

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

***"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."***

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 55

THE CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA

(continued)

"Him that overcometh will I make a *pillar in the temple of my God*, and he shall go no more out" (Rev. 3:12).

Lorain and I visited the city of Philadelphia a number of years ago, and it is today a rather prosperous Turkish town. The city was built on four or five hills in a very beautiful valley and picturesque setting. Today it is spread out a great deal, and it is a typical Turkish town. But it is interesting to note that the only thing that remains of the *ancient city* is *two pillars*! It's as though God has sovereignly preserved these two pillars, even in the natural, as an abiding testimony to His promise to the overcomer, "I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God, and you will go no more out."

Before we consider this wonderful promise of being a "pillar" let us look at the "temple of God" in which the pillars stand. All types and shadows are forever done away when Christ, the reality, comes. The Lord dwells not in temples made with hands! They are but shadowy figures of the true. "What temple will ye build me?" saith the Lord. So

wherever we see a reference to a temple of the present or the future, it *must* refer to “the true sanctuary, and the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Heb. 8:2). Furthermore, there is only *one* such tabernacle, or temple. The Word nowhere tells of two, or three, or one hundred; one away off somewhere in space where Jesus is ministering, another in Jerusalem built by the Jews, and another spiritual one composed of living stones. There is but ONE temple, ONE great High Priest, and ONE royal priesthood. So when the priests of old served “unto the example and shadow of heavenly (spiritual) things,” those heavenly things were the same that Moses saw in the mount, and the same heavenly and spiritual things to which we, God’s spiritual and heavenly people, have now come, for, we “**are come** unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the **heavenly Jerusalem**” (Heb. 12:22). None of these are a future reality to be entered into after we die, or after Jesus returns. We ARE COME! Let us never forget that fact.

More than three thousand years ago Solomon built a magnificent temple of stone and precious materials. He overlaid it with gold and adorned it with silver. There was no sound of hammer or chisel or saw, for all of the stones and every part had been carefully made and cut far away, down in Solomon’s quarry. The pillars reflected the light of the Judean hills; the great Corinthian brass door shown in the sunlight. So wonderful was it that the Queen of Sheba stood transfixed at the sight. But the temple built by Solomon was only a fleeting shadow of the living temple which Christ would build by the Spirit — a temple *not made with hands!*

The tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness and the temple of Solomon upon mount Moriah were merely *shadows* of **better things** to come; merely the natural type of the spiritual reality which Moses saw in the mount. These **never did constitute** the **TRUE TEMPLE** of God! How absolutely clear are the inspired words of the apostle, “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an High

Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary and of the **TRUE TABERNACLE**, which **the Lord pitched**, and not man.” Jesus is now a minister in the true tabernacle or temple! Concerning the old tabernacle and temple with its priestly ministry the writer to the Hebrews continues, “Who serve unto the *example* and *shadow* of **heavenly things**, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the *pattern* showed to thee in the mount.” The tabernacle of old was made as a physical, material *copy* or *representation* of the **true heavenly tabernacle** which Moses beheld in the spiritual realm of the heavens. What Moses saw in the mount was heavenly and spiritual! And that which is heavenly and spiritual is the **true tabernacle** which the Lord pitched, and not man!

We are now come to the true! The true temple is the body of Christ. The temple of the Lord is that vast family of God’s sons who are coming to maturity in the image of Christ. It distresses me to hear preachers constantly proclaiming as fact the old wives’ fable that the temple of God must be rebuilt by the Jews in Israel! Listen to the words of Peter as he presses this golden truth home to the understanding hearts of the saints. “If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a *living stone*, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, *ye also*, as *living stones*, are built up a *spiritual house*, an holy priesthood, to offer up *spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a *chief cornerstone*, elect, precious: and he that believeth in Him shall not be confounded” (I Pet. 2:3-6).

Our Lord Jesus Christ is remarkable as the cornerstone of this human heavenly temple because not only is Christ the sure foundation in the midst of a world where the pillars are trembling and the foundations are shaken, but He remains ever sure and ever stable and gives His

stability to the entire structure. More than that, He is the living stone that communicates that stability to all the other stones that are joined to Him. Praise God that in the midst of all the pressures and testings there is that INNER STABILITY of the Christ! So, we see painted before our eyes a magnificent structure, the living cathedral of Christ rising into the sky, made of living stones. This is the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man! Not a temple of dead stones, but of living stones, each stone a spiritually living person indwelt by the glory of God, whose temple we are. Not covered with glittering gold, but overshadowed by God. Not adorned with silver, but founded on redemption. Not fashioned with glittering, precious stones, but with the eternal jewels of His own nature, glory, and power!

