestly purity and acceptance before God formed a unity. In the New Testament, both the noun and adjective are used in two senses—that is, of ritual uncleanness⁵⁰ and of ethical-religious impurity.⁵¹ Paul’s injunction to touch nothing unclean, then, is a call to a radical separation of the Christian, sanctified by God’s presence, from the world of iniquity, ruled by the prince of darkness

idea of purity compare Lev. 11:15; see also Exod. 19:14, 22, where in the first Exodus, Levitical purity is demanded of priests and people.

45 Lev. 18:19; 20:25; 22:3; Judg. 13:7.

46 William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (London: SCM, 1962), 29.

47 See Ezek. 39:24; Wis. 2:16.

48 The list of physical blemishes excluding a priest from the Temple was applied to membership in the community. Compare 1QS (Appendix) 2:3; also CD 6:17; 1QS 4:10; 1QWar Scroll [1QM] 7:5; 13:5; CD 7:3; 9:21; 10:10; 11:19; 12:19. Texts in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English Translation*.

49 1QS 3:4–8; see also the obligation of holiness in 1QS 5:7–20; 6:23–7:9. Texts in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English Translation*. Also Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 23 (1961): 271–280, at 278; Joachim Gnllka, “2 Kor. 6:14–7:1 im Lichte der Qumranschriften und der Zwölf-Patriarchen-Testament,” [2 Cor. 6:14–7:1 in Light of the Qumran Documents and the Testament of the Patriarchs] in *Neutestamentliche Aufsätze, Festschrift für Prof. Josef Schmid zum 70* [New Testament Essays for Prof. Joseph Schmid on his 70th Birthday], eds. Josef Blinzler, Otto Kuss, and Franz Mussner (Regensburg: F. Pustet, 1963), 86–99, at 92–93.

50 For example. Matt. 23:27. Unclean tombs, unclean spirits and demons are referred to often in the Gospels (Mark 1:23; Matt 10:1, etc.); people and things (Acts 10:14; 10:28).

51 2 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 17:4.

(2 Cor. 6:14–15). It is a call to keep oneself untarnished from pagan aberration and depravity. We see the idea further developed in 2 Corinthians 7:1 as an obligation to cleanse oneself from every defilement of body and spirit, but more positively to perfect oneself in holiness and the fear of God.⁵²

This quotation in 2 Corinthians 6:17 shows clearly the movement from the ritual-objective conception of purity⁵³ to a spiritual-religious conception. The call to separation is no longer a call to withdraw from a pagan land as in Isaiah 52:11, or from a defiled Israel as in Qumran. Certainly, it seems Paul has particular concrete dangers in mind which demand a certain distance in regard to the pagans. But the call has become essentially a call not to live as pagans—in unrighteousness, darkness, worshipping creatures in subjection to Belial.⁵⁴ He is asking them, as a consequence of God's presence among them as his spiritual Temple, to walk in a manner befitting their new status.⁵⁵

The New Christian Holiness Code

In quoting from the closing chapter of the Levitical law of holiness (Lev. 26:12), Paul seems to be suggesting that the Church forms a kind “neo-Levitical” or priestly people.⁵⁶ In the refusal of any compromise with paganism and the world of sin, in the demands for purity, we have an ethical teaching conformed to this priestly ideal of the Church. These exigencies could well have formed part of the prescriptions of a new Christian holiness code,⁵⁷ developed as an aspect of the primitive Christian teaching.⁵⁸ The important point for us is that it underscores the cultic value of the moral life for this priestly community. Serving as priests in a community consecrated by the presence of the living God, Christians live their

52 We can find a similar use of the notion in Rom. 6:19. Paul in this text uses *akatharsia* and *anomia* to describe the situation of man under the dominion of sin, as opposed to the state of Christian righteousness and holiness.

53 Of the original ritual purity, see Isa. 52:11.

54 See Rom. 12:2; Eph. 5:7–11.

55 Compare Eph. 5:6 which demands a similar separation.

56 See Edward G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes, and Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1947), 405; Jean Colson, *Ministre de Jésus-Christ ou le Sacerdoce de l'Évangile. Étude sur la Condition Sacerdotale des Ministres Chrétiens dans l'Église Primitive* [The Minister of Jesus Christ or the Priesthood of the Gospel: A Study of the Priestly Nature of Christian Ministers in the Early Church], *Théologie Historique* 4 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1966), 62–63, 152.

57 It will be remembered that the constant refrain in the Levitical law of holiness was: “Be holy, for I the LORD, your God, am holy” (Lev. 19:2; 20:7, 26; 21:8). God demands of Israel that it adapt itself to his service—that is, that it be holy. Compare Albert Gelin, “La Sainteté de l'Homme Selon l'Ancien Testament” [The Holiness of the Human Person According to the Old Testament], *Bible et Vie Chrétienne* 9 (1957): 35–48. See also Gelin, *The Concept of Man in the Bible* (London: G. Chapman, 1968).

