

His Resting Place

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala's sermon emphasizes God's desire to dwell among His people through the Holy Spirit and the significance of living as His temples.

Duration: 29:11

Scripture: Exodus 26:31

Topics: "Rest"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the incredible love that God has for humanity. He highlights the sacrifice of Jesus, who endured a fake trial, beatings, and crucifixion for the sake of mankind. After His resurrection, Jesus spent time with His disciples before ascending to heaven with the promise of returning one day. The preacher also emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit, who was poured out on the believers in Acts chapter 2, fulfilling Jesus' teaching on being born again. The sermon concludes by emphasizing that the church, made up of believers from diverse backgrounds, is meant to be a dwelling place for God's presence on earth.

Transcript

Back in the time of the Renaissance in Europe, which happened in Denmark and France and Europe, but into Scandinavia too, there were a lot of advancements in learning and philosophy, different kinds of schools of thought. And right around there, they developed this idea or this school of thought of people that were called deists, D-E-I-S-T-S. And their theology was deism.

And their concept was this, they didn't believe in the Bible, or agnostics in a way, and rather than follow the Bible, they made up like people do today, their own religion, using their reason. They try to reason out a God that made sense to them. That's a very bad idea because God's ways are not our ways.

Neither are his thoughts our thoughts. But that's what people do today and that's what the deists did. And they said, God is like a master clockmaker.

And God made the earth and the people and he wound up the clock and then he walked away and he just let it all spin out. He's distant, he's removed from the people of the earth. He just never interferes, never answers prayer.

He's not even concerned. He's not involved in what goes on here on the earth. He started it, then he stepped back and he lets it play out.

The Bible gives us a totally different picture of God. The name of this message is his dwelling place. One of the interesting things about God is the moment he secured a people for himself, he wanted to dwell with them here on earth in a certain way, in a special way.

Now let's get our terms straight. God is not only omnipotent, that means he has all what? Power. He's not only omniscient, that means he knows everything, he is also omnipresent, which means God is everywhere at the same time and there is no place that God is not there.

So then what does that mean about his resting place? If he's everywhere, what does resting place mean? While he's everywhere at the same time, omnipresent, the Bible tells us that he has a home in heaven. He rules from heaven. There's a throne that he rules the earth from and this is the place that Jesus said he went to prepare for us, dwelling places so we could be there with Jesus after we die or he returns.

That's where God's ultimate glory is revealed and it's a place where we're not ready to see it, no one could experience it now because we're just not ready for that, the outshining of his glory. But not only that, on earth, God has indicated that he wants to dwell with his people. So starting in the Old Testament, the moment he called his people Israel out of Egypt, the minute he secured them as his people, named them as his people, it wasn't long after that that he led them under the hand of Moses to Mount Sinai and at Mount Sinai, God gave not only the Ten Commandments, not only rules about social relationships and all that, but God gave them a plan for a place of worship called the tabernacle.

The tabernacle was, for the most part, open to the air and it was in the shape of a football field, which this carpet is not, but since you all can see it, I want you to notice it. There were curtains that made the perimeter and there was an entrance on the east and then there was this curtain material and there was a courtyard and there was a brazen altar where sacrifices were made and there was a laver of water where only the priests would go and cleanse themselves before they went further into an enclosed building, as it were, and that was divided into two parts. The larger part, like this, was called the holy place and then if you went through the holy place, there was a curtain, only the priests went in here, only the priests were there, people never could come in, but past this was the Holy of Holies and in the Holy of Holies, where the high priest only went once a year, on the day that they just celebrated now, the Jewish holiday, Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, just on that day, the high priest was allowed to go in to that and sprinkle blood on the box that was there and that box was called, for all of you that are scholars, that box was called the Ark of the Covenant.

It was a box like this rectangle within the carpet and it was long, rectangular like that, came up about this high and inside the box was the 10 commandments that God had written on stone to give to Moses. Then there was a top to the box and it was solid gold covered and on the top was the mercy seat made of gold and on either end was a cherubim, a statue of an angelic figure reaching out over the box. Box was bigger than that and then on this side, there was another one and above that mercy seat, God said, I will dwell there.

