

# THE LIVING TEMPLE OF GOD

The human race seems to have an instinctive desire to build. Since the attempt to build the tower of Babel, people have established buildings wherever they settled. From the ancient Egyptian pyramids, to the great stone castles of the Middle Ages, to the modern skyscrapers of concrete and steel; the history of the world can virtually be characterised by its architecture. Of all the buildings mankind has constructed, it seems hard to imagine one more spectacular and magnificent than the temple of God, built by King Solomon.

Solomon's father, King David, had the original idea to build a permanent house for God, and began collecting the necessary materials. First Chronicles chapter 22 records that David collected a hundred thousand talents of gold, a million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond measurement. The actual weight of a talent is uncertain amongst scholars, but estimates vary between 33 and 80kg. Regardless of the actual weight, David collected an immense amount of precious metals and building materials, and he asks Solomon to add more!

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## TEMPLE OF GOD *(CONTINUED)*

The holiness of God demanded that only the best materials be used to build the temple; the stones were carved to fit perfectly together, the timber was the finest from Lebanon, and everything, even the floor, was overlaid in gold.

The temple that Solomon built was based on the pattern of the tabernacle, built almost five hundred years earlier by the Israelites during the journey to the Promised Land. The book of Exodus records that God specified exactly how He wanted the tabernacle to be built. In the Tabernacle too only the most precious and pure materials could be used; the building where God dwelt had to be perfect.

Today, neither the tabernacle nor the temple buildings exist. During His time on earth Jesus predicted that the temple would be destroyed (Mark 13:2) and some 40 years later Titus, a Roman general, sacked and burned it. In the New Dispensation God no longer requires a temple to remind His people of His presence. In his speech to the people of Athens Paul declared, "God, who made the world and

*everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things"* (Acts 17:24, 25).



A continual theme throughout the Bible is that God's house consists of His people. Paul writes, "For you are 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'" (2 Corinthians 6:16). Peter affirms this when he says, "...you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:5). Previously God

indicated His presence by filling the temple with the cloud of His glory (1 Kings 8:10, 11). In the New Testament God fills His people with the Holy Spirit; we are the living temples of God!

Paul reminds us that this is not just about our spiritual lives. While writing to the Corinthians about sins of the body he says, "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? ...He who is joined to

*the Lord is one spirit with Him"* (1 Corinthians 6:15, 16). Our physical bodies too are the temple of God!

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than 19 000  
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and murder.*

This is a concept that is not popular with the unbelieving world. On the one hand, the human body is certainly worshipped, although definitely not as the temple of God. Sport stars and supermodels are idolised and worshipped for their perfectly formed bodies. On the other hand, the world has no misgivings about abusing the body. Millions of people around the world torture their bodies by the use of illicit drugs. And then there are the legal drugs. In the year 2000, alcohol was responsible for 85 000 deaths in the United States. Poor diet and obesity was responsible for a staggering 400 000 deaths, while tobacco products caused the death of 435 000 people.<sup>1</sup> In Australia the story is similar. Smoking kills more than 19 000 Australians every year; more than the combined number of deaths caused by heroin and other illicit drugs, alcohol, road crashes, suicide and murder.<sup>2</sup> Obesity is an increasing problem, causing major health problems and deaths in

*“...live a lifestyle that honours your body as a temple created by God”*

most developed countries. It is sadly ironic that in some parts of the world people eat themselves to death, while in other parts they starve.

As Christians we are aware that we live our lives in the service of God. Being filled with the Holy Spirit makes us the temple of God. From the Old Testament we learn that God demanded His temple to be perfect; made from the finest and most precious materials. God commanded strict laws in order for His temple to remain clean and holy at all times.

It is important that we live a lifestyle that honours our body as a temple created by God. Only by eating, drinking, and living in a healthy and fitting way will we be able to ensure that we live our lives to the full potential in the service of God's Kingdom.