58 See also Rom. 13:12; Jas. 1:21; Col. 3:8; Eph. 4:25. Compare Selwyn, *First Epistle of St. Peter*, 373, 459.

lives as a worship "in spirit and in truth."⁵⁹ The last phrase recalls Ezekiel 20:34, again in the context of the new Exodus (compare also Ezek. 11:17).

We hear this same call to spiritual purification and holiness in the exhortation with which Paul concludes this passage. Believers are called to "make holiness perfect in fear of God (*epitelountes hagiōsynē en phobō Theo*)." The word used for holiness (*hagiōsynē*) is rare⁶⁰ and signifies moral sanctity here as well as it does in 1 Thessalonians 3:13. The whole basis for this moral sanctity, of course, depends upon God who has redeemed and sanctified man in Christ.⁶¹ Here this sanctifying action of God is expressed by the notion of God's presence, which constitutes the community as a consecrated Temple. Yet the divine action calls forth in the life and conduct of the believer a completion (*epitelein*) in moral dedication. This continual progress in moral sanctity is based on the fear of God (*en phobō Theo*).⁶²

With the notion of fear we are confronted with one of the fundamental religious attitudes of the Old Testament. The notion is expressed usually by the two Hebrew roots *y'r* and *p d*. *Y'r* may mean fear of God and his punitive judgment,⁶³ but is the term normally used to convey the reverential fear of adoration.⁶⁴ This fear is the attitude of the chosen people confronted with the terrible⁶⁵ grandeur of God who makes a covenant with them. It is their reaction to the holiness and glory of the God of the covenant.⁶⁶ Before the all-holy God, they feel a fear which is at the same time terror, wonder, and confidence.⁶⁷ This fear permeates all religion and is the foundation of religious living.⁶⁸ Thus we see it within the whole covenant concept of joy and fellowship with a loving and gracious God.⁶⁹

59 Compare the same theme in Jas. 1:26–27; see also Raymond Corriveau, "Genuine Religion," *Studia Moralia* 5 (1967): 113–125.

60 Found only in Rom. 1:4; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Thess. 3:13 in the New Testament.

61 1 Cor. 1:2,30; 6:11; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:13.

62 The idea of perfecting holiness is also found in Qumran: 1QS 8:20; CD 7:5.

63 See Gen. 3:10; Deut. 17:13; 19:2; 2 Sam. 6:9.

64 Compare Gen. 15:12–18; Exod. 3:2–6; 20:20; 1 King 18:11. Also John Murray, *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1957), 231 n. 1. *P d* frequently has the meaning of terror but it can stand for reverential awe: Gen. 31:42; 42:53; Ps. 36:1; Jer. 2:19.

65 Expressed in Hebrew grammar by the Niphal participle of *y'r*. Compare Exod. 15:11; Deut. 2:21; 10:17; 1 Chron. 16:25; Pss. 47:2; 111:9.

66 Compare Exod. 19:1–20; 24:15–18.

67 See Paul Van Imschoot, "La Sainteté de Dieu dans l'Ancien Testament" [The Holiness of God in the Old Testament], *Verbum Salutis* 75 (1946): 35. In the words of William Barclay: "It describes the feeling of man 'lost in wonder, love, and praise.'" *New Testament Words* (London: SCM, 1964), 228.

68 Prov. 1:7; Sir. 1:14, 21; Ps. 111:1.

69 See Isa. 50:10; Pss. 22:23–24; 31:20; 33:18. See also Simon John De Vries, "Note Concerning the Fear of God in the Qumran Scrolls," *Revue de Qumrân* 5 (1965), 233–237, at 237.

In the New Testament, *phobos* and *phobeō* express the same notion of fear carrying on the tradition of the Old Testament.⁷⁰ It is no wonder, then, that we find the idea of “perfecting holiness in the fear of God” expressed in the context of the new covenant. In the presence of the all-holy God on Zion, Moses had ritually sanctified and consecrated the people, filled with the fear of God, in order that they might be prepared to approach God (Exod. 19:14–16). The Church lives in the presence of the God of the new covenant promised by the prophets.⁷¹ In the face of this hallowed presence, the new people of God is seized in the same way by an overwhelming reverence and loving adoration. It is this “sense of God,” this religious fear, which spurs the Christian on to the highest reaches of moral sanctity and dedication.

In 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1 we see a more or less self contained unit in which the ideas of worship, chosen people, and Temple are closely woven together. The passage spells out a program of life which underscores the new life of the Christian as basically cultic or liturgical in character. The faithful have become members of Christ’s Kingdom, beneficiaries of his revelation and justification. Even more—and this is the brunt of Paul’s argument—they are the Temple of the living God, sanctified by his presence.