God will *never vacate* this heavenly, spiritual temple to return to a temple made with hands. No temple of God, formed from stones and ornamented with cedar and silver and gold, will ever be rebuilt in Jerusalem! The notion of a rebuilt temple is a lie that would be humorous, were it not so ridiculous and absurd. The very thought is a horrible blasphemy! God doesn't go *backward* in His purposes, nor does He reinstate the *type* once the *reality* has come. The temple that God builds is the temple of which Jesus spoke to the poor, sinful woman at the well of Sychar. She was quibbling about the *place* to worship God, and He said, "Neither in this mountain, NOR IN JERUSALEM, shall ye worship the Father...the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit (in their own spirits) and in truth (spiritual reality)" (Jn. 4:21-24). And our brother Paul adds this testimony, "Now therefore...ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the *chief cornerstone*; in whom *all the building* fitly framed together groweth unto an HOLY TEMPLE in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an HABITATION OF GOD through the spirit" (Eph. 2:19-22).

Almost two thousand years ago the Lord Jesus spoke to the house of Judah, saying, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Mat. 23:38). This was a pronouncement of doom upon a city and a nation that had not received its King. He is saying that the *presence* and the *glory* and the *purpose* of God had departed from Judah. God took His presence even from the Holy of holies in the temple, leaving their house desolate unto them. Finally, in A.D. 70, He came and destroyed that vacant shell of a building so that not one stone of it was left upon another. He scattered the people of Judah throughout all the earth, abolished their law and their priesthood, which to this day has never been restored, nor can it be. It seems to me that when Jesus Christ was anointed with the fullness of the Holy Spirit the presence and glory of God left the dwelling place in the Holy of holies and came into the firstborn Son of God, taking up His abiding place in human flesh. All of those years the priests had been offering sacrifices to God who was not in His accustomed dwelling place, though they did not know it. He had left His centuries-old habitation and had moved into a body of flesh, the body of His Son, the true temple of God. All of the world was ignorant of this for we read, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not" (Jn. 1:10). And again, standing before Herod's temple, beholding the stones and the glory thereof, He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews were furious, demanding, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" But, the record states, "They wist not that He spake of *the temple of His body*" (Jn. 2:19-21).

At the crucifying of Jesus, God drew a curtain of darkness over the earth and blotted out everything from sight. Beneath the cover of that dense darkness God tore the temple veil from top to bottom so *any* carnal, earthly priest of Aaron's passing order could peer into the Holy of holies, the former abode of God, and plainly see and know that **God was not there!** This Holy of holies was empty. Ah, what must

have been the thoughts of the priesthood as they returned to the temple! What must have been the feelings of the priests who had remained in the temple! When the darkness was lifted and the desolation seen and they discovered that they could enter into the Holy of Holies and not suffer death! Then they must have known that something catastrophic had taken place. Surely a deep, inward fear seized them. They would not dare breathe a hint of this to the people! They must hide the facts and continue on with the form of the sacrifices as though nothing had happened.

God was establishing something entirely new and different. Beneath the cover of darkness God ripped open that veil and let the whole world see that He had departed, leaving that room empty. It was desolate, and now this was the beginning of the end for Jerusalem, the temple, and its priesthood. And I want to say again, in spite of what many tell us, **WE WILL NEVER SEE ANOTHER TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM!** Are we so foolish to even entertain the impious thought that God would allow the unbelieving Jews to build in Jerusalem another desolate temple? To again institute a priesthood offering the blood of goats and calves ***after Christ has been offered once for all?*** The very idea is ludicrous!

Now I would draw your attention to some significant truths in relation to the temple of God. We will begin with a few passages of scripture from Hebrews, chapters eight and nine.

*“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; **a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man**” (Heb. 8:1-2).*

*“But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by **a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building (material creation); neither by the blood of***

goats and calves, but by His **own blood** He entered in once to the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Heb. 9:11-12).

*“It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens should be **purified with these** (the blood of goats and calves); but the **heavenly things themselves** (purified) with **better sacrifices** than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself..”* (Heb. 9:23-24).