**Adrian Hordyk**

Reference:

<sup>1</sup> Journal of American Medical Association. 19 January 2005, Vol 293 No. 3, p298

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ysp.org.au/drugsarticle.asp?ArticleNo=20>

## SERVING YOUR NEIGHBOUR

### *A study on 1 Corinthians 8 and 9.*

Not everything in life is black and white. Sometimes we need to make decisions on matters in which the Bible does not give specific direction. It is up to us to study the scriptures carefully and draw conclusions

about whether certain actions are right or wrong. However, as we see in 1 Cor 8 and 9, differences and contradictions can arise between the beliefs of individual Christians. In these two chapters, Paul scrutinises the practice of

# SERVING YOUR NEIGHBOUR *(CONTINUED)*

consuming sacred food. Being new converts, this issue was of particular relevance to the people of Corinth. As a church, they were still coming to terms with their newfound freedom as Christians.

Some did not yet fully realise that their old gods were but wood and stone. Today we understand that sacrificing food to idols achieves nothing. Therefore this particular debate is obsolete. However, the basic messages of this passage do have direct consequences upon what we do in our lives. It is important to understand that we, especially as youth are increasingly confronted with debatable issues. Mankind's general denial of God and technological advancements now place us in unique situations never experienced by Christians before. We need to take a stand before we become swept away by wrong philosophies.

All our actions should be in obedience to God's Word. Further, according to Paul, our perception of right and wrong should also be governed by the effects of our actions upon others and whether our actions lead others into temptation. I'd like to briefly touch on two of today's controversial issues and

point out how our actions could well be dragging our brothers and sisters into sin.

Firstly, I'd like to mention the subject of drinking at pubs and parties. Often in our circles, parties are expected to have alcohol. Some youth defend pubs (sometimes quite vehemently) as a viable Christian hangout. Some do it out of a need to be

cool and others simply out of a love for hanging out with friends. But should we be trying to defend this form of socialising? Paul points out in 1 Cor 8 and 9 that eating sacred food is not theoretically wrong. In the same way, drinking in moderation and enjoying the atmosphere which comes with it is, in itself, not wrong for a Christian. Here I'm talking about the real reason that we

often drink. You know...the thrill of too much...so that you can talk about how stoned you were the other night...how funny it was. Often such environments just lead to bad language and rude jokes. Just imagine a situation in

which a 'weak' Christian (as Paul puts it in verse 9), say a new convert were to attend one of our parties or pub gatherings. I can safely say that it would not leave a good impression. To put it in the words of chapter 9 vs 9, "*beware lest your liberty become a stumbling block*

**“Let him who thinks  
he stands take heed  
lest he fall ”**

**Show that you  
are a Christian...  
Don't become  
disqualified.**

to those who are weak". Serve your friends and all those you meet by letting go of your pride and become weak. By showing self-denial, others will see that we are serious about serving God. I'd like to quote chapter 9 vs 22 here: *"to the weak I become as weak, that I might win the weak."*

Often the people who Paul describes as strong in conscience are actually kidding themselves into thinking that a sin is right. Paul warns us of this when he says in 1 Cor 10:12: *"Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."* We should continually evaluate our actions. 1 Cor 8 vs 27 says, *"I discipline my body and bring it into submission, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."* Basically we live to serve God and should show this in our deeds and actions. Show that you are Christian for your own sake and that of others. Don't become disqualified.

The second issue I'd like to discuss is whether we should indulge in cinema. If we are honest with ourselves, movies represent significant temptation. Often in the beginning we closely read reviews before watching a movie so we can clear up our consciences before seeing it. Although it is good to do this, it is very easy to drop the habit. Very soon you catch yourself watching any movie you feel like. Personal movie and TV viewing involves the same dangers. Can we withstand the temptation of watching a new movie that we know that the Lord Jesus himself might have taken

offence to? Try starting a movie that you have been waiting to see for several months already and then stop watching when there is something objectionable. It is awfully hard not to continue watching! We often ask God in prayer to lead us not into temptation. But we often lead ourselves into temptation.

We should not fool ourselves into thinking that we are strong enough to watch a movie and just gloss over or just passively identify the bad things about a movie. Bad movies will always have an adverse effect on us, whether it is a softening of our attitude towards people who commit certain sins or a pressure to commit certain sins.

However, the worst thing about movies is they can become so popular. Though not always obvious, the watcher of a movie is often instrumental in pressuring others to watch it, whether or not it has objectionable content. As Paul points out, we have a responsibility to others.