No one ever describes what the high priest saw when he went in there, no one ever discusses it. It's too sacred, too awe-inspiring, but in some kind of cloud or thing that could be seen, there was a special manifest presence of God and God said, that's where I will dwell and as they trekked through the desert, the wilderness and then they went into the promised land, that tabernacle was set up and that was the

sacred thing that meant everything to the people of Israel. Our God dwells with us, God is with us and when they would move, what would go first? Not the people, the Ark of the Covenant would go first and all the trappings of the tabernacle and then they would set it up again and they knew that God had returned back with them and was there.

Moses said this, this is what makes us special, more special than any people in the world because Philistines, Amorites, Jebusites, none of them have God with them, none of them have the presence of God with them and one time when God said, I'm not gonna go with you into battle because you've been so disobedient, Moses said, if you're not going with us, then we're not going. No, no, no, no, we're not going because how else could we ever have victory? How else do people know us? We're the only ones who have their God is with them, not some statue of the living God, a living presence of God. As the centuries went by and Israel backslid again and again, Bible never clearly tells us what happened to that holy place except that when Jesus was crucified, the curtain was split in two from the top toward the bottom which showed that no human did it and they found out there was nothing there but that box because God's glory had departed from them.

God's dwelling place though had found a new location and that is Jesus. Jesus was the place where God dwelt in a unique way. What do we learn from this arc of the covenant? We learn this, God's presence can never dwell with us because of the law.

The law had to be covered by the mercy seat. God never dwells with us, blesses us because we deserve it. He only blesses us because we plead his mercy and we love his compassion.

How many say amen to that? Always remember that. You can never earn God's presence and blessing and power in your life. It's only done by faith in his mercy.

That's what the gold mercy seat was a symbol of. Now Jesus came. The Bible says the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Jesus in bodily form.

That's the mystery of the incarnation. He was man, had a human physical body but he was God, God the son. He was totally perfectly God but he was totally perfectly man and that is a mystery none of us can understand.

There was no place where the humanity stopped and now he's divine, the divinity stopped, now he's back to human. He was man and God, his name shall be called Emmanuel which means God with us. So now God was dwelling in his son and now imagine what we learned from that resting place.

He rested with Israel in a way for centuries but now he was here for 33 years with his son. That son teaches us the lesson that God's love for us is beyond comprehension. How much God loves you sir, you ma'am? You can't even comprehend it and maybe you think he's mad at you and he doesn't like you but I wanna tell you something.

God loves us all so much that his own son came. I was reading the end of John and about the trial, the fake trial, mock trial, how they beat him and punched him and scratched at him and spit upon him and put him on a cross all for you and me. He didn't do it for himself, he did it for us, amen? For our sins, so all our sins can be put away for the Bible says without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin but to really settle the sin question, it took the blood not of goats and lambs like in the Old Testament.

Those were just symbols of what God's ultimate intention was his own son would die and he was on that cross and I was reading it and just the agony he went through and he was God, God died for us. The son of God died for us, for you and me. Next time the devil whispers to you that God doesn't love you and that you're all alone and nobody cares, just remind him about on the cross Jesus died for you.

Paul says it this way, Christ died for me. Say that with me, Christ died for me. Me, Jim Simbla, maybe for Allah, yes for Allah too but for me I can say, Christ died for me.

What a wonderful thing to rejoice over. But then Christ died, he's buried in a tomb on the third day he rose, then he spent 40 days on and off with the disciples, talking to them about the kingdom of God and then he ascended up to heaven with promises that he would return someday. You all know that Jesus is coming back again.

All in favor say aye. Aye. Jesus is coming back again.

Well, I'm not sure of it, that won't change anything. Tomorrow's Monday whether you believe it or not, I can assure you and he's coming back again. So now, God wasn't done.