We should earnestly consider the following points. (1) Christ our High Priest is now a minister *in* the heavenly sanctuary, the true tabernacle. (1) This tabernacle is greater and more perfect than the former one which was merely a type. (3) This tabernacle is not made with hands; i.e. not something man has built. (4) Christ has entered into this heavenly tabernacle to **purify it** with the **better sacrifice of His blood**.

Armed with this understanding that *we are the temple of the living God*, and that Christ is now ministering *in* the true tabernacle, which we are, the question follows — WHERE is Christ ministering as High Priest? Into WHAT Holy Place has He entered with His blood? And WHICH HEAVENLY THINGS has He *purified* with His own blood? Is Jesus officiating in some literal, material temple in some far-off heaven somewhere? Are there *two* temples of God, one in heaven, and another on earth; one literal, and the other spiritual? I do not hesitate to tell you that the answer to this last question is a resounding NO! The true understanding of Christ’s High Priestly ministry and the outworking of the efficacy of His blood is contingent upon our absolute and total acceptance of the great, irrevocable, and eternal truth that God has only **one** temple, the **true one**, the **heavenly one**, and WE ARE THAT TEMPLE! That is the mystery. Truly “*we are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem...and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things...*” (Heb. 12:22,24).

The book of Hebrews tells us plainly that the blood of Christ has purified **heavenly things** (Heb. 9:23-24). To accomplish this Christ has entered into the Holy Place in heaven itself to present His blood for this purification (Heb. 9:6-12). But do heavenly things *require purifying*? Is there something in some far-off heaven somewhere that Jesus shed His blood for? Did our Lord come all the way down to earth and become a man in order to take His human blood to cleanse some sanctuary up in the heavens from whence He had come? Did He take His blood up beyond the Milky Way in order to purify those heavenly things?

Let us UNDERSTAND! Christ is in heaven ministering as a Priest in the temple, the Holy Place in heaven! The truth is — **we** have been raised up and made to sit together with Christ in the heavens! We are in Christ! Christ is in us! We are builded together, an habitation of God through the Spirit! We are raised up a building of God, a spiritual tabernacle! **WE ARE THE TRUE TABERNACLE WHICH THE LORD HAS PITCHED, AND NOT MAN!** Nothing can be plainer than this. **WE ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD IN HEAVEN!**

Can we not understand by this how it is that the heavenly tabernacle had to be **purified** by the offering of the blood of Christ. There is not some material holy place away off beyond the blue which had to be cleansed by the blood of Jesus. It is **WE** who needed to be purified! The work of the blood of Christ is not on behalf of something up in the sky; rather, the blood of Christ has cleansed *our hearts* from sin and purged *our consciences* from dead works, that we might serve the living God! “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost who is in you, whom ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; *therefore*, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (I Cor. 6:19-20).

Our Lord Jesus Christ gave perhaps the greatest parable of His ministry when He cleansed the temple and then spoke to the people about the temple of His body. He said what He meant: His body was a pure body,



and He stood there to let them know that the fore-court of the temple was a symbol of the body of the believer. There were three courts in the temple: the outer court, the inner court, and the most holy place. The Lord meant them to understand by that purification that the outer court of man's temple, the body, had to be cleansed! There are three courts in this temple of man's being, just as there were three courts in the temple made with hands. Your body, as the apostle Paul eloquently proclaims, is the temple of God. He also said, "The temple of God is holy." And again, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." When we defile our body we defile the temple of God just as surely as did Antiochus when he offered a pig upon the altar of the typical temple in Jerusalem.

Redemption demands that a man be restored SPIRIT, SOUL, AND BODY to that sphere of life and purity and incorruptibleness and glory which was his in that first blessed moment when he came forth from the bosom of the Father. There are three courts in the temple which constitutes a man. The first is the outer court of the body; the next is the inner court of the soul; the next is the innermost court of all, the spirit, which God Himself has given. God demands that every part of the temple shall be cleansed and restored and embued with the incorruptible nature of God! There is the true temple!

The purification of the temple begins in the spirit, the most holy place of Being. It is there the blood of Jesus is presented before God! It is there that the blood of Jesus, the *incorruptible life of God*, is sprinkled, quickening *our spirit* by *His Spirit*, making us alive to God again. All purification begins in the Holiest of all! Nothing can be cleansed in soul or body until by the washing of regeneration our spirits are quickened unto God, effecting the release of His life within. Would you worship God? If you are to worship God in a holy temple, let Him quicken your spirit by the sprinkling of the blood-life of God in Christ; then let Him cleanse your soul, let Him cleanse your body, and worship God in the

temple of your own Being. God wants that. Oh, the mystery of it! Therefore it is that God sent His Son, not merely to cleanse the outer court, but through His death, through His resurrection, through His life, and in the power of His Spirit, to cleanse man FROM THE CENTER TO THE CIRCUMFERENCE. Hence it is that the purification of the temple of humanity must begin in your spirit and mine.

