

## ***The Dwelling Place of GOD***

*“Thus says the LORD: ‘Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word’” (Isaiah 66:1-2).*

God indwells all believers (John 14:17,23). Yet as we go walk with Jesus at times, He may seem distant or far off. If we are truly in the Father’s hand, the Lord will most certainly NEVER abandon us or leave us. We can rest assured of that! (John 10:29; Hebrews 13:5). But what are we to do when we don’t sense the nearness of God? Where are we to go when God seems far off? Because as the psalmist rightfully said: “it is good to be near God” (73:28).

I am convinced in the last chapter of the book of Isaiah we find a clear answer... You see, we couldn’t build God a big enough building for Him to dwell in. The temple in Jerusalem made with human hands was not grand enough for the LORD’s presence. The tallest cathedral with the most vibrant stained-glass windows wouldn’t be nice enough. The lighting, sound, pews or no pews, steeple, and the color of the carpet in a sense doesn’t matter... But what does matter is what our hearts are like.

For it is the humble, repentant, obedient heart that God pours his favor and gracious presence upon. And so, if you are missing that oneness and closeness with the fellowship of God’s Spirit, then I encourage you to ask yourself these edifying questions... Am I walking in humility? Or am I puffed up with pride? Do I place myself beneath the cross of Jesus? Do I genuinely repent and feel sorry for my sinful actions? Am I striving alongside the Spirit to overcome my fleshly desires? Do I lay myself before the Lord frequently as a sinner in need of a Mighty Savior? Am I hungry for God’s Word? Do I long for the pure spiritual milk that’s in the Scriptures? Do I tremble at the thought that Almighty God wants to speak to me when I open the Bible? Do I hear the Word and then do the Word?

The prophet Isaiah brings us back to the foundation of fellowship. A heart that is open to grace and fully surrendered to the Lordship of Christ. God doesn’t want a fancy building to dwell in... He wants you as His child to be humble, contrite in spirit, and someone who reverences His Holy Word. And so may you seek to do these three and pray along with the hymnist:

*“Just a closer walk with Thee,  
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea,  
Daily walking close to Thee,  
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.”*

Respect the Blood,  
Dalton Mathis