

Meditation #29: The Body-Temple

What does it say?

STUDY: I Corinthians 6:12-20

GOLDEN TEXT: I Corinthians 6:19 and 20 = *Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.*

What does it mean?

Nine months before the first Christmas, the Holy Spirit miraculously conceived Jesus' embryo and attached him inside Mary's womb. In the context of I Corinthians 6, the Apostle Paul reminds us that all of our bodies are temples of the same Holy Spirit. He is concerned about moral pollution and the need for sexual holiness and wholeness. The general truth is two-fold: *First*, the Holy Spirit lives within us, and as good hosts we should make his dwelling clean and healthful. *Second*, none of us operates in a bubble, so that all our relationships and environments impact the "place" where the Spirit dwells. In short, decisions and environments matter to the Holy Spirit—and therefore should matter deeply to us. Some people refer to the entire creation as "God's Temple," and so it is. Individually, each of our bodies is his temple, too.

1. Does it matter that we take good care of the creation and our bodies—places where the Holy Spirit dwells? Who is affected?
2. Why did the Holy Spirit start the new humanity in Mary's womb? Why not start completely fresh? Why does he dwell in our bodies? What does he seek to accomplish?
3. How does the health of the rest of the creation impact the health of our bodies, the Spirit's temples? Can you mention five or more ways? Do these ways matter to the Holy Spirit, alive within his body-temples?
4. Is the Spirit within us the same as the Spirit that moved in the beginning, prior to the original steps of creation (Genesis 1:2)? Is he the same Holy Spirit who initiated the new life in the womb of Mary? What are the purposes of the Spirit's presence?

What are we going to do about it?

5. How should we honor the Holy Spirit, the source of Jesus' life, this Christmas? Is the way we treat our bodies—and the creation around us—the way we treat the Holy Spirit who lives in our body-temples? Can you mention four ways we can treat the Holy Spirit better?
6. Should there be worship where the Spirit is present? Do you say a prayer every time you eat? Do you sing a hymn or spiritual song as you walk down the street? Are there CDs or tapes of Bible-readings and praise songs in your car? What else honors the Spirit in our body-temples?
7. Where do you sense the Spirit's presence and power the most—at home, on a busy street, in a park, at church, with friends at a restaurant? Or all these places? Will you take time this week in one of those places to renew your commitments to the Holy Spirit?

Truth To Celebrate: The same Holy Spirit that worked a timeless miracle inside Mary's body, starting nine months before the first Christmas, desires to dwell in our bodies as well.

Advent-Action: Keep the Spirit's body-temple in good shape—and save energy and reduce CO2 at the same time—by walking or biking more to get to Church, school, visiting friends or family, work, shopping, and such like. Give the car a rest... and give the environment a break.