There's this longing in him, I have to be with my people. I can't just be in heaven. I've got to dwell, fellowship, help, bless, I gotta be close to my people.

As they were waiting in the upper room, Acts chapter two tells us the story, the Holy Spirit was poured out and now the full meaning of what Jesus said to Nicodemus came into play. You must be born again. You have to have a new birth, a new beginning.

So the Spirit came and dwelt within the believers. The Spirit didn't come to touch the believers, he came to live in the believer. Remember, God is always looking for a resting place, a place where he's welcome.

You think he's welcome in this culture? You think he's welcome on Wall Street? You think he's welcomed with the media, the New York Times and the media? You think he's welcome in the corridors of power politically? You think he's welcome with the Democrats? You think he's welcome with the Republicans? You think in Hollywood, they're really interested in Jesus and finding a resting place for God? No, there is in a crack house or any other kind of house? No, no, the Bible tells us his resting place would be the actual believers who now have been born again, have put their trust in him. So now we find this astounding verse. I want you to be open now as you read it to its implications.

Look, 1 Corinthians chapter six. Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually sins against their own body.

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own. You were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.

Paul is now teaching about, because in Corinth, there was gross immorality. It was a byword that if you said to someone, you live like a Corinthian, that means you're a lowlife, immoral. So he was saying, no, you can't take your body and join it to a prostitute.

Are you gonna take the temple, a temple of the Holy Spirit? He dwells in you. And now he's giving us this thought, which most of us don't ponder every day. You see this sister here? Stand up.

She's a slow temple, but she finally got there. She is a temple of the Holy Spirit. All who believe that from the word of God, say amen.

Amen. You see her? She's a temple of the Holy Spirit. You see these tenors? As born again Christians, God is not just with them.

He lives inside of them. He doesn't live in any physical place. Let's get this straight.

He doesn't live in Jerusalem. He will never live in any physical building. Whatever they build in Jerusalem, or whatever you think of a church sanctuary, Catholic church, Protestant church, God does not dwell in buildings.

There are no sacred buildings. There are no sacred pieces of earth. I was told that recently someone went to preach, one of our staff at a church, and the worship leader distracted the person who spoke because among other things, he did some other strange things, but he was barefoot.

He wouldn't wear socks or shoes while he was leading worship. And the person came to me and asked me, Pastor, I was there, it was a nice church, good spirit, but the dude had no shoes on, had no socks on. So I was guessing what it was, and I confirmed by talking to someone who goes to that church, and they don't realize what a distraction that is.

It doesn't edify anyone. But he said the reason he doesn't wear shoes is because he's on holy ground. Ha.

There is no holy ground. We are individual temples of the Holy Spirit. Can we say amen? Like happened years ago.

A brother, Deacon Stephen Tisdale here would come up and say to me, Pastor Symbol, I wanna tell you something. It's kind of personal about a problem I learned. And I say, tell me.

He go, not here, let's go outside. I don't wanna say it in the church. No, that's how people think.

They think this is sacred here, or this is sacred. There's nothing sacred. God is sacred.

And he lives inside of us. You gotta get away from those Old Testament ideas. There are no sacred buildings, sacred land.

There's no sacred country. There's nothing. There's Jesus living in his people through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

That's why Paul said, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. How? Through the Spirit living inside of me. But let's just, before we close with one other point, let's just think of the repercussions of what I just said.

First of all, what a privilege. Look at me, frail as I am, faulty as I am, and yet God says, no, I'm gonna live in you. I'm not gonna just save you.

I'm not gonna just save you. I am not gonna just forgive your sins. No, I'm not gonna just write your name in the Lamb's Book of Life.

No, I'm not just taking you to heaven one day. I have no place else to dwell, so I'm gonna dwell in Jim Simba so that people can see what I'm like through a human being. Never as perfect, obviously, as Jesus

was, but God says, no, I'm gonna dwell in her.

