

HEART FOR THE HOUSE

Psalm 92:12-14 says, *“The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green.”* A flourishing life that’s vibrant, productive and long-lasting, is a life that is planted in the house of the Lord. If you have a **heart for God** - if you have it in your heart to accomplish His plan and purpose for your life; if you want to be a part of the solution and meet the needs of the community; if you desire to be the salt and light of the world (a city on a hill); if you want to help build a community of love; yes, if you really do have a **heart for God**, then you need to also have a **heart for His house**.

There are two important things we should all understand concerning church life. (1) God’s heart for His house, which is the church of the living God (*1 Timothy 3:15*), and (2) what it means to be God’s church rather than just attend it. In particular, having a **heart for God’s house**. God chose one simple phrase to describe King David, and this is the phrase He used ... *“David was a man after My own heart.”* If you look past all of David’s accomplishments to what was the real passion of his life, you will find that it was building the house of God. He didn’t merely have a heart for God, but He had the same heart that God had for His house. David desired more than anything to build the Temple, the place that would be God’s house on earth. If you desire to be a man or woman *“after God’s own heart,”* you need to have the very same heart God has for His own house. Just attending church is no indication of where your heart is. Your heart needs to be where God’s heart is!

Have you ever wondered why so many supernatural things happen when you are at church? It is because God has promised that His heart

and His eyes will always be in His house. In 1 Kings 9:3 the Lord said to David, ***“I have consecrated this temple, which you have built, by putting my Name there forever. My eyes and My heart will always be there”*** (and this is repeated in 2 Chronicles 7:16). The church, the House of God, is a Holy place, because God has declared that His eyes and His heart will always be there. The big question is this, “Where is your heart located?” The Bible tells us that, *“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”* (Matthew 6:21). Remember, God is looking at your heart to see whether you have the same “treasure” He has. Having the same treasure that God has is very beneficial. ***“The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him”*** (2 Chronicles 16:9).

The people who have a heart after God’s heart, who have a **heart for God’s house**, don’t seek to promote their own gifts and abilities, they don’t look for recognition and fame. They take what God has placed in them and they become an asset to the church where they are planted, and as a result, their influence and reach are greatly multiplied. They become “known” because God Himself has promoted them. The church (Cornerstone) should be well-known because the Almighty God is given prominence and His presence is with us. The church should stand out because it is where God’s heart and eyes are perpetually fixed. The church should be the pillar of society, the talk of the town, the centre of the entertainment world, the content of our education systems, the constitution our government measures itself against, and the hope of our nation. I have the sense that God wants to do something great through Cornerstone. For this reason, I sincerely believe that when we have a **heart for the house**, it will be accompanied by great expectation. An expectancy motivated by a vision and a faith that is not ruled by our own eyes; a vision that is not ruled by the customs and beliefs of our society; but a vision that is fully in line with God’s **heart for His house**.

Psalm 27:4 says, ***“One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I will look for: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to look upon the beauty of the Lord, and to worship in His holy house.”*** If you could ask for any one thing, what would it be? Would you have the heart of David and desire to abide in God’s house and gaze upon His beauty, or would you be caught up with things outside? In the house of God you are safe from the things of the world because the two cannot dwell together. Remember, your hope is not in the walls of the temple but in the God of the temple. It is impossible to separate God’s heart from His dwelling place. He loves to meet with His people at a specific location. Now don’t get me wrong, the spiritual house (not built by human hands), that is made up of living stones, is essentially where God’s Spirit resides. 1 Peter 2:5 says, ***“You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”*** However, the “spiritual house” does not negate the need for God’s people to congregate (come together). That is why our “assembling together” is called upon and encouraged in Hebrews 10:25.

There are two Greek words that refer to a body of believers coming together. The first, ‘synerchome’ (*to come together*) is used especially of the gathering of a local church (1 Corinthians 11:17-18; 33-34; 14:23). In Acts 13:43 it is rendered “synagogue,” from the same root word. The other Greek word “ekklisia” (literally, *a calling out of*), is also used for the coming together of believers or for a local church (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:5). You will note that in this instance the church often has a definite location - *“the church of God which is at Corinth”* - with reference to a church in a district. Therefore, the argument that the Church is be made up purely of “spiritual stones” is not valid. There is a definite place where the spiritual stones come together as one body; it’s called a synagogue or a church. Even Jesus taught there!

That being the case, if you were to have a **heart for God's house** your heart would be directed toward both His people and the place where they gather together. I love the prayer of Nehemiah (13:14), "**Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for its services!**" He did good deeds for God's house and its service to God's people! Psalm 84:10 says, "**A single day in your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else! I would rather be a gatekeeper in the house of my God than live the good life in the homes of the wicked.**" Both David and Nehemiah had a clear understanding that they were not merely attendees in God's house, but rather, they were God's chosen vessels (His Church - living epistles).

I have no doubt that God desires to meet (tabernacle) with His people, both corporately and individually, in a spiritual temple and in a physical place. The Spirit of God inhabits a spiritual temple. That is now His dwelling place and it is where we worship Him in Spirit and in truth. However, there is also a location (a temple) where God comes down to meet with His people in the "Shekinah" glory. This hasn't necessarily changed! If God chooses to manifest Himself in the midst of His people, there is no better location than the place where they have come together in His Name. "**For wherever two or three are gathered (drawn together as My followers) in My name, there I Am in the midst of them**" (Matthew 18:20).

God has a heart for His house, do you have a **heart for His house**? Jesus had a heart for God's house! Luke 4:16-22, "**He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was His custom.**" In Hebrews 10:25 we are told to "encourage one another" to go to church. Great support is available at church, you don't have to carry your burdens alone. Psalm 84:4 "**Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.**"

So, how do you know that you have **a heart for God's house**? Here are seven indicators:

- You will have a strong desire to bring your unsaved family and friends to God's house.
- You will have a strong desire to be present in God's house as often as you can.
- You will have a strong desire to worship in God's house, with others of like mind and like heart.
- You will have a strong desire to serve in God's house, even when there is no recognition or profile.
- You will have a strong desire to give to God's house and be prepared to make sacrifices whenever necessary.
- You will have a strong desire to promote God's house, especially as a place where people's needs are met.
- You will have a strong desire to pass on God's house as an inheritance to your children and for future generations.