**We must... care  
that our neighbour  
completes the race  
and obtains the  
everlasting crown  
of glory**

Sometimes it seems that Paul wishes us to become radically removed from the world. Ironically this is the very thing that many of us are so scared of. The worst nightmare for many of us, including me, is to become part of a radically conservative religious group that is mocked by the world. Believe it or not, this is actually the way we should tend towards. Never forget that we are striving towards the goal of

## SERVING YOUR NEIGHBOUR *(CONTINUED)*

eternal life. Do not get caught up in the pleasures of the world just because you think you can stand it or that it is not specifically forbidden in the Bible. We really do not need the extra baggage. Our goal is to attain eternal life along with our fellow Christians. I'd like to finish with quoting vs 18 of chapter 9 where Paul says, "*What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present*

*the gospel of Christ without charge.*" We must take utmost care that our neighbour completes the race and obtains the everlasting crown of glory. And don't forget that to enter heaven we must become weak and dependant like little babies.

**Joshua Schiebaan**



## CHURCH OPENING



### *Free Reformed Church of Southern River*

It is 10:30am Sunday morning at the Free Reformed Church of Kelmscott. Members of West Kelmscott walk out from the morning service after three baptisms and five professions of faith (it was a long service). Members of Kelmscott start to queue in the driveway, anxiously looking for parking spots. Lake Road is congested. It seems like no one can get in or get out of the

church parking lot. This has been just your typical situation at Kelmscott Church for the last nine years, but not anymore.

On April 28, 2007, we as the church of West Kelmscott were able to celebrate the opening of our new church building situated in Southern River. It was an enjoyable occasion where we as a

church, and the Free Reformed community as a whole, could thank God for His providence in giving us our very own place of worship.

The afternoon started with a hearty welcome from the master of ceremonies, Mr Dick Pot. Political dignitaries such as Gosnells Mayor Patricia Morris and Federal Member for Canning Don Randall were present. On the whole, the speeches were warm and welcoming. Mr Harry Hordyk, Chairman of the Building Committee, and Mr Jack van Dongen, Chairman of the Committee of Management, reflected on the arduous building process, the great job done by the Alita Building Company under the expert guidance of Mr Alistair Kleyn, and the amazing assistance of all members of the church at the working bees held over countless Saturdays.

Following the speeches was a series of gift presentations and musical performances from different clubs and members from within the congregation. The Men's Club did a humorous mock consistory meeting while the Women's Club sang a series of songs with guitar and tambourine accompaniment and presented a small gift. The Senior Youth Club and River Club provided some commemorative pictures. JCCC middle school students and three younger members of the congregation provided entertainment with choir songs and musical instruments.

During the ceremony, Reverend Veldman unveiled the commemorative plaque which was to be placed on the wall near the entrance of the church. He also gave a brief message about the church being a place where the truth of God is preached, pointing to Revelation 22:17, the message on the church plaque, which reads, "And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires let him take the water of life freely."

At the conclusion of the ceremony, everyone congregated in the brand new fellowship hall to enjoy coffee, drinks, and delicious food prepared by the ladies of the church. People were encouraged to browse the new church building, but were warned to beware of the electric fence that encircles the premises.

We can be truly thankful to God our Creator and Redeemer for the rich abundance of blessings that He has given to the (now) Free Reformed Church of Southern River. It is only through His blessing that we can have such a fine place of worship.

It is with true thankfulness that we can pray the words of Moses in Psalm 90: 17, where he says:

*"And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands for us; yea, establish the work of our hands."*

**Chris Steenoff**



# CELEBRATING ANZAC

*Speech Presented at JCCC ANZAC Assembly  
on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2007*



We all know the story of the Australian soldiers at Gallipoli. We all know the infamous story of defeat visited by the Turks on our soldiers. We are not here to repeat the story. These mistakes, this campaign, served in the creation of our national identity. Gallipoli is a name renowned throughout Australia. Every true blue Aussie will hear the name and show recognition. Australians throughout the world are known to be courageous fighters, great mates, tough and determined. Gallipoli established our identity.

However, our identity was not the only result of this futile campaign. Our 'wasted' Australian lives served as a protection for the future. Our reputation preceded us. It gave us an edge over any feared attacks from the Asian countries. We became confident that we could pull our weight in war. Any possible attackers of our resource rich land would have thought twice before challenging Australian armies. Looking back, we may be thankful to God for

preserving freedom in this country. We have a stable government that grants us freedom to attend church and we have freedom from oppressive governments.