I'm gonna dwell in her. I'm gonna dwell in him so that people can know my love, my patience, my kindness, my mercy. How else am I gonna show it to them? I'm not sending angels to yell at anybody.

I'm not writing in the sky the only witness that I will leave on the earth are my people, what they say about me, and they do. Just think of that. That also means this, wherever you go, whatever you watch, whoever you're with, you take the Holy Spirit with you.

Whenever you open your mouth and say something ugly about another temple, you are grieving the Holy Spirit who lives within you. This is why Christians suffer such losses of joy and peace because it's not the Holy Spirit's not in them, but we do things, say things, go places, watch things, get involved in people, go clubbing or wherever people think that I have freedom to do with no thought of. You can't go there alone.

You gotta bring the Holy Spirit with you. He's in you. Are you with me on this? Everyone who understands it, put your hands together.

Okay? So you could say, well, I'm not in church now. It's not Sunday. I'm gonna do my thing.

No, it doesn't work that way. Everything we do, the Holy Spirit is with us. This is why some Christians are perpetually weak, joyless, negative, despondent, depressed, no vitality, no spiritual energy, and another person's en fuego, on fire for God.

Why? Because one person, like every day, just hurts the one who lives within them, and there's a reaction. I'll prove it. How many Christians here have ever sinned, said something? Let's just talk about say something.

You just get tempted, you say something ugly or whatever, and boy, does the Holy Spirit let you know that you messed up. How many have ever had that happen? No one has to tell you. Holy Spirit is like, what is that about? What are you talking about? So we are temples, every one of us.

Say it with me. I am a temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in me. I am a temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in me.

That's true for all of us. That's the reason why some people really live a sanctified Christ-like life, because they walk carefully, not because they're afraid of going to hell. You'll never live, we'll never be like Jesus, afraid of going to hell.

They're walking carefully because they know I'm not alone. He's with me, whatever I look at, whatever I watch on TV, He has to watch it with me. Whatever thing I get involved with, He's with me.

Oh, I love Him so much. How many love the Holy Spirit? Come on, wave your hand at me if you love the Holy Spirit. He's our strength.

My help comes from the Lord, and that help is inside of us, quickening us, strengthening us. So that's God's resting place, how we should make a good place for Him to be. You know, you might be sloppy about things in your house, and everything is kind of like mook-a-look, but then when a friend comes and you have someone visit, boy, you get everything ready, like everything.

Oh, you live like this? Yeah, we always keep the house like this, yeah. Yeah, sure, sure, sure, sure. Why? Because a guest is coming.

How many want to make a nice resting place for Him? Say amen. You know, everything in order, being careful. Don't say anything to hurt Him.

You know, if you were over at my house with Carol, and another guest was there, and you're our guest, and someone else comes in, we'd be careful. Don't hurt our guest. Don't say anything, don't hurt.

She gets served first. She gets thought of first. She's the guest.

He's the one who now lives with us. Where else would He live? I, I close one other place. Oh, Lord, open our eyes that we might see same book, 1 Corinthians.

Let's look at one other resting place He has. It's connected to the one I just gave you. Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple, and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? Now listen, in the King James, they use you in the singular.

I don't know how it is in Danish, but in English, it can be confusing, because I could say, you, could you help me? Right? Singular you. But I could say, you, would you help me at the end of the service? Same word, you, but one means one. The other one means a large group.

English is confusing that way. I bet in Danish, there's a singular you and a plural you, like in Spanish and French. In the King James, many people think this is another way of saying your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

No. See, they added the word, the N-I-V, yourselves, plural. Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple, and that God's Spirit dwells in your collective midst? So God is building another kind of temple, beside our bodies.

Notice what he's building. Look at Ephesians here. Consequently, you folks are no longer foreigners and strangers.

He's talking mostly to Gentiles now. But you're fellow citizens with God's people, and also members of his household. Notice how the metaphor changes here.

