

PASSING THE PEACE

Unity & Reconciliation

Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:11-12;
1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14; Matthew 5:23-24

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please check your bulletin.

INVOCATION

Pastoral prayer that invites the Presence of God into our midst.

Psalm 67:1-2, 105:4

LORD'S PRAYER

Corporate prayer that emphasizes our covenant in Christ and encourages the confession of sin.

Matthew 6:9-13, 5-18

CALL TO WORSHIP

Read Scripture

SONGS

“Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs”
(Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16)

INTERCESSION

Pastoral prayer for unbelievers.

1 Timothy 2:1-6

INTERCESSION: UNBELIEVERS

“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all...”

1 Timothy 2:1-6



DISMISSAL

Call to the altar and prayer of blessing to dismiss the children

Matthew 19:14; 18:1-14

SONGS

“Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs”
(Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16)

DECLARATION

Greatest Commandment, Royal Law, and Shema

DECLARATION

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Mark 12.29-31; Matthew 22:35-40; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Leviticus 19:18



DECLARATION

And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Mark 12.29-31; Matthew 22:35-40; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Leviticus 19:18





THE BODILY TEMPLE AND THE NEW ALTAR

Series on *Incarnational Theology of the New Temple*



NEW SERIES: PART I

1. In the NT, we are called the Temple of God. We are also called the body of Christ. But what does that really mean? What does that entail?
2. More specifically, what does it mean to be God's *Holy* Temple?
3. If God dwells in us as the new Temple, why do we need to “seek” Him or draw “closer” to Him? Why do we ever feel distant from Him?

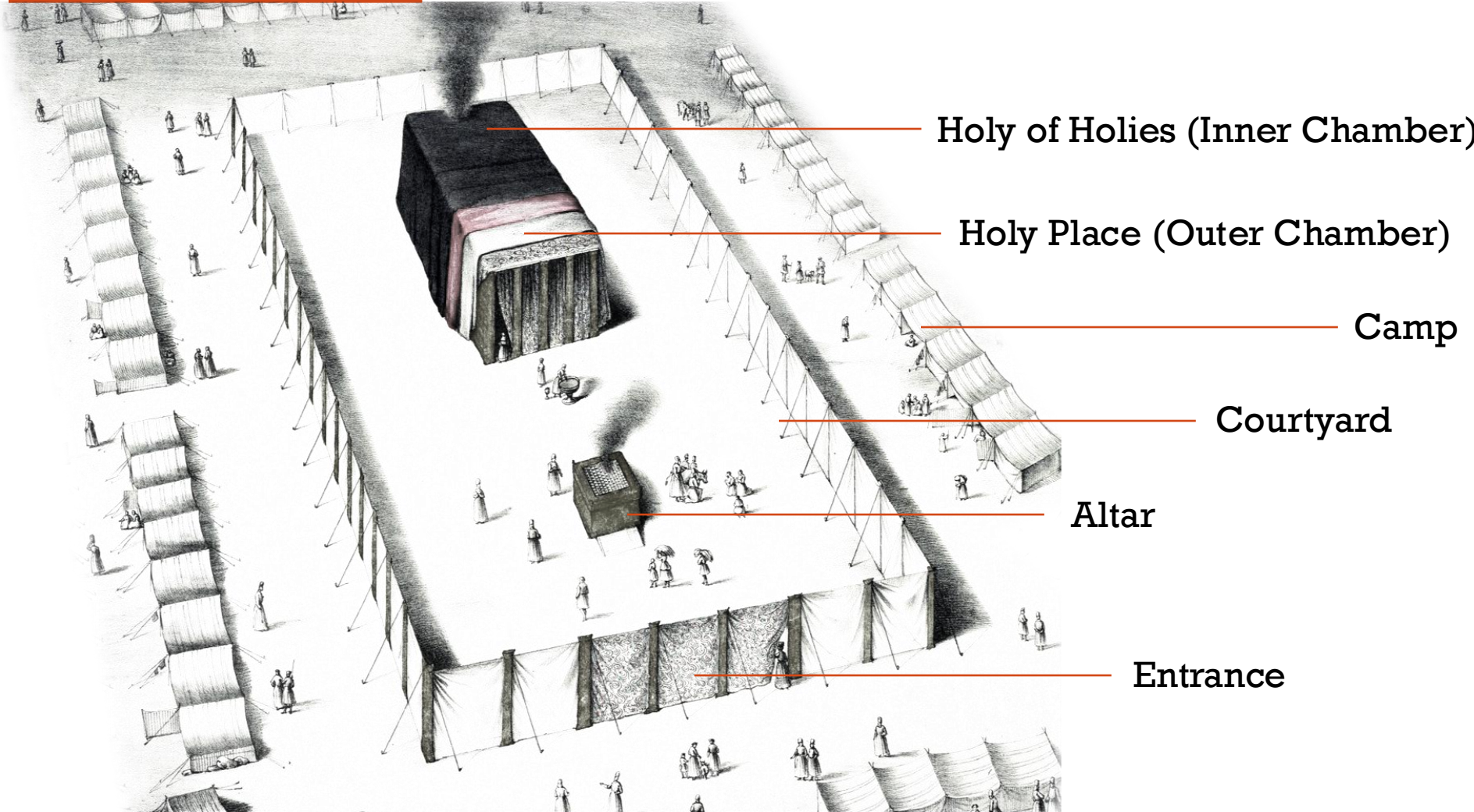


UNDERSTANDING SACRED SPACE

- In the OT, there was a system of centralized worship that revolved around the Tent Tabernacle, which was later replaced by the Temple.
- Two prominent features to focus on today:
 - (1) **Holy of Holies: Presence of God**
 - (2) **Altar for sacrifices**