In the new Temple, the material symbol of the Old Testament gives way to the full reality which was foreshadowed by the Jerusalem Temple. All the longing of Judaism in regard to the new age and the new Temple are found fulfilled in the Christian community. God does dwell among his chosen people but with a dwelling so close, so intimate, and so real that it transcends even the wildest dreams of the Israelites. It is this presence which is the central reality of the new Temple and the new cult.

The old cult of the Temple had demanded a whole program of ritual purity of the servants of the Temple, which was God’s consecrated “dwelling.” So from the more intimate and personal “dwelling” in the Christian community there arises a new cult that comprises the whole moral life of the believer. It demands a separation from the godlessness and depravity of the pagan world. And positively it impels the believer, overpowered by wonder, love, and praise in the presence of God, to an ardent pursuit of holiness. Just as the priestly code of Leviticus had governed the lives of the Old Testament priests, so the priestly people of God also have a new code of worship. The whole community is to pursue a purity and holiness which corresponds to its priestly status. The mystery of the Christian community as Temple has brought us to the heart of the mystery of Christian life as a worship of the all-holy God.

70 Luke 1:50; Acts 9:31; Rom. 3:18; 11:20; 2 Cor. 7:1; Col. 3:22; Rev. 14:7; 15:4.

71 Compare Ezek. 37:27; Jer. 31:31; 2 Sam. 7:8. Also 2 Cor. 6:16–18.

God's Spirit Dwells in the Church

In 1 Corinthians we have two texts which treat of the Temple theme, 3:16–17 and 6:19–20. The text of 3:16–17 is primarily dogmatic in perspective but it does provide several elements for the liturgical character of Christian activity as it is rooted in the liturgical character of his existence:

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 that temple you are.
(1 Cor. 3:16–17)

As in the other passages on the Temple we are presented with a doctrine which is presumed to be already known. "Do you not know that you are God's Temple." Paul explains what he means when he says "and that God's Spirit dwells in you." It is the presence of the Spirit which constitutes the Christian community as God's Temple.⁷² The Spirit is the principal reality of Christian life, the characteristic feature of messianic times (Acts 2:47).

We notice that it is the community which is called a Temple. "The Spirit of God comes down on the community, and communicates himself to individuals through the community."⁷³ He is said to dwell (*oikei*) in the community as in a Temple, again recalling the whole Temple theology of Old Testament times.⁷⁴ It is this indwelling which constitutes the Christian Temple as holy, as it did in the Old Testament.⁷⁵ As a consequence, the Christian community is not profane but holy—a Temple of God's Spirit in which he dwells by charity and his gifts. Again we see in Paul's concept of holiness the idea of consecration to God and to cult.

In the broader context of his concerns in 1 Corinthians, Paul, by shifting to the image of the Temple, brings out the full gravity of any action which would seriously endanger the Christian community. He has especially in mind those members of the Corinthian community who are fostering division and schism in Corinth. In their foolish and dangerous quarrels over preachers (1 Cor. 3:4; 1:10), they are attacking the very foundation of the Temple by dividing Christ (1:12). In fact, all ministers or members of the community who falsify the Word of God and the faith to the extent of endangering the foundation of the Temple would also be included in his condemnation.

⁷² Compare also 1 Cor. 12:1–13.

⁷³ Lucien Cerfaux, *The Church in the Theology of St. Paul*, trans. Geoffrey Webb and Adrian Walker (New York: Herder & Herder, 1959), 148, n. 8.

⁷⁴ Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament*, 58, 95, draws a comparison between the dwelling of the Holy Spirit among Christians and that of the holy angels in the midst of the Qumran community.

⁷⁵ For this comparison with Qumran, see Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament*, 59.

"If anyone destroys God's Temple, God will destroy him" (1 Cor. 3:17). The word which Paul uses for "destroy" (*phtheirein*),⁷⁶ is used in the Septuagint to translate *š t*, which has the double meaning of "destroy" and "judge," and is used both of man's evil work of destruction and of God's punishment. Occasionally, the word is used in eschatological contexts to signify damnation (2 Pet. 2:12; Gal. 6:8; Col. 2:22).⁷⁷

Thus it would seem probable that in our context Paul sees damnation as the punishment for those who destroy or desecrate the Temple of the Church. The very idea of the desecration of the Temple has an eschatological association (Dan. 9:27; 12:11).⁷⁸ These schisms attack the very foundation of the faith preached by Paul and so cause the Temple to crumble. In removing Christ as the foundation, the schismatics cut off the vital relation between Christ and the community, causing the Temple to lose its quality of consecration, which is effected by Christ's Spirit in-dwelling in the community. We can thus understand the terrible punishments threatened upon the perpetrators of such a sacrilegious act.

Paul does not develop in 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 the thought of the Christian's activity as cultic in nature. Yet it remains implicit in the Temple image and in the holiness which that necessarily involves. What the apostle does develop is his own role in the construction of the Temple. As an apostle, he is in some way at the origin of the Christian life. The Christians are a consecrated Temple of which Paul has laid the foundation by his apostolic preaching and activity.