You will see then that the Lord Jesus Christ, when He purified the fore-court of the typical temple in Jerusalem, determined to show His people that even this temple of the body which God has given man should no longer be the prey of foul disease, and of filthy, sensual passion, and of putrefying death. He showed them that the body should be purified, that the soul should be purified, by the quickening of the spirit, and that He had come to pour out His Spirit (the life-blood of Christ), not only upon the spirits and souls of men, but upon all ***flesh***, and that all ***flesh*** should rejoice in the advent of One who was not only the Saviour, but the Healer of mankind, the Cleanser of the outer court of the temple, the body, the giver of immortality so that even this corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality, and even this vile body shall be changed, to be fashioned like unto His body of glory. Isn't it wonderful!

The deep mystery is that ***we are the heavenly tabernacle where Christ the High Priest is ministering!*** His ministry is in and through us! It is in His body that He now walks and manifests His priestly ministry. The only true contact that the world has with the gracious person of Jesus is the contact they have with us, the members of His body. Christ loves the world, but He loves it through us! He reveals His mercy, but He shows that mercy through you and me! He saves men, but we are the instrument through which He reveals His salvation! God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, yet it is unto *us* that He has committed both the word and the ministry of reconciliation! He has forgiven all men, yet it is given unto us to remit men's sins! Oh, yes!

Christ is the great High Priest in the heavens, He ministers in the holy place (spirit) of His heavenly temple, which temple we are!

I know no definition of God more sublime, outside of scripture, than this definition of a philosopher of France, who said, "I conceive God to be Him whose CENTER IS EVERYWHERE, and whose CIRCUMFERENCE IS NOWHERE." The spirit, soul, and body of a purified being is a center of omnipotent God. That God in whom we live, and move, and have our being, has His center in us. If God has no circumference then His center is certainly where I am, where you are. There can be no other center! Every man who has been quickened to God and made alive in Christ, is the center of the infinity of God! I want you to know, my brother, my sister, matters not how carnal, how weak, how limited you may have been, God desires to make your spirit a CENTER WHICH SHALL HAVE NO CIRCUMFERENCE. He wants to make your spirit alive, your soul pure, your body redeemed and incorruptible, and cause the River of all Life to flow out to the whole creation, unto the vast multitudes of hopeless men and women who came before you, and into unborn generations before you, so that you shall be a CENTER for an omnipotent and omnipresent and holy God; that is the object of the purification of the temple. This is sonship! THIS IS THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

Would God that all the saints of God might understand these sublime and divine mysteries and see that God's purpose from the foundation of the world has been the building of a spiritual house, a holy temple, an eternal abiding place in His creation in which He can be at home, and in which place He and His creation can meet. Praise God, we are living in the days when this glorious building of God is being completed, the full realization of which causes us to bow our heads in awe and wonderment. It is not temporal or transient as were the temples in Jerusalem which were all destroyed in turn. The temple which is Christ's body is eternal in the heavens! It is not earthly nor does it

belong to the earthly realm, but to an heavenly. It is not of corruption, but of incorruption.

God is preparing us to minister to all creation, equipping our spirit, soul, and body to live forever in harmony with the mind and will of God. All the God-like qualities of your life are due to the fact that God by His Spirit indwells you. You are the temple of God! That is the wonder of the indwelling Spirit. It is not a work of grace; it is God possessing you. The knowledge of this sublime truth will make you holy. No one can ever thus see his place in God and remain in carnality. Christ has come to purify His heavenly temple with His blood! Should one claim to see these truths and yet remain as he was before, then he has not seen by the Spirit, but by the natural mind only. Away with the *man of sin* who usurps the place of Christ in His temple!

## **A PILLAR IN THE TEMPLE**

“Him that overcometh will I make a *pillar* in the temple of my God, and he shall *go no more out*: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem...and I will write upon him my new name” (Rev. 3:12).