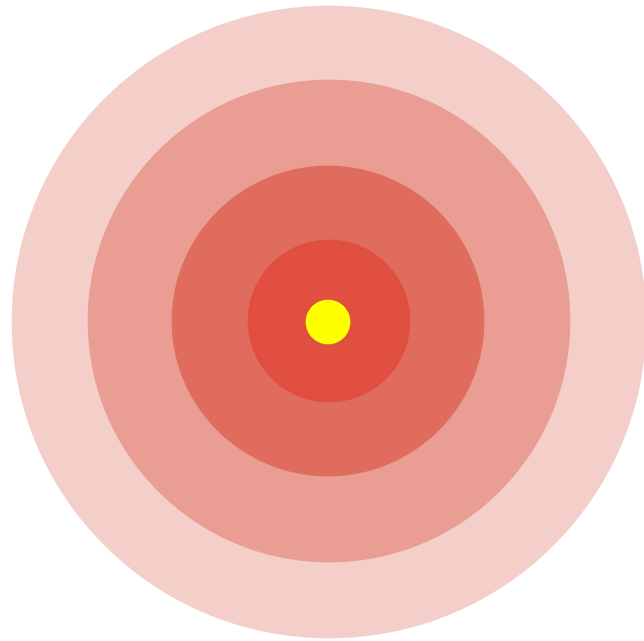


UNDERSTANDING SACRED SPACE

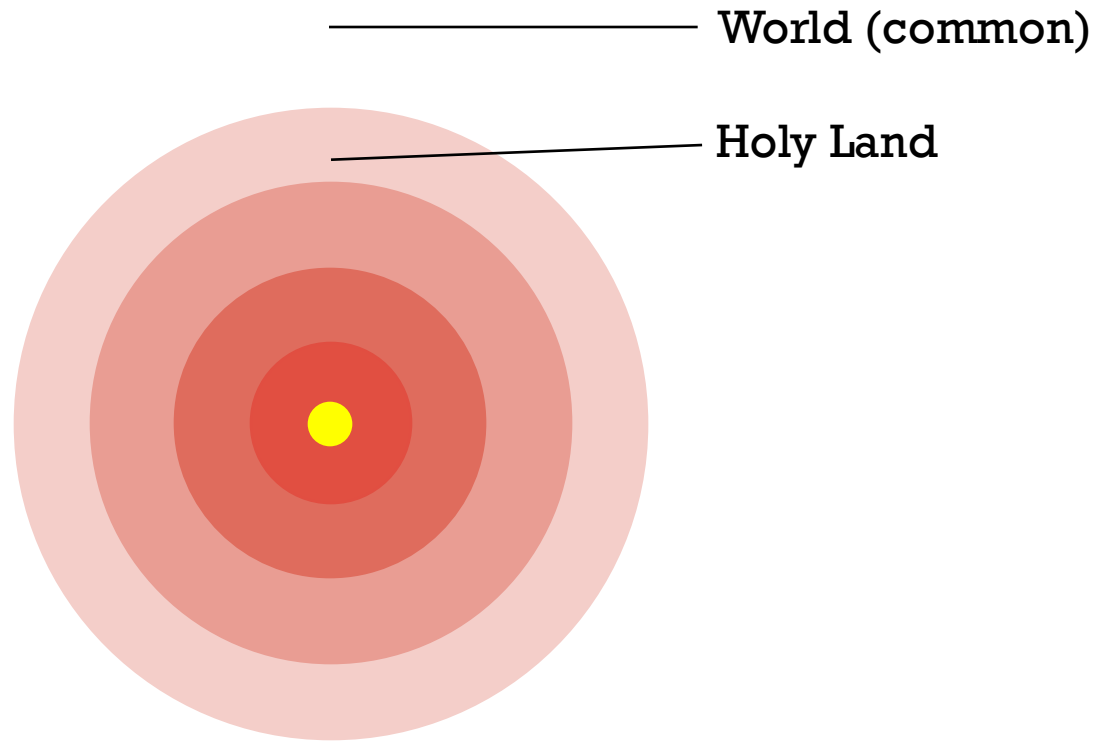


UNDERSTANDING SACRED SPACE

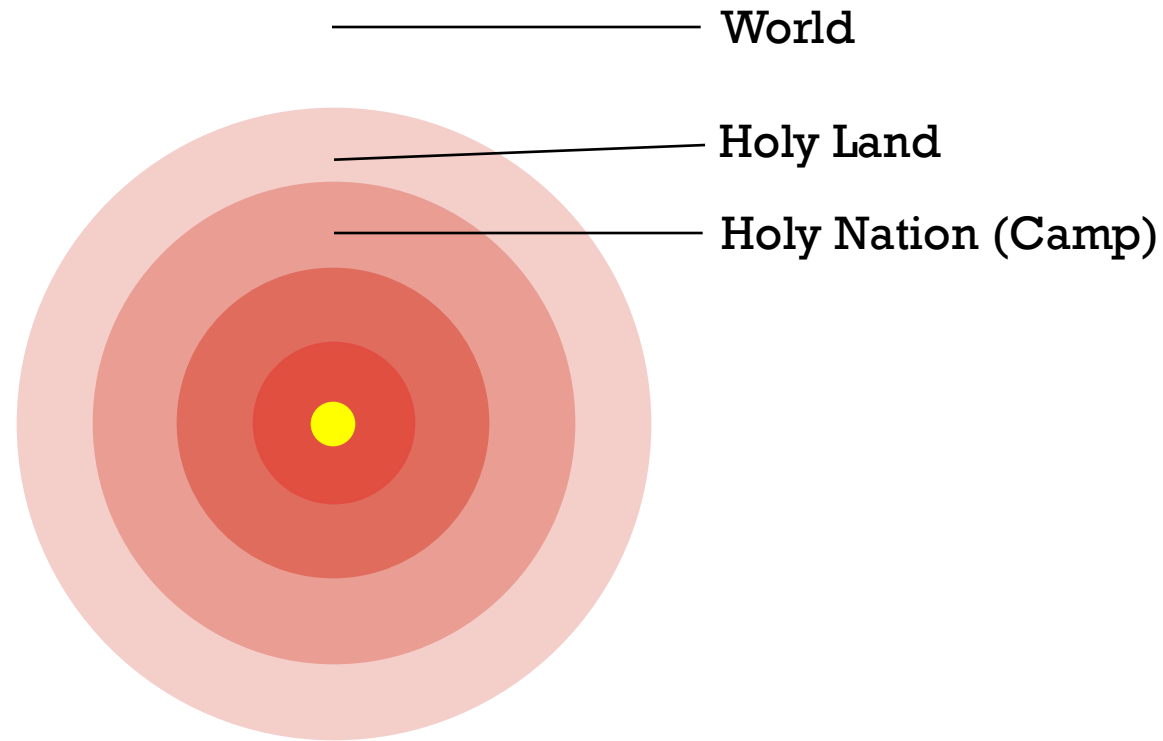