In this sense, this Temple text must be understood in light of Paul's meditation upon the "building" of the Church which immediately precedes it (1 Cor. 3:10–15). In combating the divisions that have cropped up at Corinth, Paul explains that the Christian community does not belong to any minister of the Gospel but to God (1 Cor. 3:1–9). To illustrate this he uses the image of the plantation. "Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth" (1 Cor. 3:7). The apostles are only workers.⁷⁹ The plantation or building, however, belongs to God alone (1 Cor. 3:9).

76 1 Cor. 3:17; see also 1 Cor. 15:23; 2 Cor. 7:2; 11:3; Eph. 4:22; 2 Pet. 2:12; Rev. 19:2.

77 In Qumran there also are "men of destruction" who try to destroy the community, but fail and are themselves condemned to eternal destruction (1QS 4:12; 9:16; CD 6:15). Compare Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament*, 59.

78 Paul may even be comparing the errors and schisms within the community to the profanations of Antiochus IV (see 1 Macc. 1; 2 Thess. 2:4–12). See Albert-Marie Denis, "La Fonction Apostolique et la Liturgie Nouvelle en Éspirit" [The Apostolic Office and the New Liturgy in the Spirit], *Revue Des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 42 (1958): 401–436; 617–656, at 423–424.

79 *Synergoi*: either "fellow workers in God's service" (so Victor P. Furnish, "Fellow Workers in God's Service," [synergos 1 Cor. 3:9], *Journal of Biblical Literature* 80 [1961]: 364–370) or "fellow workers of God" (so Karl H. Schelkle, "Der Apostel als Priester" [The Apostle as Priest] *Theologische Quartalschrift* 136 [1956]: 257–283, at 272).

At this point Paul passes over to the image of the "building" (verses 9b–15). The Church at Corinth is God's building (v. 9). Paul is the skilled master builder who has laid the foundation of this spiritual edifice (v. 10; compare Rom. 15:20) through his missionary work.⁸⁰ The other workers must build on this foundation which he himself has laid. That foundation is Jesus Christ crucified (1 Cor. 3:11; 1:23).

The value of the work of each apostolic worker will be tested or verified by fire in the final judgment, Paul says. If the work survives the test because it was the result of solid doctrine and disinterested zeal, the worker will receive a reward (v. 14). However, if the work was the result of a doctrine which emptied the truth of its force, it will perish and the worker will forfeit his reward, though he himself may be saved "as through fire." Thus, it is that Paul points out the weighty responsibility of the worker who seeks to build up the Temple of the Church.

The model for that building up of the Church is, of course, Paul. By arousing faith in Christ crucified, which leads to baptism in him, Paul has laid the foundation of an edifice whose very existence is a liturgical offering. Other workers can also cooperate in the construction of the sanctuary, but only in continuity with the faith in Christ which he has preached. Any attempt to build on any other foundation, on a Christ of human whims and desires, can only result in the destruction of the Temple and its liturgical life. This constitutes a real profanation and will be punished with eternal punishment.

80 This work includes the whole process of "*Christum tradere*," or handing on the Christian message. See Josef Pfammatter, *Die Kirche als Bau: Eine Exegetisch-Theologische Studie zur Ekklesiologie der Paulusbriege* [The Church as Building: An Exegetical-Theological Study of the Ecclesiology of the Pauline Epistles], (Rome: Gregorian University, 1960), 27. Here the building activity is obviously that of the apostolate (see also 2 Cor. 10:8; 12:19; 13:10; Rom. 15:20; Eph. 4:11–12). Paul probably has in mind Jer. 1:9–10. But the whole Church, in its own way, also participates in the work of edification (1 Thess. 5:11; 1 Cor. 8:1; 10:23; 14:3–5, 12, 17, 26; Rom. 14:19; 15:2; Eph. 4:29. Compare also Eph. 2:21–22; 4:15–16, where the growth of the Temple-building is that of Christian life). Edification is a many-sided reality which can never be reduced to the purely ethical, even in such texts as 1 Thess. 5:11 (see Michel, "*Oikos*," in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, 5:122–151, at 143). It is a communitarian notion, derived from the building-Temple metaphor, which is a symbol of God's presence through the Spirit of Christ. (See F. W. Young, "The Theological Context of New Testament Worship," *Worship in Scripture and Tradition: Essays by Members of the Theological Commission on Worship* (North American Section) of the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches, ed. Massey H. Shepherd Jr. [New York: Oxford University, 1963], 86–87). It conceals within itself teleological, pneumatological, cultic, and ethical facets (Michel, "*Oikos*," 5:144, 147). Since almost every aspect of Christian life is referred to as unto edification, the whole of Christian life is ordered to the "building up" of the building-Temple and is thus ordered to the spiritual worship of the Temple community. In addition to the articles quoted we refer to G. W. MacRae, "Building the House of the Lord," *American Ecclesiastical Review*, 140 (1959): 361–376, with a bibliography on 362, to which we would add Congar, *Jalons Pour une Théologie du Laïcat* (Paris: Cerf, 1954), 467; Eng. trans.: *Lay People in the Church: A Study for a Theology of the Laity* (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1957).