An understanding of the Old Testament background is essential to understanding this figure. Pillars played a prominent role in both Israel’s tabernacle and temple. There were two pillars at the door of Solomon’s temple (I Kings 7:13-22). Each was solid bronze covered with gold, and when the sunlight struck them they would send forth shafts of light so brilliant it would blind one’s eyes. Each was thirty-five feet tall and five feet thick. They could be seen for miles around the countryside for the temple was situated high upon mount Moriah and the pillars stood taller than the temple. These two pillars supported the full weight of the temple’s roof and were key to the structure. They

were given names: Jachin (*established*) and Boaz (*strength*). They spoke clearly of *firmness* and *security*. The gold speaks of divinity or the divine nature. Two is the number of witness in scripture, revealing the importance of the pillars as the outward witness of the strength and government of the God of the temple.

The builder of a temple, who spares no expense, will sometimes bring his pillars from the very ends of the earth. Whenever he hears of a rock with rich enough veins of color in it, and which is, at the same time, capable of taking on the finest finish, which is able to bear all his carving tools, and receive all his intended polish and resplendence — at any cost, he will bring home such stones, and will with them rear a long vista of such pillars, till his temple is a perfect edifice of praise and beauty before all people. And so, the Lord declares, will it be with the heavenly temple! It is not by any means any and every stone that will qualify and take on all that is in the master-builder's mind. It is not every pillar that will carry all His Father's name, and all the name of the holy city, and all His new name. And thus it is that wherever the heavenly builder finds such a possible "pillar," even if it is in the utmost end of the earth, at any price He will choose it for His great design, and will not leave off working on it, till He has set it, in its proper place,

in His heavenly temple. And then, when that heavenly temple is at last finished — what a vision of strength, power, beauty, and glory it will be — supported and adorned with a column of dear-bought, far-borne, and magnificently-wrought pillars! And every one of these pillars inscribed with His Father's name, and His own new name!

I repeat, the temple of the living God is not a natural building constructed by hands. None of the church buildings on earth, be they called temples, cathedrals, or some other high sounding name, are in reality a temple of the living God. People talk about the presence of God filling a building, but the presence of God does not fill any man-made building in that manner. God indwells only His living temple of

living stones and if the life-presence and glory of God is in any building it is only because God's living stones are gathered there! The man-made building has nothing to do with it, and you cannot go back to the building once God's living stones have departed and find any lingering glory of God. The glory rests upon His people, the saints of the most High!

During my lifetime there have been many buildings that have been called temples. Some are called Calvary Temple, Grace Temple, Faith Temple, and various others. But you will not find God there! Years ago Aimee Semple McPherson, one of the early Pentecostal leaders, had a temple in Los Angeles; it was named Angelus Temple. Later a man named A. Earl Lee opened Emmanuel Temple in Los Angeles. Back in the days of the great Latter Rain outpouring a brother and sister received a word from the Lord to build Him a temple, and that when it was finished God would move in mighty power and thousands of people would flow unto them to be blessed in the kingdom of God. Immediately they began to construct a huge building called Faith Temple, seating several thousands of people. Their congregation was small, and the people were constantly bled for finances to complete the vision. It became a wearisome burden, but on and on they plodded, to build the Lord's temple. When it was nearing completion I remember them remarking about what "butterflies" they had in their stomachs at the prospect of the great move of God that was at hand. But the move of God never came, and they passed from the scene. You see, my beloved, they had mis-interpreted the words of the Lord! God wasn't talking about building a natural building out of concrete and steel! He was talking about them raising up the true temple of the Lord in that place, matured and perfected in Christ, with the Father's name and Christ's new name inscribed in every living stone, filled with His glory, that the ministry of manifest sonship might be revealed in them. Sadly, they neglected the true temple, draining the people's lives, strength, and pocketbooks to build the wrong temple! Many others have opened

temples. Perhaps thousands have called their buildings temples, but not a one of them is the temple of God, for “YE are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (II Cor. 6:16).