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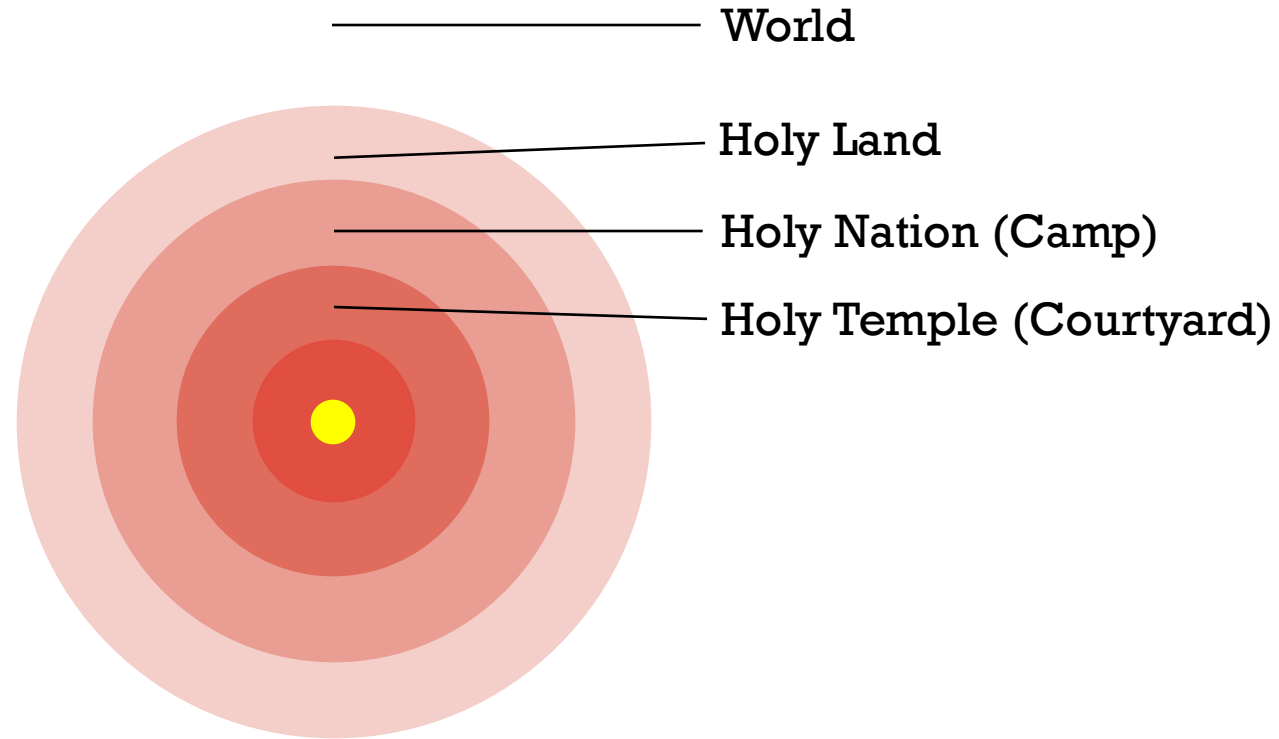
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