

WALK TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD

Scripture: I Corinthians 1:10-11; 16-23

February 28, 2020

At first glance I missed the point of verse 16. Paul says, “You yourselves are God’s temple.” He doesn’t mean me, he means us. The temple he refers to is the church, and as the song says, “The church is not a building ... the church is a people.” Paul speaks of his foundational work that he did on his first Corinthian visit, then he points out that others are building on that foundation. He warns that dire consequences await anyone who would seek to destroy that temple – the church, the body, the collective people of God.

My thoughts immediately turn to the possible schism threatening our denomination, but that’s also missing the point. The church is not First Church Beckley; it’s not the WV conference. It’s not even the United Methodist Church. The Baptists down the street and the Catholics across town as well as the Pentecostals and Presbyterians; we know are all part of the “temple” – Christ’s church.

Whatever happens to the organic structure of Methodism will not “destroy the temple”. We all will still be the church. I am a part of that “temple” every day, and so are you, and so are our sisters and brothers in other denominations, as well as those within our denomination who may disagree with us on some issues. Changing our structure will not destroy the temple, whether the change be large or small, soothing or painful, sudden or gradual.

Whatever happens to our structure -- and even if nothing happens to our structure, we are still the body of Christ. We can disagree on minor points; we can disagree on major points; but we must all agree that God will use us to bring the knowledge of Jesus Christ to, as our pastor frequently says, “this beautiful and broken world”.

As we continue this season of reflection, let us renew our determination to be part of a church that seeks to transform the world by making disciples for Jesus Christ. By so doing we continue to be a part of God’s holy temple as envisioned by the Apostle Paul.

Prayer: Our loving creator, sustainer, and savior, help each of us to be part of your temple today. Give us the strength and inspiration to resist any force that would weaken our message and our mission, and help us to continue to make disciples who will transform the world. Amen

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