Here we have tremendous depth of God’s plan for us. First, to him that comes to the *sixth stage* of overcoming will “I make a pillar in the temple of my God.” Here the Lord Jesus says that He is going to place us in the temple of God. We will not be sitting in some building worshipping God or doing great things, but we will be part of the building. We will be a pillar in the building! God is not building a temple for us to sit in or minister in. He is raising up a temple *out of us*. In the day of His manifestation out of this temple in all the glory and fullness of Himself there will be no need for the sons of God to put up large tents, rent great auditoriums, or erect huge buildings to accommodate the crowds. Oh, no! God isn’t going to move that way again. The Spirit of God will flow spontaneously out of the sons of God wherever they are — in the streets, in the business places, in the fields, on buses, trains, and airplanes, in the restaurants, in the movie theaters, in the schools, in the churches, in the homes — wherever these sons appear in the purpose of God and at the word of the Father, there shall the mighty works, deliverances, revelations, and transformations be wrought. Up and down the land, in every place, to rich and poor, to educated and uneducated, to affluent and the down-trodden, needy, and hopeless, in the halls of government and to the common people, unto all without respect of persons, without announcements or advertising, without organized meetings or gatherings, without radio programs or television networks, without organizations or promotions, shall the glory flow into men’s lives. God will visit men wherever they are, reveal the secrets of their hearts, confound their intellects, break their wills and their bondages, cleanse them from their sins, heal their sick, raise their dead, transform their minds and hearts, and raise up the revelation of Christ in their lives.

Let us consider the temple that man builds. Its gates are open for people to come in and pray. Its courts are also open and children come in and play, while its roof offers hospitality to the birds which have built their nests there. All this, however, is temporary and transient. When winter comes, the birds forsake their nests and fly away in search of warmer lands. The children, too, leave only the echo of their laughter in the deserted courts of the temple as they run away to seek the shelter of their homes. And the passerby who came to pray in its sacred atmosphere leave only the warmth of their petitions while they themselves are called by the demands of life. They were led there by the consciousness of some particular need, and then they resumed their way and left the temple behind. By night the temple's doors are closed and locked, all is dark and cold, and men have no access.

NOT SO THE PILLAR WHICH IS WITHIN THE TEMPLE! It is not a bird to stretch its wings and fly away. It is not an outsider who comes in for a few moments seeking a suitable environment for his prayer and then goes. The pillar is part of the very "being" of the temple! It belongs to the essence of the temple and constitutes an integral part of it. It cannot go away from the temple. Only when the temple itself would be demolished could the pillar be severed from it. So the Lord Jesus says to him that overcometh He will make a pillar in the temple of God, and he shall **go no more out**. No more will we be "in and out" of the presence of God! No longer will we be in and out of the leadership of the Spirit! We will be in **perfect union** with the spirit, mind, purpose, life, victory, and glory of God and shall go no more out!

Philadelphia was situated on the edge of a great volcano. Since it was located at the edge of a volcano the ground around it was very fertile making Philadelphia a rich agricultural area, especially for the growing of grapes. The city became one of the choice areas of the ancient world for the production of wine. But since it was next to a volcano they had a problem with earthquakes. Many, many earthquakes had hit this city



and in A.D. 17 it was totally destroyed. The emperor Tiberius came in and completely rebuilt the place because he loved the wine. There were frequent tremors and the inhabitants lived in constant fear. The people were used to leaving the city during times of tremors and volcanic activity, and coming back in when it appeared the danger had passed. They were conditioned to living on the edge, fleeing in panic at a moment's notice, then returning again and again. Their flight was always into the valley, away from the city, in case the buildings collapsed, as often was the case. Their lives seemed to consist of a never ending saga of going in and out, in and out.

In the loving embrace of one verse the Holy Spirit presented to the saints in Philadelphia a most astonishing and beautiful promise, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall **go no more out!**" Saint of God, how is it possible to read such thrilling words of promise, declared and proffered to all who seek and believe? Behold with wonder and holy reverence the majesty of what is promised in this blessed passage — "*and he shall go no more out.*" That doesn't make much sense to the modern mind, but it made a world of sense to those believers in Philadelphia! The very idea of a city, of a temple, of a position and an abiding place of security and permanence was reassuring and wonderful beyond words. Just imagine, if you can, living in Los Angeles, California and one day learning the glad news that you will never be shaken again! It is indeed wonderful!

A pillar is a load-bearing support. In the great temples of ancient times there were pillars made of marble that were polished smooth and when the pillar was set in the temple it was strong — it had been tested, they knew it would handle the load. Today great buildings and bridges are erected with giant steel girders that have been load-tested, and the architects are certain that they can bear the weight. The overcomer is one who has been tried and proven! He has overcome all the obstacles God has placed in his path to test his character. He is

tested and proven and is qualified to bear the responsibility given to those who are the temple of the living God. God does not choose and shape and polish us just so we can be beautiful and take pride and rejoice in our own state of being — He makes us pillars so we can bear someone else's burden.