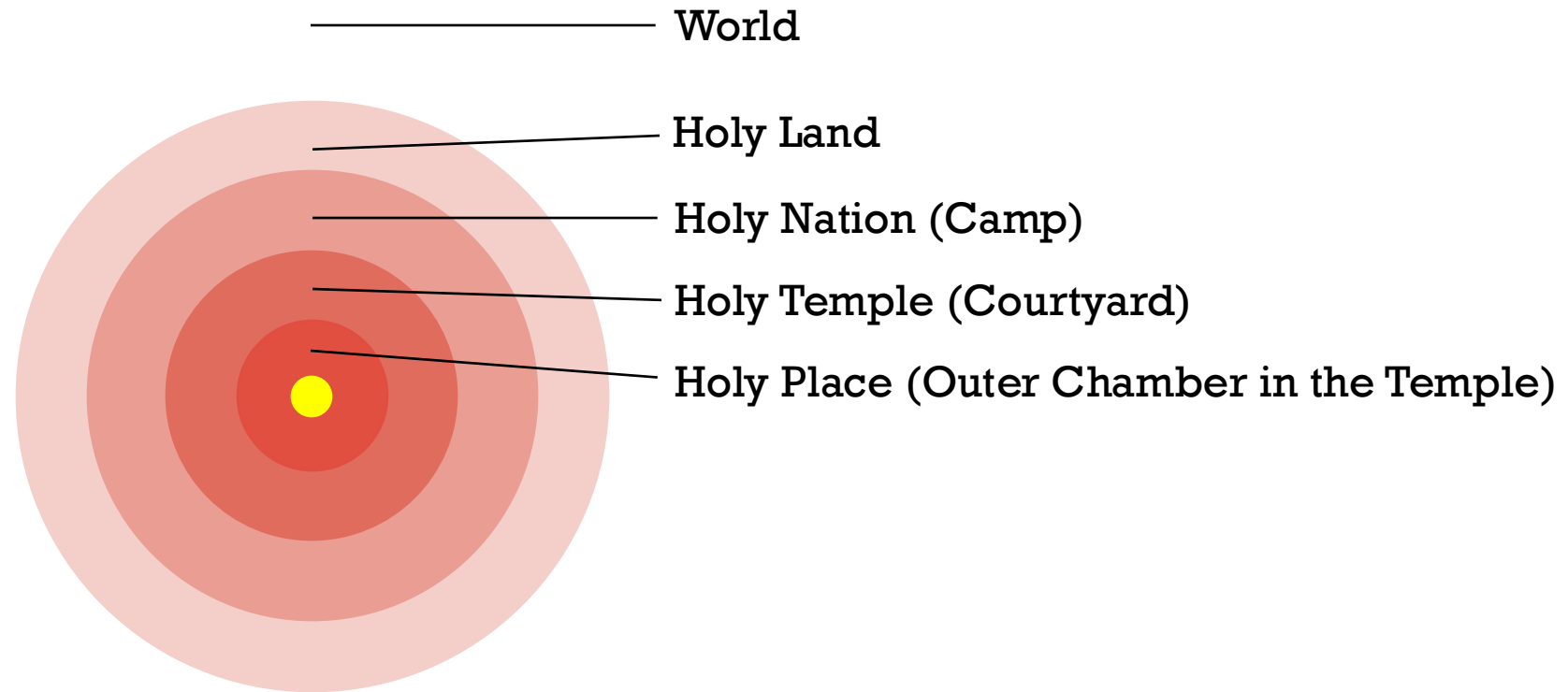
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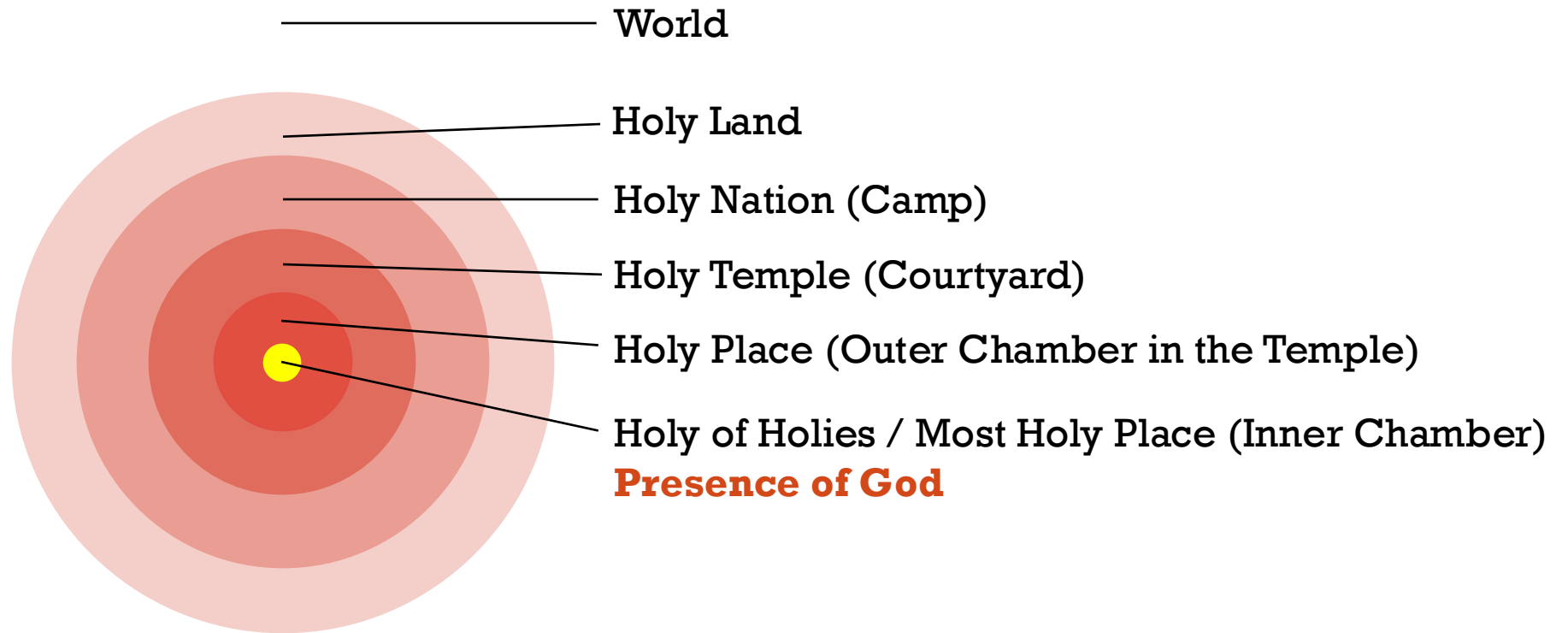
UNDERSTANDING SACRED SPACE



