

# A Temple

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1) as a temple in which his Presence dwelled and which reflected his glory. “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (Psalm 19:1). Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, So God created man in his own image” (Genesis 1:26-27). “Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed” (Genesis 2:8).

In accordance with God’s instructions, Moses had the Tabernacle built in the Wilderness, and had it dismantled and rebuilt at each new location. God’s Presence dwelled among his people in that Tabernacle. Later, David decided to build a more permanent building, a Temple, to replace the Tabernacle. God approved the idea, but because David was a man of war, God chose David’s son Solomon for this task. So Solomon had a magnificent Temple built, but it was destroyed many years later. It’s much less impressive replacement was then built; but it too was later destroyed.

Before that however, God manifested his Presence in a far greater way, as foretold In Isaiah 7:14: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”—which means, “God with us” (Matthew 1:23). So the Son “tabernacled” with us, then told his disciples he would soon be leaving them, saying: “If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth (John 14:15-17). He later added “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth ... and he will tell you what is yet to come” (John 16:13). And Peter wrote: “As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him— you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:4-5).

So, the Temple no longer stands on Mount Moriah, but God is here in a far different, more wonderful way! Paul asked: “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God” (1 Corinthians 6:19). So God’s Presence is not now in man-made structures; but in his people!

In my early childhood my parents came into contact with a church of a different denomination from the one we had been attending. I remember when we left the beautiful stone and brick church in a suburb and started attending services in a frame, one-room store-building in downtown Cincinnati, Ohio. The structure and number of people present were not impressive, but God’s Presence among the people was!

Jesus said that the Holy Spirit “will tell you what is yet to come;” but this has been claimed for both sides of conflicting views; so I hesitate to claim His authority for the following views; though they came from serious and prayerful study of the Scriptures. These related facts came to mind:

- We can be “a temple of the Holy Spirit,” so worship in religious structures is not essential;
- The Lord said “Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them” (Matthew 18:20); and so large numbers are not necessary to worship Him and sense his Presence;
- A tremendous number of persons who promised before God and the people to be faithful in attending services when they joined a church, are not doing so;
- More followers of Christ are participating in small group fellowships today than ever before; rather than joining a church and attending its services;

- God is still using organizations mightily in building his Kingdom; many of their ministries, such as obeying the command to “go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20) would not be possible without the support of many members;
- Signs of the Antichrist’s takeover are increasing; so Jesus is coming soon! It is questionable how long Christian groups will be able to function openly.

My serious study also raised these questions:

- Was the emphasis on church membership and attendance more applicable for an earlier time than now?
- Are there situations where it is God’s will to not belong to an organization; but to find fellowship and service through small group fellowships instead?
- When persons decide to no longer keep their vows, should they not withdraw their membership from the church?
- Is the upsurge of small groups and the decrease in organizational participation God’s way of preparing His Church for these “last days”?

This inquiry has strengthened my conviction that our ministry to small groups, formed for evangelism, fellowship, worship, discipleship, witness, and service without the requirement of membership in our In Christ Fellowship ministry, is “on target”; so we are determined to continue challenging everyone we can reach to:

- join or form such fellowships;
- start using our free materials that teach God’s Salvation Plan that can unite those “in Christ,” in such a unity that it will be the catalyst for the greatest revival ever;
- realize that failing to keep one’s vows is to endanger one’s salvation;
- get churches to see that their most urgent mission field may be among their own members; and that their renewal will require a drastic doctrinal adjustment of the tradition that contributed to their failure to “keep the faith;”
- follow Paul’s example who said in Philippians 3:14: ”I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

The driving force of this ministry is concern for your soul and the souls of those you can influence. It takes time for groups to change doctrines as we believe they will in this case; but every day’s delay costs more souls; so, the response is up to you and to us—today!!!

Yours, "in Christ,"  
 Brother Jim, Founder  
 In Christ Fellowship  
 Website: [InChristFellowship.org](http://InChristFellowship.org)  
 Email: [Support@InChristFellowship.org](mailto:Support@InChristFellowship.org)

Note: You can learn more about this ministry at [www.InChristFellowship.org](http://www.InChristFellowship.org). We encourage you to contact us at [Support@InChristFellowship.org](mailto:Support@InChristFellowship.org) if you have questions or need help in applying these truths in your own life. We do not maintain a "membership roll," nor do we solicit monetary contributions; yet, we also encourage you to contact us if you feel led of the Lord, to participate in our efforts in some way.

All Rights Reserved. Any ICF article, whether in digital or printed formats, may be freely distributed provided the distribution is done at no cost to recipients and the source of the article is clearly and visibly identified as [www.InChristFellowship.org](http://www.InChristFellowship.org). Contact us at [Support@InChristFellowship.org](mailto:Support@InChristFellowship.org) if you have any questions regarding distribution.

All articles are available in PDF format, and can be freely downloaded from [www.InChristFellowship.org](http://www.InChristFellowship.org) for personal use or for distribution as allowed above.