No overcomer will be transformed into a pillar to be placed in a literal temple in heaven. This is a symbol of the sure and fixed position to be attained by those who overcome all things. At the present time every one of God's called and chosen elect is being processed, shaped, tried, and tested, and is subject to "falls" along the way. We catch a vision of high and holy realms in God and, in moments of exceptional anointing, enter for a little while into those blessed experiences, only to have the anointing lift and the vision fade, once more to face the mundane activities and the struggles of daily life. Ah, there is a promise, bright and blessed, that in due time the processing will be completed, the testing will be finished, the secret inworkings of God consummated, and those who have overcome, who have *passed the tests* will be as pillars, fixed and secure, in that glorious spiritual temple which will be the meeting place between God and men in the ages yet to come.

We do not belittle the circumstances; they are often cruel. We are not blind to the burdens; they are crushing. We are conscious of the fierceness of the storms; they are doing their utmost to overwhelm us. We do not minimize the temptations; they are doing their worst to break down our strongest defenses. Yet our eyes are turned away from these to Him who is *mighty within*. Of ourselves, our outer man and human consciousness, we are like the reed shaken with the wind; but in the Christ within our spirit, we read, "Behold! I have made thee an iron pillar and brazen walls, and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail" (Jer. 1:18). So we see the reed stiffened and rooted by HIM who is never moved! The Christ within is neither changed nor affected by any outward thing! From everlasting to everlasting He is the same.

The Lord is raising up a people in this hour who are not tossed about by every wind of doctrine; who are not gullible; who are not being controlled by man; who are not being made merchandise of; who have discernment and are not being deceived; who need no special teacher with some new revelation; who do not need a human shepherd to guide their every step; who do not have to depend on someone else for their happiness and spiritual strength — but who have been tested and tried and have proven the very life of God is *within them*, being raised up as wisdom, righteousness, power, provision, and glory in their lives. Christ has been revealed not only *to* them, but is revealed *in* them! They are drawing on the strength of their inner man, the spirit, Christ in them, according to the riches of HIS GLORY!

Dearly beloved — I beseech you in the name of the Lord, to open your eyes to the mighty power of God at work in you, and to appropriate the fullness and completeness of the Lord Jesus Christ. No matter what fiery furnace we may be cast into, there is One who walks in the midst of us, and He is the Lord of glory! It is overcoming — it is standing and walking and living in the victory of Him who is holy and Him who is true — that ***makes us a pillar in the temple of God! “I will make you a pillar,”*** saith the Lord! Do you hear that? Christ within makes us a pillar! That is the secret. It is not that someday, somewhere, Christ will confer this “position” or “office” or “degree” upon us. He makes us a pillar, we become the pillar, as His stability, steadfastness, immovability, strength, victory, incorruptibility, and immutability are raised up within us as the reality of our lives.

In looking at a piece of petrified wood we can see this. Several times we have visited the petrified forest in Arizona and seen the huge trees that are now stone, and it is a wonder. Once they were wood, NOW THEY ARE ROCK. For something has happened to them! Certain minerals entered into every cell of each piece of wood and wrought a complete change in it. This process continued until that piece of wood became

rock. Same shape, same size, and it has exactly the same cell structure. But what a great change has taken place! All those trees would have decayed by now, disintegrating in weakness and corruption. But now they are strong enough to be set up as pillars in a temple! **THAT IS WHAT GOD IS DOING IN US!** Something is happening to us. We do not understand all about it, but we know that there is a change going on in our innermost beings. It is God permeating us with Himself! God has impregnated us with His life, and now He is taking over, filling even our very cells with all He is and will be. This change is flowing out of our innermost selves, unto our souls and even in our bodies. This process shall continue until we arrive at the condition of being saturated with God! God shall so fill us, shall so overwhelm us that we take on the very characteristics of God. Aren't you glad!

When we have become a pillar in the temple of God, we shall remain there in blessed union with Christ and the Father, for the Lord's word to us is that **"WE SHALL GO NO MORE OUT."** Once we have truly overcome all things of this carnal, worldly order of man, we shall be established in the pure, unchangeable, eternal nature of God and stand as pillars in the temple of God. Once we have realized the fullness of God and His kingdom within, we shall never again leave that state of His complete, perfect, and glorious presence. We shall remain in His temple, in blessed and holy union with Christ in our spirit, never again to leave that realm of His life, wisdom, power, and glory. We will be "pillars" in His temple, this is God's unalterable and unchanging promise to us, His overcomers! Only as we bring His holy temple and the glorious fullness of His presence with us, shall we come "down" to the needy multitudes of earth and of the whole creation to deliver them, set them free, and restore them all.