Built on the foundation. Now he's talking building, construction. Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

In him, Jesus, the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him, plural, you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. So he doesn't dwell in Jerusalem.

He is not in any church. He's not in any altar. He dwells in us as individual temples of the Holy Spirit.

But now, the three of you brothers, could you just get up and stand next to me? He's building a spiritual temple, but not using stones or bricks. Using humans as bricks. And he joins us together from all different backgrounds.

He saves us, and he makes us a spiritual dwelling so that his presence can live among us. So that when people walk in the building, they can say, I didn't understand everything, but God is in the midst of those people. The church is supposed to be his number one advertisement for who Jesus is.

Why? Because he made us a temple. We're joined together. Now picture thousands of us like are here this morning.

And as we sing, as we worship, as we pray, God says, I found my resting place. I heard you singing this morning when I walked in, and I said, oh God, rest here. We invite you, be here, Lord.

We welcome you. We all have one thing in common. Look at the different backgrounds.

Latino, Asian. Where are you from, brother, originally? Nigeria. Nigeria and Brooklyn, New York.

But God has joined us, look, together. Now notice what Satan's gonna try to do. Every building, you have to have the bricks together.

You can't have leaks there. It hurts, right? So if we separate a little bit, just separate a little bit, that's what he tries to do. Gossip, slander.

Oh, I don't like the way she looks. Oh, she thinks she's all that. Or he, or that.

And now there's separation. And now the building isn't what God intended it to be. The other danger is to be a stone inspector.

Peter says he is building a building with living stones. Living people are the stones. So God doesn't want you to do anything else but be together.

He doesn't want you looking and saying, I don't know if I want that stone. He's so different than me. You know people who are racist and ignorant and prejudiced, if someone's different from them, they get all bent out of shape.

But when you know Jesus and know the mercy he's shown you, you go, I thank God for any brother that he's gonna give me. Any brother. Can we all put our hands together? You may be seated.

Oh, the glory of your presence. So brothers and sisters, here's my last word to you. I want God to have a resting place in the Brooklyn Tabernacle.

And I want God to have a resting place for you that are Christians in your body. Your body is a temple. And we together are the temple of the living God.

He has to inhabit. He won't be away from us. He's gotta find someplace to be so he can rest and bless and help us.

Some churches thrive for a season and there's the love of God and blessing and conversions made and a spirit of prayer. And then one thing leads to another study. Brooklyn is the borough of churches.

I've done a study of churches going back to 1700s, 1800s. Some very historic churches here. And now there's not even 10 people together.

Why? They got separated. They wanted to live for their name, their denomination. I want the Brooklyn Tabernacle as a brand.

We gotta keep mentioning that. No. How about mentioning Jesus as our brand? How many say amen? Amen.

I want God to be welcome here. Just one last repetition. When this building had no seats in it and they were just painting the ceiling, I stood against this column right here.

There was no paint, no curtains, no anything. They were working on the building. This was a big change from where we were previously.

I passed him and passers and I stood there and I envisioned one day all you people sitting here and all alone on a weekday I stood there and I said, God, I give you this building and all I wanted to be is a place where people lift up your name and praise you. I don't want the choir to be famous. I don't wanna be famous.

We don't want the name Brooklyn Tabernacle. I don't want any other name to be famous, just you, Jesus. I want your name to be lifted up.

I want people visiting from Denmark to leave and say, I didn't understand everything, but boy, God is in that place. I forgot his name, the guy who spoke, but boy, God is in that place. How many want that with all your heart? Come on, if you want that.

Lord, bind us together in love. Let us live this week understanding that our bodies, that's right, our physical bodies, our temples of the Holy Spirit who lives within us, who came from God and that we together collectively are being built into a temple of God so that praises and love and mercy can go out from us to the world. Thank you for your word today.

Thank you for other stones that are standing next to us. We appreciate every one of them, Lord. In Jesus' name, we pray.

And everyone said? Amen. Hug a stone. Go ahead, hug some stone.

Pick a nice one and hug it.

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