God prepared the way for many of our grandparents to migrate to this Southern Land. Persecution and hardship in World War Two served to spread God's people. We are the descendants of these people. Because we can see God's hand in preparing the way for our forefathers, we can also remember this day with thanks not only to the soldiers for giving their lives, but to God also for preparing a place for us in which we may serve Him freely. The 25<sup>th</sup> of April is an important day for us, the very reason we commemorate it today and yesterday. We remember the lives of the fallen, and how they gave them up, to show the world that we are not to be dismissed lightly. Australia was weighed, measured and not found wanting.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of April we also give thankfulness and praise for the freedom that was brought about because of the war at Gallipoli. We as God's children are now allowed to live in freedom, worship in freedom and receive a Christian education in freedom. The freedom we now enjoy was paid for in blood by our heroic forefathers. We give thanks to God for the efforts of these men, and for the sacrifices that they make for our liberty.



This land of ours matters to us. We are Australian, we sing of it in the national anthem. We too, must be Australian and give our lives should the government require it of us. We must ask ourselves, are we worthy to fight for this country? Will we do it justice? Are we worthy of being called Australians? As Christians, we are duty-bound to obey the government and its commands. As Australians we are duty-bound to serve our country, to fight for it and to protect it. Are we supporting the cause which our soldiers died for at Gallipoli? More importantly, are we giving honour to God in our actions?

War is the terrible occurrence that has come as a result of our sinful human nature. It is our sinful human condition that causes wars, yet we must be

*It is not only physical wars that we as Christians may need to fight. It is the spiritual wars that we must battle;*

thankful, and if need be, we must fight with a good and faithful heart, knowing that one day, the Lord will call all His children home. Until then, however, He will continue to guide and protect them through all walks of life.

It is not only physical wars that we as Christians may need to fight. It is the spiritual wars that we must battle; the wars within ourselves, within our church and within our society.

Continually we will be bombarded with issues that may force us to doubt our faith, yet if we only remember the courage of our forefathers who fought so bravely for the freedom of this country and pray for God's deliverance, we too will be victorious.

**Tom Amoraal &  
Jamie-Lee Mostert**



# The Amazing Gift

*About one girl's struggle to profess her faith  
And about the grace of an Almighty God*

Recently at university,  
My lecturer posed a question  
About the most important thing  
Students should get from education.  
I knew the answer in my head.  
'Love for God' is what I should've said.  
But that awkward silence...  
'Confess My Name,' a quiet voice said.  
And those incredulous looks...  
'Glorify Me,' that voice persisted.  
My time was running out.  
'Knowledge' answered one. 'Independence,' another replied.  
'Skills for life,' I nonchalantly lied.  
No awkward silence; no incredulous looks.  
But an accusing conscience  
And a heart that felt like a stone in my chest.  
Visions of Peter sobbing so long ago-  
I now understood his wretched woe.  
My textbooks were heavy that afternoon,  
But my heart, so filled with gloom  
And burdened with sin  
Caused a greater heaviness within.

When I knelt down to pray that night,  
My prayer was sorrowful; I knew I had no right.  
But oh the blessed relief  
When my heart knew no more grief!  
Oh, the blessed cross; the blessed love  
That amazing gift of Christ above!

What an opportunity to witness Christ!  
What a tragedy it went to waste.  
How in sheer, broken anguish, God must have cried,  
And how Satan must really have been satisfied  
At my stupid, tragic blunder.  
But – how much greater the wonder  
Of this story's amazing end!  
My brother – my sister – my friend  
How truly awesome is our God!  
Come – let us worship Him together!

**By Miriam Terpstra**



**Aim:**

Romans 12:2 teaches all of God's people:

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

This magazine will encourage its readers to earnestly contend for the faith, and to think and act biblically, in the good traditions of the Church of all ages. Its basis is God's word, as the Church confesses in the Three Forms of Unity. It is intended for the younger members of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, and is produced in co-operation with the Una Sancta. Subscription to the Contender is automatic with subscription to the Una Sancta.

It is not meant to be exclusively for unmarried members who still attend the Youth Bible Study Clubs, but for all those who fit within the loose parameters of 16 to 30 years of age.

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