In closing this message I would mention again that a "pillar" in the temple is a part of the structure. Just think of that! I doubt not that thousands of saints who read these lines rejoice in the knowledge that

they are *living stones* in the wall of God's building, but here is a promise, given to overcomers, that is greater than all — they shall be *pillars* in the temple of God. It is a high and wonderful promise! Only God can reveal such things to us. The pillars bear the weight of the superstructure. One day when Paul was writing to his son in the faith, he wrote of the house of God "which is the church of the living God, the *pillar* and ground of the *truth*" (I Tim. 3:15). This house of God, in which God dwells, lives, and works out His life, is also the P-I-L-L-A-R OF THE TRUTH.

What is truth? Be not deceived into thinking, my beloved, that truth is a doctrine, a creed, or correct understanding about God. The most simple definition of truth is — REALITY. Nothing is real in the whole material universe, nothing is truth; everything is but a shadow, all is temporal, illusion, and is passing away. Everything that can be seen, touched, tasted, possessed, and analyzed is not real, but at best a shadow. Whatever exists as a "form" of matter in this universe of appearances is but a figure, not the real thing.

What is the real thing — REALITY? "The things which are seen are temporal," the inspired apostle says, "but the things which are *not seen are eternal* (abiding)" (II Cor. 4:18). The things which cannot be seen by the natural eye are the things of the *spirit*. CHRIST, the SPIRIT, is the reality of everything! You may think that the human (Adamic) life you have is real, but it is not; it too is only a shadow. "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (James 1:24). Every cemetery bears witness to this! Real life is Christ. If you have the Son of God, you have life; if you do not have the Son of God, you do not have life (I Jn. 5:12). If your spirit has not been quickened by His Spirit you have not discovered life and abide in death, and this death has passed upon all men.

If someone sends you a photograph of himself, you will say, "That is uncle Joe, or cousin Mary." But in truth that is not any person at all! It is merely a picture, an image, a false likeness. From time to time dear ones on our mailing list send us pictures of themselves or their families. We have a bulletin board in our office filled with pictures of folks from all over the world. Some of them we know, many of them we have never met. Sometimes someone stops by and I will point out some of these: "This is Paul and Emily Mueller, this is Ray and Doris Prinzing, this is..." and on and on we go pointing out our friends from here and there. But what they see is not these folks at all! REAL things are not found in pictures!

The whole universe is but a picture, an image, a likeness. All the types, shadows, and figures in the Bible were but symbols and images of **reality** to come, and that reality IS CHRIST. Christ is the truth, the reality of all! In the physical realm we have food for sustenance; but Christ is the living bread that came down from heaven, that if a man eat thereof he shall never die. On earth we have great rocks, and the wise man, Jesus said, builds his house upon the rock; but Christ is the true rock of ages, the foundation and stability that cannot be moved or shaken by anything. We dress our bodies in clothing for protection, warmth, appearance, and identification; but Christ is the eternal robe of righteousness covering the nakedness of our flesh nature, and the royal robe of the king of glory and a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, giving us our identification as king-priests in the kingdom of our Father.

Christ Himself is the truth, and His Spirit is the Spirit of truth (Jn. 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; I Jn. 5:7). Christ is the reality, and His Spirit is the SPIRIT OF REALITY. Only Christ, the Spirit, is **real!** The people in whom the living God dwells, lives, and moves, is the PILLAR OF THE TRUTH, the support upon which reality stands, the buttress that bears the reality. Upon this people can be seen the glory of the Lord, the **reality of the**

***universe!*** Upon this people can be seen what is real and true — the truth! Upon the sons of God can be seen the reality of life and incorruption, the reality of love, the reality of righteousness, the reality of mercy and goodness, the reality of wisdom and knowledge and power. The sons of God are the ***pillars*** of God's great temple, the support of the superstructure, the resting place of all truth, the foundation of all REALITY! God is raising up a many-membered temple, all indwelt by Christ, all in perfect union with Christ, to be filled with all the glory of God throughout the ages to come. This body is God's house, His habitation, His temple. The overcomers are the ***strong and tall pillars*** upon which this reality rests! Oh, the wonder of it!