The Body as Temple of the Holy Spirit

Our final text is 1 Corinthians 6:19–20:

Do you not know that your body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body. (1 Cor. 6:19–20)

This text is part of a longer passage (1 Cor. 6:12–20) which is perhaps the most developed moral exhortation of all the Pauline letters. Paul condemns fornication, calling on theological motives of the highest order. He reacts against the attitudes of the Corinthian libertines, a group that lived according to their own understanding of nature, rejecting Christian chastity and treating of sexual behavior as essentially the same as eating and drinking.⁸¹ All was permitted to them.

Paul directs his principal arguments against the sophism of his opponents expressed in verse 13: “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food.” In answer, he shows that while food and the nutritive function are of the purely physiological order and therefore of passing value, such is not the case with the body. The body is not for immorality but for the Lord and the Lord for the body. There is a mutual relation between the two realities.

We cannot help but see here the “belonging” of the Christian to Christ which is effected by baptism⁸² and by the Eucharist.⁸³ The dignity of the body is first underscored by its future destiny. It is destined to rise in virtue of the resurrection of Christ (v. 14) which will complete the lordship of Christ over the body. But in its present reality there is also a community of life between the body of the Christian and the risen Christ. “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?” (v. 15).

This belonging to Christ excludes, for instance, union with a prostitute. The Christian who unites himself to a prostitute forms a corporeal unity with her (compare Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:28). He subjects himself and belongs so much to this

81 Jean Héring states that there must have existed a group of Gnostic libertines in Corinth. To this group he attributes the two basic tenets: First, everything which had to do with bodily life was unimportant for the spiritual life and the destiny of the spirit. This led some to extremes of asceticism and others to sexual debauchery. Second, they rejected the resurrection of the body since the body was created by an inferior divinity. See *La Première Épître de Saint Paul aux Corinthiens*, Commentaire du Nouveau Testament 7 (Paris: Neuchâtel, Delachaux & Niestlé, 1949), 47; Eng. trans.: *The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, trans. A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock (London: Epworth, 1962). However Robert M. Grant, while stating the probability of Gnostic tendencies in Corinth speaks more cautiously in constructing their doctrines. See *La Gnose et les Origines Chrétiennes* (Paris: Seuil, 1964), 137; Eng.: *Gnosticism and Early Christianity*, Lectures on the History of Religions New Series 5 (New York: Columbia University, 1959).

82 Compare Rom. 6:6; 1 Cor. 12:13; see also 1 Cor. 6:11.

83 Compare 1 Cor. 10:16, 24–27. Héring, *Corinthiens*, 47–48, sees the allusion to the Eucharist especially in the phrase “and the Lord for the body.”

"mistress" that he withdraws his body from the lordship of Christ (v. 15). It is a robbery and a desacralization which has no equal in other sins which are "outside the body" (v. 18). In other words, a human being is defined religiously in terms of his Lord. To be united to a prostitute is to prostitute oneself. It is to become one flesh with this being of flesh (v. 16).⁸⁴ On the other hand, to remain faithful to Christ and incorporated with him is to become a spiritual unity with him (v. 17).⁸⁵

The radical opposition is between two worlds—between the harlot and her heathen world with which the fornicator unites himself "in one flesh" and Christ and the new world of the *pneuma* with which the Christian is one spirit. We should also note that it is possible that Paul was confronting a situation of ritual prostitution in a pagan temple.⁸⁶

It is in the context of this series of arguments that Paul passes on to a new reason, or rather the same reason under a new form: "Do you not know that your body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God?" (1 Cor. 6:19). The body of Christians is a temple. Many authors have pointed out a certain relation of this theme with the Hellenistic thought of the time. The Stoics, for instance, spoke of the divinity as dwelling in man.⁸⁷ The Jewish philosopher, Philo, likewise spoke of the soul as the house of God.⁸⁸ Yet, neither Philo nor the Stoics referred to the body (or the community) as a temple; indeed, both Stoicism and the doctrine of Philo are profoundly individualistic. And while certain affinities can be seen with Hellenistic thought, the direct source of Paul's doctrine is the Christ-event itself and the whole current of spiritualization at work in Judaism.⁸⁹

84 Contrary to the use in Gen. 2:24 and Eph. 5:28, flesh here is used in the pejorative sense as opposed to the Spirit (Rom. 8:9, 22), in the sense of being opposed to life in Christ (Rom. 7:5; 8:5; Gal. 5:24). The biblical phrase is transposed from the conjugal union to the passing and lustful encounter which is its sinful degradation.

