

THE BIBLE VIEW

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The House

Bill Brinkworth

“If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” 1 Corinthians 3:17

While living in a college dormitory for 18 months, the quarters were too crowded for my wife, daughter, and me. With only being able to afford \$135 a month, the task seemed impossible to find our own home. God, however, made it possible for our getting a gutted, two-bedroom house. The structure was abandoned after the previous owner halted his remodeling. God put into our hearts to buy the shambled structure anyway, and He miraculously provided just enough money to do the necessary repairs and restoration to the property.

Weakened and damaged lumber was replaced, as was the plumbing, insulation, electrical, and sheet rock. Soon, the newly restored house was beautiful to our eyes. God provided the means to rebuild the house when financially, it did not seem feasible.

While we lived there, missionaries were housed, visitors fed, those in need of counsel knew where they could find discernment. Sunday school lessons and sermons were written there. The house was dedicated and used for God’s glory.

When the Lord called us to move to another ministry, the house was sold. A different owner took possession of the property.

Years later, a friend drove by our old residence and took pictures of it for us. After viewing the videos, we were shocked by what we saw.

The house’s outside was now green with algae. Litter cluttered the yard. Trees that were once lush and fruitful were dead and missing. Fences were in disrepair. The house was no longer the beautiful structure that was dedicated and used for God’s glory. It was not the house we left.

After saddened by what now remained of our old home, my mind contemplated a spiritual similarity. The Holy Spirit often does the same to a person as the Lord allowed to happen to our house. He repairs and makes lives “new,” but too often the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit is allowed to return to shambles.

God sees one’s desperate need for restoration. When He hears their acceptance of Christ’s death as payment for one’s iniquities and hears pleas to have sins forgiven, He does. Slowly,

He changes the believer into a new, different person. He cleans and rebuilds their “house.” With the Holy Spirit’s help, a dirty sinner becomes a forgiven and changed believer. Many glorious changes are performed in the child of God’s life. He soon is not the person he once was.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” II Cor. 5:17

Sadly, something sometimes happens to that improved believer. A “little” sin creeps in and changes what the indwelling Spirit of God had accomplished in the believer’s life. Soon iniquity has more control in the person’s life. Praying, Bible-reading, and obedience to God’s commandments cease. The loving Spirit that came into one’s life and made magnificent changes is ignored and forgotten. That Spirit never leaves the person he so lovingly helped, but He is grieved (Eph. 4:30) and no longer works in that believer’s life. However, He is still there — waiting. *“A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” Gal 5:9* (“Leaven,” or yeast, is a picture of sin. It only takes a little “leaven” to change flour and water into a loaf of bread.)

Disrepair wrecks and ruins the life of the once shining example of the good the Holy Spirit did in the sinner. Old, sinful habits return and create more havoc in the backslidden, believer’s life. A godly testimony is no longer evident by lifestyle and behavior. One’s spiritual “house” is in disarray and disrepair. It is not the happy, God-pleasing life it once was. *Read: Mat. 12:43-45.*

Unfortunately, this is true in thousands of lives. They were once surrendered believers, allowing the Spirit of God to do marvelous changes and improvements to their lives. Now, they are weaker shells of what the Holy Spirit made of them.

There is, however, still hope. While there is breath, there usually is an opportunity for the saved child of God to obey again, allow the Spirit of God to use them, and let Him improve the believer. It is never too late, although not all the sin-scars from one’s rebellion against God’s commandments may be removed.

If you have been saved, but have allowed your sinful sin nature to once again rule and reign in your life, the beckoning Holy Spirit’s plea calls for you once again. Heed God’s commandments and submit yourself to His call. Do what you did when you were close to Him in the past.

Read and feed on God’s Word. As one is reminded of where the Holy Spirit’s call was ignored or disobeyed, repent, and beg His help and mercy once again to rebuild your “house.” God is the God of second, third, fourth... chances. Let Him repair what you allowed to be in disrepair. He is willing to help!

“If you want your neighbor to see what the Christ spirit will do for him, let him see what it has done for you.” — H. Beecher

Hymn Writer Loses Joy of Salvation

H. Bosch

Robert Robinson, author of the hymn “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing,” lost the happy communion with the Saviour he had once enjoyed, and in his declining years, he wandered into the byways of sin. As a result, he became deeply troubled in spirit. Hoping to relieve his mind, he decided to travel.

During his journeys, he became acquainted with a young woman on spiritual matters, and so she asked him what he thought of a hymn she had just been reading. To his astonishment, he found it to be none other than his composition. He tried to evade her questions, but she continued to press him for a response.

Suddenly, he began to weep. With tears streaming down his cheeks, he said, "I am the man who wrote that hymn many years ago. I'd give anything to experience again the joy I knew then." Although much surprised, she reassured him that the "streams of mercy" mentioned in his song still flowed. Mr. Robinson was deeply touched. Turning his "wandering heart" to the Lord, he was restored to full fellowship.

Come, Thou Fount

Hymn writer Robert Robinson

(1) Come, Thou Fount of ev'ry blessing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace; Streams of mercy, never ceasing, Call for songs of loudest praise. Teach me some melodious sonnet, Sung by flaming tongues above; Praise the mount — I'm fixed upon it — Mount of Thy redeeming love.

(3) O to grace how great a debtor, Daily I'm constrained to be! Let Thy goodness, like a fetter, Bind my wandering heart to Thee: Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love; Here's my heart, O take and seal it; Seal it for Thy courts above.

When God Gave Them Up

Author Unknown

Although Psalm 81:8-16 reminds Israel of their sin against God, it is a chilling wake-up call of what can happen to Christians today. When believers get to the point they neglect God's words and do what they want, as did Israel, God may give them over to their demise.

"But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. 12 So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels." Psalm 81:11-12

Romans 1 also recorded some in the early church with a similar "I'll do what I want" attitude. Since some of the early Christians were determined to do their own will and way, God also gave them "gave them up" (Romans 1: 24, 26, 28) to their sin. The ungodliness of those Romans worsened, and God let them reap the terrible consequences of their iniquities. In Romans 1:27-31, one can read how progressively more vile and immoral their iniquities became when God stopped His intervention, and they reaped the awful wages of the sins they had sown. It is a fearsome time in one's life when God's helping hand is withdrawn from one's life.

Both early Israel and the early church learned that God would not force Himself or His way on people. He does not want a puppet that does what He wants. God desires to have one love Him as much as He loves him. With that kind of relationship, the believer will gladly do all he can to please his heavenly Father.

There are times that God's warnings halt, and He allows sinners to reap what they have sown. However, that is not God's desire. He wants to bless and help His followers, but God will not tolerate wanton sin.

"I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. 15 The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have

endured for ever. 16 He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.” Psalm 81:14-16

Rebellious sinners believe they are in control of their lives and believe getting what they want will make them happy. Unfortunately, they unknowingly are missing real joy and a safer, fulfilled life of obeying God’s will and way. Father knows best, despite what the sinner believes.

“God hates the sin, but He loves the sinner.” — *D.L. Moody*