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UNDERSTANDING SACRED SPACE



UNDERSTANDING SACRED SPACE

- **Why the degrees/thresholds of separation?**
- **Sin cannot be in the All-Holy Presence of God.**

“And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst.”
(Exodus 25:8)

“You cannot see My face, for man shall not see Me and live.”
(Exodus 33:20)

“For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;
evil may not dwell with you.” (Psalm 5:4).



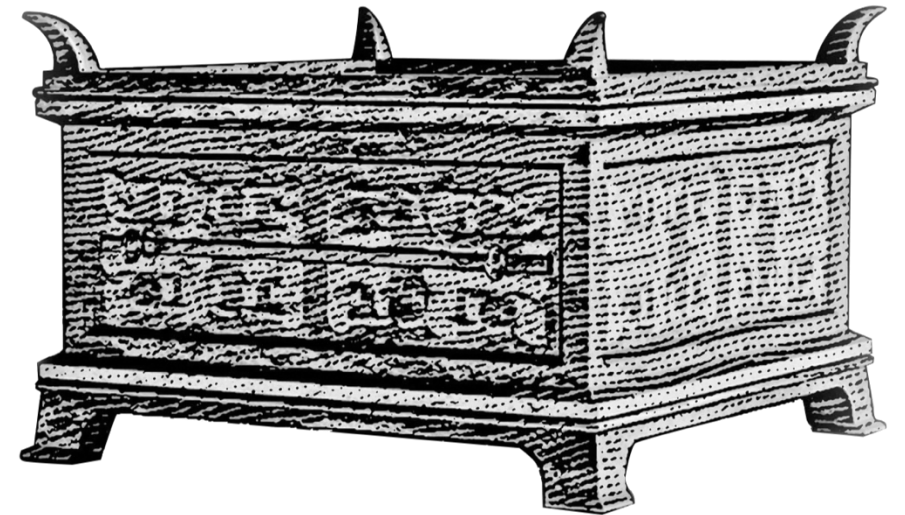
UNDERSTANDING SACRED SPACE

- Before the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and be near the Presence of God, a blood sacrifice had to be made first to atone for sin. He would, then, take the blood of these sacrifices into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle it on the mercy seat (Ark of the Covenant).
- Before entering, he also brought coals from the altar and an incense offering and set it before the Presence of God.
- This would happen only once a year on the Day of Atonement (**Leviticus 16**).



UNDERSTANDING SACRIFICES

- The purpose of the altar (and sacrifices) was to show the reality, necessity, and cost for the forgiveness of sin —blood sacrifice was required to pay the penalty of sin.
- **There is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood, for the wages of sin is death** (Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22; Romans 6:23).



UNDERSTANDING SACRIFICES

“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.” (Isaiah 59:2)

- The altar burned up the sins of Israel and closed the gap that separated Israel from God, so that holiness would be possible.
- We cannot be a holy nation if we live in sin.
- The fire on the altar was to burn continually without ceasing (Leviticus 6:13).



UNDERSTANDING SACRIFICES

- There were also other kinds of sacrifices, such as peace and thanksgiving offerings with bread and wine or incense, that did not forgive sins, but simply marked adoration or praise or thankfulness to God *for* His forgiveness and peace (**Leviticus 7:12-15, 23:13**).





HOLINESS WAS ONLY POSSIBLE THROUGH SACRIFICE

**“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of His glory!”
(Isaiah 6:3)**

UNDERSTANDING HOLINESS

- It is God's Presence who makes us holy. God is "holy, holy, holy", we ought to be "holy". (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8).
- We are not holy on our own terms, or by rule, right, ritual or nature. We are holy *if and only if* we abide in God:

“Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, for I am the Lord your God. Keep my statutes and do them; I am the Lord who sanctifies you.” (Leviticus 20:7-8)



UNDERSTANDING HOLINESS

- The formal definition of *holy* means “set apart”.
But set apart how?
- Moses gives us a practical description of holiness, saying it is ‘closeness with God’ or ‘drawing near to God’.

“When Moses heard it, he fell on his face, and he said to Korah and all his company, “In the morning the Lord will show who is his, and who is holy, and will bring him near to him. The one whom he chooses he will bring near to him.”” (Numbers 16:4-5)





