

The Temple of God

By Dr. Greg Wiens

As I run through various neighborhoods in the morning I have noticed something; many homes are beginning to fall into disrepair. At first, newspapers (or advertising circulars) begin to pile up in the driveways. Then the lawn begins to develop patches of brown and the landscaping gets full of weeds. Sometimes the homeowner will work diligently and get the lawn back in shape. But, in some cases, the weeds keep growing until they approach the height of the landscaping and major portions of the lawn die. It is at this point that I realize the home is empty and probably headed for foreclosure.

When people are too busy their lawn and exterior usually suffers somewhat. But, when homeowners know they will lose the house, they give up and no longer care about its condition. And the house ends up looking like what I described in the previous paragraph.

In the Old Testament, we see the same thing happen with the nation of Israel. When they had a King who was evil, who neglected the Temple, it would soon fall into disrepair. The neglected repairs would reflect in the Temple. But when a good King would come to reign, one of the first things they would do was to fix up the temple and institute a healthy worship of our Lord. We see an example of this in *2 Kings 22* when Josiah is convicted through the scriptures and leads the nation in repentance, forgiveness and obedience. The very next thing he does in *chapter 23* is restore the Temple.

What is God's Temple to you? Too often we say it is the building in which the church meets, but according to scripture this is not the case. In *1 Corinthians 6.19-20* we read: "*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price, therefore honor God with your body.*" According to this passage, (see also *John 2.16-21*; *1 Corinthians 3.16-17*) our body is God's temple; the temple of the Spirit.

I find it interesting to view our bodies in this way. Like taking care of our house, or in the Old Testament, the temple; the way we take care of our body is surely one indication of whom we see as the owner. If God owns our body and we want to worship him; then we will take care of our bodies. Sure, we get busy and sometimes we neglect our bodies, just like our houses. But as with Josiah, when we get serious about following the Lord, it should show in the way we take care of His temple.

There seems to be at least four factors that influence the condition of our bodies:

- Sleep
- Diet
- Exercise
- Pace

Obviously at 55 years of age, my body isn't what it was at 25, but I am still responsible to get adequate sleep, eat good foods, exercise and keep a reasonable pace. Sure these bodies are going to pass away, but while we are alive they are the temple of the Holy Spirit, which was purchased by God. If he owns it, I better do my best to bring honor to him through the way I care for it.

Research tells us a lot about what is healthy and not healthy in each of these four areas. So read and learn. When I get a brown spot in my lawn, I try to find out what is causing it and then take the necessary steps to fix it. The same should be true of my body. If I am addicted to caffeine and can't

sleep well at night, then I should take the steps necessary to correct it. We are the ones responsible for taking care of our temple.

Some temples will wear out sooner than others, and that's in God's hands. However, I don't want to stand before God someday and have him tell me that I wasn't supposed to be there yet; and that He had years of work yet for me to do on earth. But because of the way I neglected His temple, it fell apart and wore out. No, I want God to say that I took care of his temple like Josiah did. Ironically, that Temple too was destroyed but not during Josiah's reign because of his obedience to the Lord. Josiah finished his work for God, and then the temple was destroyed.

My prayer is that my body will wear out on God's timetable because I brought honor to Him in the way I took care of it. That is also my prayer for you.