**Sermon Title: The Features of the Church in a Christ-less Culture**

**Sermon Text: 1 Corinthians 3:16-17**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to a biblical understanding of the features of the Church in a**

 **Christ-less culture.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 4 features of the Church that must be respected by those inside and outside the church.**

**Introduction:** Verses 14-15 is dealing with Christians, the rewarded and those who suffer loss. Verses 16-17 deals with non-Christians, the evil, unsaved people who attach God’s work and God’s people, that are God’s Temple. These individuals or groups can attack from within or from without, seeking to intentionally or unintentionally destroy what God is building and God is using His servants to build.

 This is a severe warning to any who would try to hinder or destroy the local community known as the Church/Temple of God, that is built on the foundation of Christ. (**Matthew 18:6-7**)

**I. Do you not know you people are the Temple of God? V.16a**

**II. Do you not know you people are where the Spirit of God dwells? V.16b**

**III. Do you not know anyone who destroys the Temple of God, will be destroyed by God? V.17a**

**IV. Do you not know the Temple of God is holy? V.17b**

**I. Do you not know you people are the Temple of God? V.16a**

 The term “Do you not know” occurs 10 times in 1 Corinthians, which denotes an indisputable statement. Paul calls on the Corinthians to have self-awareness about the ultimate identity of their local body, community, the Church.

 A. The designated **definition** of the Temple of God.

 1. The **Jew’s** view of the Temple.

 In Jewish understanding God lives in His Temple.

 2. The **Gentile** view of the Temple.

 B. The designated **dweller** of the Temple of God.

 **1 Kings 6:16-20** Then he built the twenty-cubit room at the rear of the temple, from floor to ceiling, with cedar boards; he built *it* inside as the inner sanctuary, as the Most Holy *Place*. **17** And in front of it the temple sanctuary was forty cubits *long*. **18** The inside of the temple was cedar, carved with ornamental buds and open flowers. All *was* cedar; there was no stone *to be* seen. **19** And he prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple, to set the ark of the covenant of the LORD there. **20** The inner sanctuary *was* twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high. He overlaid it with pure gold, and overlaid the altar of cedar.

 **2 Chronicles 3:6** And he decorated the house with precious stones for beauty, and the gold *was* gold from Parvaim.

 **1 Kings 8:10-11** And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the holy *place*, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, **11** so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

 **2 Chronicles 5:13** indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, *saying: "For He is* good, For His mercy *endures* forever," that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud,

 **Psalm 48:4-8** For behold, the kings assembled, They passed by together **5** They saw *it, and* so they marveled; They were troubled, they hastened away. **6** Fear took hold of them there, *And* pain, as of a woman in birth pangs, **7** *As when* You break the ships of Tarshish With an east wind. **8** As we have heard, So we have seen In the city of the LORD of hosts, In the city of our God: God will establish it forever. Selah

 **Psalm 48:12-14** Walk about Zion, And go all around her. Count her towers; **13** Mark well her bulwarks; Consider her palaces; That you may tell *it* to the generation following. **14** For this *is* God, Our God forever and ever; He will be our guide *Even* to death.

 The Temple in its most basic sense symbolizes the dwelling place of God!

**II. Do you not know you people are where the Spirit of God dwells? V.16b**

 (**Titus 3:5-6**)

 **John 14:16-17** "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- **17** "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

 **Romans 8:9** But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

 **Romans 8:11** But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

 **2 Samuel 22:12** He made darkness canopies around Him, Dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies.

 **Psalm 18:11** He made darkness His secret place; His canopy around Him *was* dark waters *And* thick clouds of the skies.

 **Psalm 97:2** Clouds and darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice *are* the foundation of His throne.

 **Revelation 15:8** The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

 **Ezekiel 44:5** And the LORD said to me, "Son of man, mark well, see with your eyes and hear with your ears, all that I say to you concerning all the ordinances of the house of the LORD and all its laws. Mark well who may enter the house and all who go out from the sanctuary.

**III. Do you not know anyone who destroys the Temple of God, will be destroyed by God? V.17a**

 A. Can destroy by their **moral** defilement.

 B. Can destroy by their **ethical** defilement.

 C. Can destroy by their **spiritual** condition. (**Jeremiah 24**)

 **Psalm 79:1** O God, the nations have come into Your inheritance; Your holy temple they have defiled; They have laid Jerusalem in heaps.

 **Psalm 114:2** Judah became His sanctuary, *And* Israel His dominion.

 **Ezekiel 9:6** "Utterly slay old *and* young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom *is* the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." So they began with the elders who *were* before the temple.

 **Ezekiel 43:10** "Son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern.

 They will be destroyed, wrecked, torn apart, ripped, devastated.

**IV. Do you not know the Temple of God is holy? V.17b**

 **Matthew 21:12-13** Then Jesus went into the temple of Godand drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. **13** And He said to them, "It is written,`My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a`den of thieves.'"

 **2 Corinthians 6:16** And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For youare the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among *them*. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

 **Ephesians 2:21-22** in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, **22** in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

 It is the Spirit of God alone that brings about spiritual fellowship and unity.

 1. Unholy people can make it near impossible for the Spirit to work within the Church

 Ill will, unwillingness to learn, grumbling, quarreling, divided.

 2. Unholy people can split a church.

 **Philippians 2:3** *Let* nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

 **2 Timothy 2:14** Remind *them* of these things, charging *them* before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers.

 **Hebrews 12:15** looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;