85 Compare Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament*, trans. by J. Holland-Smith and W. J. O'Hara (Freiburg: Herder, 1965), 273–75; Ceslas Spicq, *Théologie Morale du Nouveau Testament* [The Moral Theology of the New Testament], 2 vols. (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1965), 1:557.

86 Héring draws attention to the fact that "the *pornai* were in general hierodules, that is, slaves attached to the service of a pagan temple (notably the temple of Venus Aphrodite) and were believed to put their adorers in relation with the divinity they served" *Corinthiens*, 48.

87 "Wretch, you are carrying God with you, and you know it not. Do you think I mean some God of silver or gold? You carry him within yourself, and perceive not that you are polluting him by impure thoughts and dirty deeds." Epictetus, *Discourses*, Bk. 2, Chap. 8, 13, in *The Philosophy of Epictetus*, ed. John Bonforte (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955); see also *Discourses*, Bk. 1, Chap. 14, 14; Bk. 1, Chap. 8, 11.

88 "Be zealous therefore, O soul, to become a house of God, a holy temple (*hieron hagion*), a most beautiful abiding-place; for perchance, perchance the Master of the whole world's household shall be thine too and keep thee under his care as his special house, to preserve thee evermore strongly guarded and unharmed." *On Dreams*, Bk. 1, 149, in *Philo*, trans. F. H. Colson, and F. H. Whitaker, Loeb Classical Library, (London: Wm. Heinemann, 1934).

89 See Congar, *Le Mystère du Temple*, 186.

What is important here is the application of the identity of the Church as Temple to the body of the individual member of the Church. The message is that we cannot separate the community and its members.⁹⁰

In 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 it seems that Paul is aware he is repeating what he said three chapters earlier. In fact he begins in exactly the same way (“Do you not know ...” Compare 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:16). Again he seems to presume an established teaching and is drawing from a general principle to make a particular application. The community and the body are made a temple by the Holy Spirit who dwells in Christians to make them participate in the new world of grace and of life.⁹¹ While he is speaking of the individual believers, there remains on the horizon the idea of the community insofar as all Christians are members of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 6:15).

Throughout the passage it is the body which Paul wishes to vindicate as hallowed ground, not to be desecrated by *porneia*, which means unlawful sexual intercourse or fornication. To make his case, the apostle insists on the relation of the Spirit with the body of flesh. The Spirit dwells in the bodies of Christians (v. 19) and begets the life of Christ in them. The Spirit of Christ⁹² has transformed his risen body to become a “life-giving Spirit” (1 Cor. 15:45). The risen body of Christ is now “the focal point of a spiritual power which acts on men to bring about their resurrection and to give them life.”⁹³ For this reason, the Christian “who clings to the Lord becomes one spirit with him” (1 Cor. 6:17). It is through baptism and the Eucharist that this union with the body of Christ (v. 15) in the Spirit (v. 17) is effected. Baptism is in one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13) and through the Eucharist we come into real and spiritual union with Christ (1 Cor. 10:4, 17).

In the Temple theology of the Old Testament, the divine presence made up the essential reality of the Temple. So too here as Paul teaches that the Spirit of Christ makes the body of Christians “the Temple of the Holy Spirit.” As the Temple of the old covenant was consecrated by the glory of God, so the bodies of Christians are consecrated as temples by the Holy Spirit.

90 “The religious character of the community identifies itself with that of its members. ... The texts suggest now the idea of the community, now that of the individual lives. The same theme can be applied to the body.” Lucien Cerfaux, *Le Chrétien dans la Théologie Paulinienne* (Paris: Cerf, 1962), 256; Eng. trans.: *The Christian in the Theology of St. Paul*, trans. Liliam Soiron (London: G. Chapman, 1967). For a brief presentation of the notion of body in St. Paul, see John L. McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1965), 100–102. He shows how the biblical notion of “corporate personality” is involved. Also J. de Fraine, *Adam et son Lignage: Études sur la Notion de “Personnalité Corporative” dans la Bible*, Museum Lessianum, Section Biblique 2:195 (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1959), 207–208; Eng. trans: *Adam and the Family of Man* (Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1965).

91 Compare Rom. 8:4, 9–11; Cerfaux, *Le Chrétien dans la Théologie Paulinienne*, 256–257; Congar, *Le Mystère du Temple*, 184.

92 Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 6:11.

93 Cerfaux, *Le Chrétien dans la Théologie Paulinienne*, 276.

The Consecration of the Christian

Consecration and the holiness that it demands was one of the principle themes associated with the old Temple. In the new Temple, it is union with Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit which puts man in contact with the holiness of God. He who adheres to the Lord receives his Spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). The words *ho kollōmenos* ("he who clings or adheres") express the idea of connaturality between the Spirit and the *pneumatic* man. The connaturality, effected by baptism,⁹⁴ affects man in his nature and substance.⁹⁵ Our bodies, united with Christ and destined for resurrection, already take on a higher mode of life that is divine.