HOLINESS IS CLOSENESS WITH GOD

**The closer you are to God, the holier you are.
Not because of who you are, but because of who He is.**

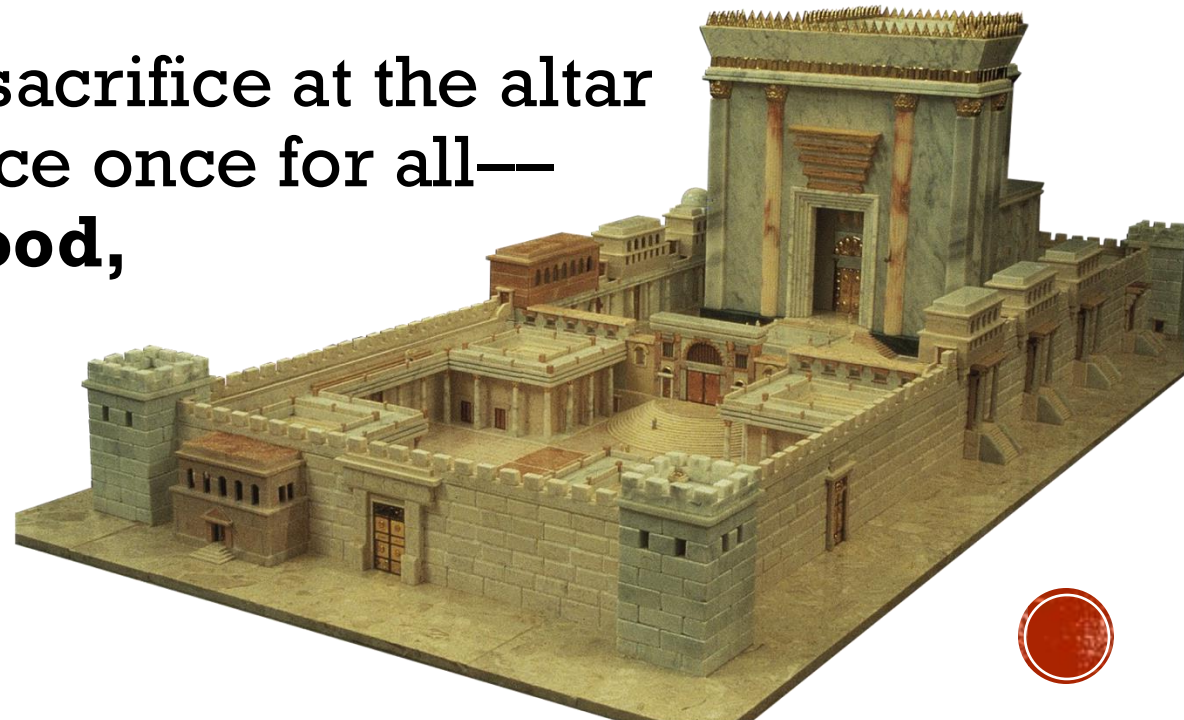


SACRIFICES BROUGHT YOU CLOSER TO GOD

Sin separates you from God.
Sacrifice closes the gap and brings you closer to Him.

NEW HOLY TEMPLE

- Upon Christ's death, the veil separating the Holy of Holies from the people of God was torn (**Matthew 27:50-51**).
- The Temple and altar were deconsecrated.
- Christ fulfilled the law of blood sacrifice at the altar by offering His body as a sacrifice once for all—**for without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin.**



HEBREWS 10:1-4

“For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. **For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.**

Hebrews 10:1–25 ESV



HEBREWS 10:5-7

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,
“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body have you prepared for me;
in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.
Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,
as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’”

Hebrews 10:1-25 ESV



HEBREWS 10:8-10

When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second. **And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

Hebrews 10:1-25 ESV



HEBREWS 10:11-14

And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. **For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.**

Hebrews 10:1-25 ESV



HEBREWS 10:15-18

And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord:

**I will put my laws on their hearts,
and write them on their minds,”**

then he adds, “I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.” **Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.**

Hebrews 10:1–25 ESV



HEBREWS 10:19-22

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence **to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.**

Hebrews 10:1-25 ESV



HEBREWS 10:23-25

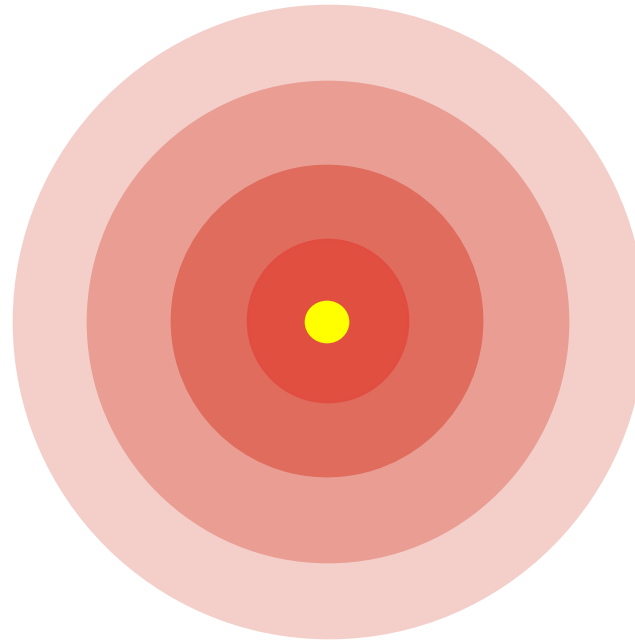
Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

Hebrews 10:1-25 ESV



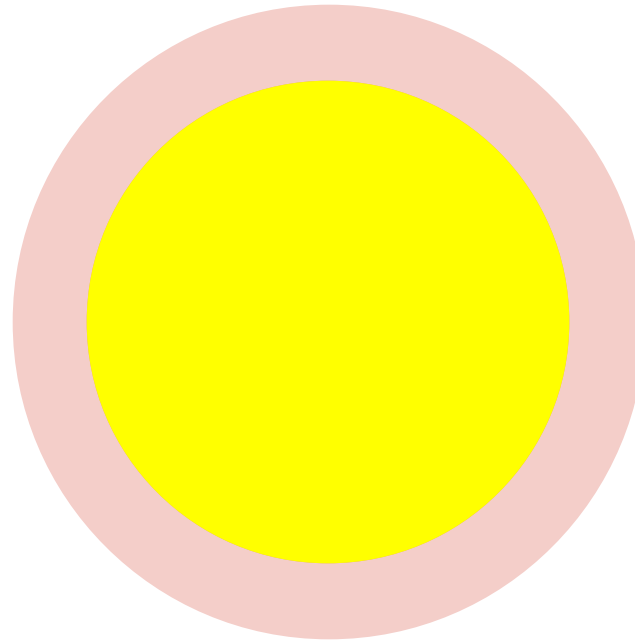
NEW HOLY TEMPLE

- Christ removed the thresholds that set us apart from God:



