Sermon 2nd Sun. After Epiphany

Title: The Temple of the Spirit

Text: 1Cor 6:12-20

Prayer/Salutation

1Cor 6:19 “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit…”

**Bridge**

 **The other day, I happened to listen to a man who had just returned from a trip to India. He told the story of walking past a Hindu Temple to the god Vinayaka. It is one of the pantheon of gods they worship, but this temple is the largest in India of their Rat god. Outside were children begging who are sold to pimps by their parents. Be prepared for my next statement. The pimps break their legs and arms, so that passersby have pity on them and give them money. The pimps take every cent they obtain. If the passersby give them food, the children, in despair, go inside the temple and offer it to the rat god. They are always hungry. The rats in the temple, they scurry all over, thousands of them and they are *not* hungry. Oh no! For the populace brings grain to the rats to placate them for sins and ask for blessings. They bring so much grain in fact, that the entire population of India (1,380,000,000 people) could be fed for the entire year. Every single man, woman and child in India could be fully satisfied. Instead, the Hindus, held by the demons, give the food to rats. And the temple reeked of the stench of a thousand rats.**

**Law**

 **In our 1 Corinthians text for today, at first in verse 12 and part of 13, Paul goes where I would like to stay, in food. He says all things are lawful, but not everything is beneficial, and that food is meant to nourish us to keep us alive. However, what I think he’s hinting here is that if I eat too much and get real fat, I just might die earlier than I want to. I need to take that to heart, well, I know you’ve seen that I had to get a bigger belt this year! I call it, “famine insurance”, but thank God that has not yet come to pass! And I confess that to you right now. But Paul moves onto another subject that was prevalent in Corinth at the time, sexual immorality. I’m sorry to say, that many in America live like Corinthians. Like I said the other day in Bible study, in studies of men that have internet access, an outrageous 70% of them struggle with the addiction of worshipping at the temple of porn. They, too, like the Hindus, are held by another kind of demon. This leads to marriage infidelity, divorce and so many other sins. The breakup of the American family is like a ball rolling down a hill.**

 **Likewise, our country and the world are rife with reports of pedophilia in all segments of society, and like those poor kids sold to the pimps at the foot of the temple in India, children are held as slaves of all these sick individuals in the most horrific of conditions. Ever wonder why so many kids disappear? Yeah, that’s one reason. These poor kids will never have a normal life, because of the immorality of their captors. And the demons laugh, as they bring more and more people into the temple of the idolatry of sex. All these sins, and all other sins for that matter, no matter what they are, you know what yours are, (we know we are sinners, otherwise we wouldn’t be here today), those sins join us to the devil and his demons. They ensnare us and pull us deeper and deeper into their temple with them. And there is something about this physical union researchers and psychologists say, that when our physical chemistry is combined with another, that bond is tough to break. It is a union that the Lord meant for the marriage of a man and a woman, and just that couple! The age of Aquarius of the sixties and seventies led us on a path that has gained so much momentum, that in this new Age of Aquarius, the ball of sin is rolling down the cliff at breakneck speed, and like a huge snowball, is grabbing everyone in its path. Like Paul warns you, I do, too, “Flee from it!” For we know that if we do not, and our temple is rat infested and full of the stench of continuing sin, the Spirit will flee from--- us.**

 **But, I know you feel frustrated, demoralized, and depressed like many others these days, even me. When people ask me, “How ya doing?” I often lie and say, “Ok.” Because that’s easier than saying, “Not so good. I have issues.” I know you sometimes think the same. So I submit to you that not only is this one ball of sin coming at us, but many, all from different locations on that hill above and at any moment, we will be crushed upon their impact. It is maddening, frightening and seemingly impossible to avoid. Sin is all around us, the temples full of idols that we redeemed try to avoid, and others push at us to join in the “fun”. Again, I say, flee from it! Flee from it all! For it is idolatry!**

**Gospel**

 **And in these past years, it seems that more and more Christians are becoming cynical in the struggle of this war between good and evil. When they see the evils of the day go unpunished and their brothers and sisters in the Lord persecuted for even saying anything about it, they are dismayed that justice is not done. And it is happening all over the world. But remember, we are living in the world but are not part of it. Like Paul tells us, when we understand that we are a temple of the Holy Spirit because we have been joined to Christ in Baptism and in His death and Resurrection, then we are able to do what Paul asks us to do, flee the temple of the demons and remain the Temple of the One Jesus sent, The Holy Spirit! We do this because we are bought with a price. We are not our own. The pimps in India bought their slaves with money, but our loving God bought us out of slavery with something far more precious, the very blood of Jesus. When the Spirit is in us, we see the righteousness of God and that in His time it will prevail. We are set apart in this way from all others. We go to the Word! We let the Spirit work in our lives! That is why it is so difficult for us to tolerate the evil we see in other lands and ours occur and it just be dismissed. It is a war between good and evil. Both here in the heart and there in the world! “For there will be wars and rumors of wars.” Those are in progress, in the physical realm and in the spiritual. We are in the last days as we have been for two thousand years. And as I have said in many of my sermons, we wait, even though He is here, in our temple.**

 **Conclusion**

**The Good News is that Jesus will not tarry forever. The Word says He will come. When He is revealed in the last day, His righteousness will come. Ps 103:6 says that, “The Lord executes righteous acts, and justice for all who are oppressed.” But in verse 8 David also said, “He is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness.” Therefore, everything is in His time and His way. But Paul reassures us that, “God raised Him up and will also raise us up by His power!” We don’t know when it will be. But, selfishly, we pray it is soon. And when He comes all these evils shall pass. And we will be taken up into heaven, as part of the holy temple of God, which is Christ Jesus. Keep looking up my friends. Seriously, keep your lamps full of the Spirit, for we are His Temple, keeping your eyes and ears open, for He comes at a time you do not expect. Let us pray…**

**“Come Lord Jesus quickly, for many are waiting and none of us shall be disappointed.”**