They have something of a holiness that belongs to buildings consecrated for worship. A Christian can be thought of as the priest in the Temple of his own body, in which sanctuary he serves God and keeps out whatever might profane it.⁹⁶

It is in this context that 1 Corinthians 6:18 is to be understood. The gravity of fornication, which is the one sin which is against one's own body, is that it totally falsifies the religious destiny and meaning of the body. Fornication thus becomes a complete alienation of the body from its true master and an abominable desecration of a sanctuary consecrated by the Holy Spirit himself. Even more, as has already been mentioned, the prostitution which is envisaged was possibly sacred prostitution. In this case, resort to the prostitute became the most terrible abomination of the Old Testament—the introduction of strange gods into the Temple of the all holy God.

94 In 1 Cor. 6:11 the process of sanctification is united with baptism: "But you had yourselves washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God."

95 "The adherence of which Paul speaks confers on man a quality of sanctity. It is a reality which posits a special reference to God, which gives rise to rights and duties, and which, in Pauline thought, is of its nature intrinsic, just as it was in the thought of the ancients." Cerfaux, *Le Chrétien dans la Théologie Paulinienne*, 276, n. 2.

96 Cerfaux, *The Church in the Theology of St. Paul*, 148–149. In this light it is no wonder that when Paul speaks of the life of celibacy and virginity in 1 Cor. 7, he again stresses holiness. "The unmarried woman, and the virgin, is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit" (1 Cor. 7:34). "Body and spirit" in this verse express the totality of the human being. Compare Spicq, *Théologie Morale du Nouveau Testament*, 564, n. 3. The virgin or celibate is totally consecrated to the Lord. Consecrated virginity becomes a privileged mode of living one's baptismal consecration, a drawing out of its ultimate consequences. Compare F. X. Durrwell, *In the Redeeming Christ*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (London: Sheed and Ward, 1963), 214. Set apart and dedicated to the Lord and the things of the Lord, virgins are thus called to live a life conformed to this holy state. Their virginal lives are a most active form of participation in the spiritual cult of the new Temple. It is in this way that Lucien Legrand speaks of "cultic continence." *The Biblical Doctrine of Virginity* (London: G. Chapman, 1963), 78–86. See also, Xavier Léon-Dufour: "L'Appel au Célibat Consacré" [The Call to Consecrated Celibacy], *Assemblées du Seigneur* 95 (1966): 17–23.

Paul's final argument takes up the christological-redemption theme of our belonging to the Lord because he has redeemed us at the cost of his own life—"You are not your own; you were bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:19–20). It is a theme closely connected with the theme of the habitation of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Spirit brings about a consecration, while Christ wins our redemption.⁹⁷ Lucien Cerfaux in speaking of this says:

Paul passes without effort from one notion to the other, doubtlessly because they are bound together in his thought. The Spirit dwells in the Temple. It is his house by the will of God who makes him dwell in Christians (*ou exete apo Theou*). Thus Christians are in some way the property of the Spirit, as they are the property of Christ by right of purchase (the purchase of redemption).⁹⁸

The main point of the verse (as also of 1 Cor. 7:23) is that Christians have no rights of their own (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 1:19). They are the property of Christ, redeemed by his precious blood (compare Rev. 5:9; 1 Pet. 1:19). Because Christians belong not to themselves but to God, Paul urges them to reverence their bodies (1 Cor. 6:20b). For in reverencing their bodies they glorify (*doxazein*) God himself. *Doxazein* is certainly a cultic term and is used in the Septuagint to designate the act of cult.⁹⁹ And Paul takes up that meaning in his use of the term,¹⁰⁰ as he also presupposes the whole of the Old Testament understanding of the *doxa* of God.

In the Old Testament, the *doxa* of God appears in the living creative power of creation and in the historical revelation of God to Israel (Exod. 19:16). God's glory dwells in "the holies" and will reveal itself in all its fullness in the eschatological future. We could translate *doxa* as the powerful splendor or the splendorous power of God. Wherever God manifests his glory, his glory reaches out to transform into God's dwelling place everything that is receptive to this power. In so doing it arouses from creatures the response of *doxazein*—of worship, honor, and praise.

97 Compare Cerfaux, *Christ in the Theology of St. Paul*, 312. The same close association of themes is taken up in Rom. 8:9: "But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him."

98 Cerfaux, *Le Chrétien dans la Théologie Paulinienne*, 256, n. 2. Also *Christ in the Theology of St. Paul*, 312–13.

99 Compare Lev. 10:3; Ps. 4:23; Isa. 6:7, 13. Two of the better studies on *doxazō* and *doxa* are those by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard von Rad in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, 2:235–258.

