

As we continue exploring the holiness of the Church, Pastor Alida reminded us that sanctification is not only personal but also corporate. God is not simply forming individual believers in isolation; He is building His people together into a holy dwelling place for His Spirit.

Last week, we reflected on the Church as a holy assembly — a people called out, set apart and belonging to God. This week, the focus moved further into the truth that the Church is also God's dwelling place. We are not merely gathered around God's presence; by the Holy Spirit, God dwells among us and within us.

Ephesians 2:19–22 describes believers as members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone.

“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

- Ephesians 2: 19-22 NIV

In Christ, the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. This means that the Church is not a loose collection of individuals, but a spiritual house being carefully built together by God.

Pastor Alida highlighted that Christ is the foundation and cornerstone of the Church. Everything must be aligned to Him. The Church is not built on human wisdom, personal preference, personality, culture or popularity. It is built on Christ, held together by Christ and grows into holiness through Christ.

The message also reminded us that believers are like living stones being built into a spiritual house. This process can sometimes be uncomfortable. Stones must be shaped, fitted and joined together. In the same way, God uses community, commitment, accountability and love to shape us into maturity. Holiness is preserved not by isolation, but by covenant belonging.

Pastor Alida also explained the corporate indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 3:16–17, Paul teaches that the gathered Church is God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells among His people. This means the Church is sacred. Division, pride, preference and compromise are not small matters because they damage the very temple God is building.

“Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.”

- 1 Corinthians 3: 16-17

Each believer is a temple of the Holy Spirit and is called to honour God with their body, choices and life. The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force, but the third Person of the Trinity — co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. He guides, comforts, convicts, empowers and transforms believers.

Pentecost marked the beginning of the Spirit-filled life of the Church. The Holy Spirit was poured out to empower believers for witness, worship, holiness and mission. Through the Holy Spirit, God continues to form His people into a living witness of His Kingdom in the world.

Pastor Alida also encouraged the Church to read 1 Corinthians 12 and prayerfully consider where they see themselves within the body of Christ. Paul reminds us that the Church is one body with many parts and each part has a God-given purpose. The gifts and abilities God has placed within each believer are not merely for personal fulfilment, but for the strengthening, encouragement and building up of the Church. As those planted in this local church community, we are invited to ask where God may be calling us to serve, contribute and use what He has entrusted to us.

Alida shared the image of a vessel being filled. If the lid remains on, only a few drops can enter. But when the lid is removed and broken, the vessel can be filled to overflowing. In the same way, believers are invited to remain open to the Holy Spirit so that God can continue to fill, transform and overflow through us into the lives of others.

God is building His Church into a holy dwelling place. Our part is to stay close to Christ, remain open to the Spirit, stay connected to the body and allow God to shape us together for His glory.

“And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.”

— Ephesians 2:22

Key Takeaways

- Sanctification is not only individual; it is also corporate.
- God is building His people together into a holy dwelling place.
- The Church is God’s temple, and His Spirit dwells among His people.
- Christ is the foundation and chief cornerstone of the Church.
- The Church must be aligned to Christ, not personal preference or worldly values.
- Believers are living stones being shaped and fitted together.
- Holiness is preserved through covenant belonging, not isolation.
- Division, pride and compromise damage the unity and holiness of God’s temple.
- The Holy Spirit dwells within individual believers and among the gathered Church.
- The Holy Spirit guides, comforts, convicts, empowers and transforms.
- Spiritual gifts and spiritual fruit are given for the building up of the Church.
- Every believer has gifts and abilities that are needed within the body of Christ.
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- A healthy church makes room for the Holy Spirit while maintaining peace, order and discernment.
- God calls every believer to remain open to the ongoing filling and work of the Holy Spirit.

Discussion Questions

1. What stood out to you most from the image of believers being “built together” as God’s dwelling place?
2. What does it mean that the Holy Spirit dwells both within individual believers and among the gathered Church?
3. Pastor Alida used the image of a vessel with a lid. Are there areas where we might unintentionally “put the lid on” and limit the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives?
4. What spiritual fruit or spiritual gift do you sense God wants to grow or strengthen in you for the benefit of the Church?
5. What is one practical step you can take this week to stay close to Christ, connected to the body and open to the Holy Spirit?

This Week’s Challenge

Read 1 Corinthians 12 and ask the Holy Spirit - “Where do I see myself in the body of Christ, and how can I use what You have given me to build up the Church?”