100 In the Pauline epistles *doxazein* occurs twelve times. Rom. 1:21; 8:30; 11:13; 15:6, 9; 1 Cor. 6:20; 12:26; 2 Cor. 3:10; 9:13; Gal. 1:24; 2 Thess. 3:1. As Heinrich Schlier points out, in Paul *doxa* and *doxazein* occur most often in a salvation-historical context. "Doxa bei Paulus als Heilgeschichtlicher Begriff" [Glory as a Salvation-Historical Term in Paul], *Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus Internationalis Catholicus 1961* [International Catholic Congress of Pauline Studies], vol. 1 *Analecta Biblica* 17 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963), 45–56.

This conception of *doxa-doxazein* is further developed by Paul. "The Father of glory" (Eph. 1:17), destined man from the beginning to "glory" (Rom. 9:23).¹⁰¹ The glory of the "immortal God" (Rom 1:23) in creation was already directed to our eternal destiny. For God made creation the place and the medium of his presence (Rom. 1:19–21). And the glory of God radiating from creation called for its acknowledgment in *doxazein*, in worship, on the part of those who saw themselves indebted to the Creator. In so doing the glory of God would reflect back to their praise.

However, the glory of God radiating from creation was lost for man by sin (Rom. 3:23; 1 Cor. 1:21). And so God again caused men to experience his powerful splendor in Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3:8; 4:4, 6; Phil. 4:9) and his Gospel (2 Cor. 4:4, 6; 3:9) "for our glorification" (1 Cor. 2:7). The *doxa*, disclosed in Jesus Christ and the Gospel, becomes our *doxa* through baptism (Rom. 8:30; Eph. 5:26–27) and faith (Eph. 3:16–19). God thus gives his *doxa* to the believer, who grasps it in faith and gives himself to it in worship and praise. All aspects of Christian living become, consequently, ways of testifying to the glory of God.

"Glorify God in Your Body"

We are thus in a position to better understand Paul's urgent admonition: "Glorify God in your body (1 Cor. 6:20b)." Christian existence, which is a response to the glory of God in Christ, further radiates the *doxa* of God in *doxazein*. In glorifying God (*doxazein*) one gives back the *doxa* to God, so to speak. And it allows the glory of God to reflect further and to dwell upon earth.

Already in 1 Corinthians 6:19 with the mention of the Temple of the Holy Spirit there was associated an image of the glory of God, which filled the Jerusalem Temple in the form of a cloud. Now, in 6:20, we are told that we must make a cultic response to the glory of God offered to us in Christ and his gift of redemption. That cultic response is a chaste life, unsullied by fornication. Drawn into the ambit of God's glory, the Christian is consecrated as his Temple and shares in the splendor and sanctity of God himself. Through a life lived in conformity with that holiness and that splendor, man's body becomes a further reflection of God's glory in the world about him. It becomes a continuous worship and praise of God.

In the Corinthian correspondence, as throughout the Pauline corpus, the Christian life is shown to have a liturgical character, a character that flows from the identity of Christians as "temples" of God and members of the Church, which is the new Temple of God, sharing in the spiritual edifice of Christ crucified and risen.

The Spirit that dwells in this new Temple dwells in the believer by baptism. And it is this divine presence which constitutes the whole Church and individual Christians as a consecrated Temple. It is the special mark of Christians that they

¹⁰¹ See also Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:4.

worship and serve by the Spirit of God (Phil. 3:3). This service is the priestly service of the new spiritual Temple in a life shaped and penetrated by the Spirit.

Paul in his exhortation to chaste living touches on the very heart of one's being as a Christian. *First*, as a person redeemed by Christ and destined to resurrection and eternal union with the Lord of glory, one shares, even now, in a community of life with Christ. One is "consecrated" as a member of Christ's body through baptism and the Eucharist. He pulsates with his Spirit and already radiates with his glory. It is therefore not a thing of indifference to subject this body to a prostitute, to become "one flesh" with her and her heathen world of sin and vice. For by this union he puts himself in complete contradiction with that which he is as "one spirit" with the Lord.

Secondly, the Christian is a Temple of the Holy Spirit, who has become such precisely in virtue of the redemption of Christ. Transformed by Christ, the Christian participates in Christ's life-giving Spirit. The "presence" of the Holy Spirit makes of the body of Christians a consecrated temple with all that that implies—a special sanctity and separation for the service of God. This divine presence is a dynamic presence. It is the moving force of the moral life of Christians, which gives to their whole life a cultic value. The sanctity and service demanded of the believer are no longer essentially ritual. It is the whole existence of the Christian, united to Christ in the Holy Spirit, which becomes the worship of the new Temple. The Christian, in the living out of one's moral life, becomes a priest in the temple of his own body, dedicated to the service of God. The person's life, lived in moral purity and holiness, becomes an extension of God's glory in the world and a constant worship and praise of God.