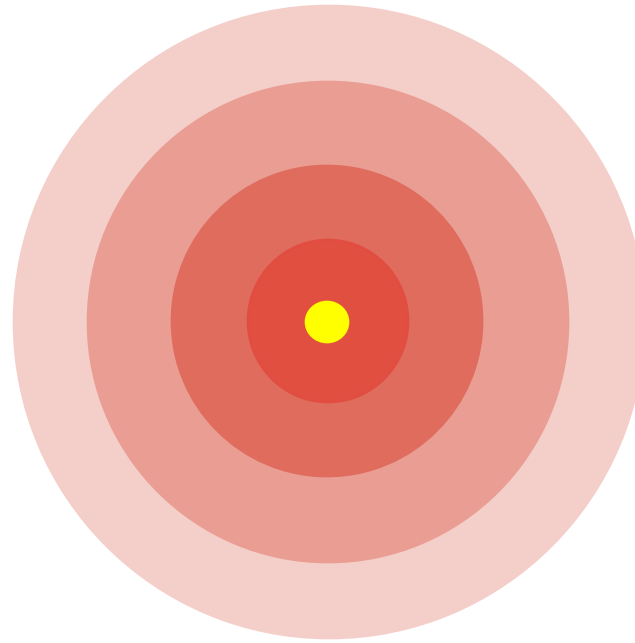
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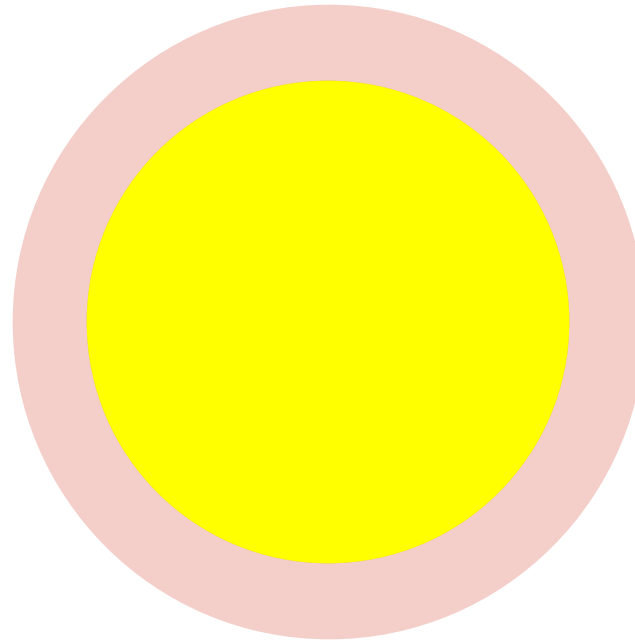
NEW HOLY TEMPLE

- *Sin* is a term used in ancient archery that means “to miss the mark”.



NEW HOLY TEMPLE

- Greatest Commandment is to love God's Presence, which now dwells in people.



NEW HOLY TEMPLE

- The inner circles of the Holy Temple became one with the holy nation of priests (1 Peter 2:5,9; Isaiah 61:6).
- Now, we are the Temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18).
- —But! We did not become the Temple by virtue of belief alone.
- **We could never have been the Temple without Jesus Christ—God incarnate.**



NEW HOLY TEMPLE

- Christ is the Temple of God (**John 1:14, 2:18-22**).
- By virtue of Christ's incarnation and ascension and His life-giving Holy Spirit, we are now being built into His Temple (**1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 Peter 2:5**).
- We are the Temple of God because of Christ's flesh and His Spirit—which now lives in us (**1 Corinthians 12:27; Romans 8:9**).



NEW HOLY TEMPLE

- Christ deconsecrated the Old Temple in His death (**Matthew 27:50-51**)
- Christ consecrated the New Temple in His resurrection and ascension by sending us His Holy Spirit (**John 2:13-22, 16:7-10**).



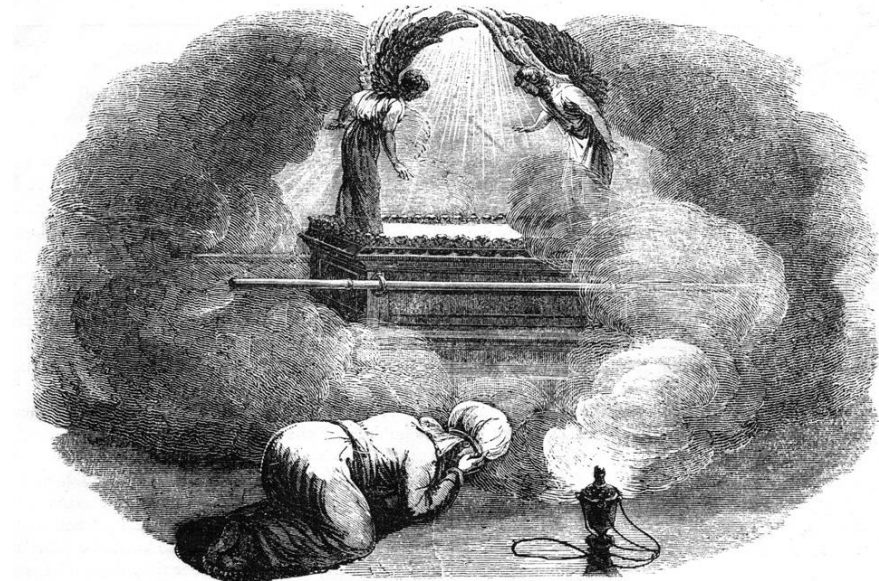
NEW HOLY TEMPLE

- Temple of God = Body of Christ
- Our physical body is truly the Temple, knitted together in communion with Christ. **We are not *metaphorically* the Temple, we are *actually* the Temple because the Presence of God is truly within and among us.**
- True believers are individually and communally the Temple of God: “For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”
(**Matthew 18:20**)



NEW HOLY OF HOLIES

- The Presence of God is pleased to dwell in the hearts of those who abide in Him (**Ephesians 3:17**). God dwells in the Holy of Holies of our hearts, where Christ is our High Priest continuously interceding for us on our behalf (**Hebrews 4:14-16, 7:25, 8:1-3, 9:24**).
- Therefore, there are no longer “thresholds” of holiness among God’s people.
- —But!



UNDERSTANDING HOLINESS

- There are still degrees of holiness among believers.
- This is called *sanctification*, the process of God progressively drawing you closer to Himself to make you holy (Leviticus 20:7-8; Philippians 2:12–13; Ephesians 2:10, 1:4; Hebrews 12:10-14).



UNDERSTANDING HOLINESS

- In other words, sanctification means God is progressively separating or setting you apart from sin and death in body, soul, and spirit—all in all, the passions of the flesh, the patterns of this world, and the works of the devil and his demonic forces.

“Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.”

(1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)



UNDERSTANDING HOLINESS: BIG Q

If the Temple houses the Presence of God, how then can we feel distant or separated from Him?

- How do we draw closer to God?
- How do we grow in sanctification (holiness) in the Lord?

To understand how God desires us to be close with Him, to grow powerfully in sanctification, it boils down to understanding how our physical body participates as the Temple of God.

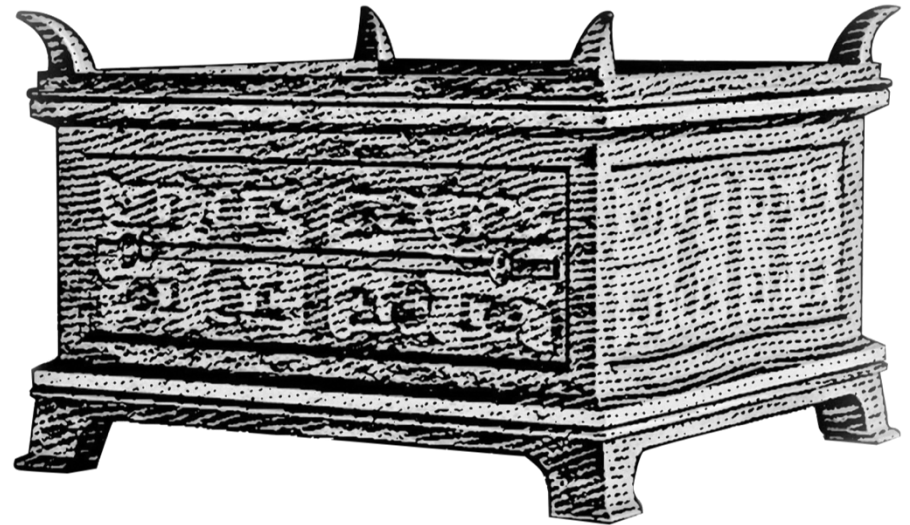




THE NEW ALTAR.

Different parts of our bodies participate in the new Temple in different ways.

You may not know it, but you make sacrifices on the new altar every single day.



NEW ALTAR

- How did God consecrate the Temple in the OT:

“As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple.”
(2 Chronicles 7:1)



NEW ALTAR

- This same holy fire descends from heaven *again* when God consecrates and inaugurates His new Temple at Pentecost through the baptism of the Holy Spirit (**Luke 3:16**):

“And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (**Acts 2:2-4**)



NEW ALTAR

- Heavenly Fire descended to the altar and His Presence filled the Temple, again. What was the new altar?
- Tongues
- So, when you harmonize these passages, the new altar of the new Temple is our **tongues, our lips, our mouths**.
- Now, if our tongues act as an altar, where sacrifices take place, we should expect to see this reiterated in the new covenant in other ways—and we do.



SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES

- Hebrews refers to evangelism and our verbal worship of praise and thanksgiving to God together as a sacrifice:

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name.” (**Hebrews 13:15**)



HEBREWS 13:10-16

“We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. **Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.** For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. **Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name.** But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”



SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES

“You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house [Temple], to be a holy priesthood, **to offer spiritual sacrifices** acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 2:5)

- Verse 9, Peter refers to these spiritual sacrifices as “proclaiming the excellencies of Christ” (ESV) who has called you out of darkness and into His marvelous light.
- **Proclaiming + Praising + Giving Thanks = Sacrifices**

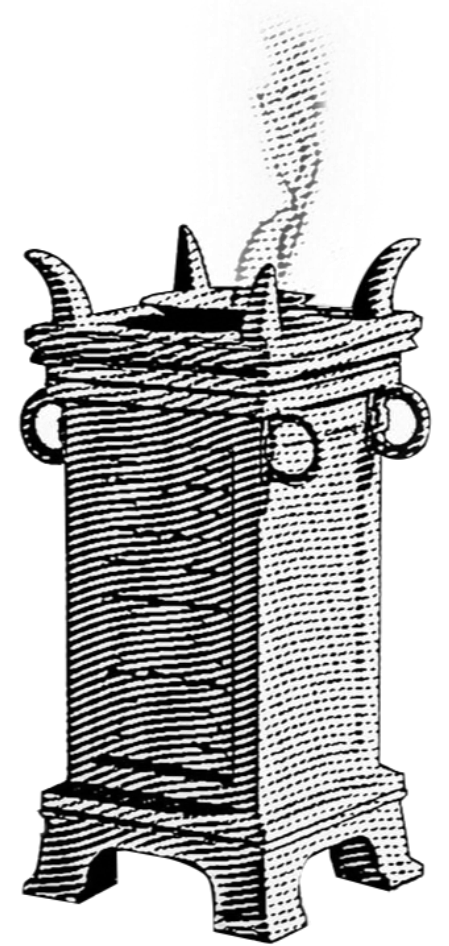


SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES

- **Prayer** is a spiritual sacrifice likened to an incense offering:

“And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel’s hand.” (Revelation 4:8)

“Let my prayer be set before You as incense,
The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.”
(Psalm 141:2)



SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES

- When God consecrated the new Temple, He did not abolish sacrifices. He restored sacrifices to their purest form.
- Our tongue is an altar to God in the temple of Christ, where **real and true sacrifices of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, repentance and evangelism are offered as a pleasing aroma to the Lord as our proper spiritual worship.**



WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

Critical Application.

How does it apply to us?

Why does it matter?

THE ONCE-FOR-ALL SACRIFICE

- Reconsider Paul's words in light of the new altar:

“The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Romans 10:8-9)

- Confess with your mouth [altar]
- Believe in your heart [Holy of Holies] (Eph.3:17)



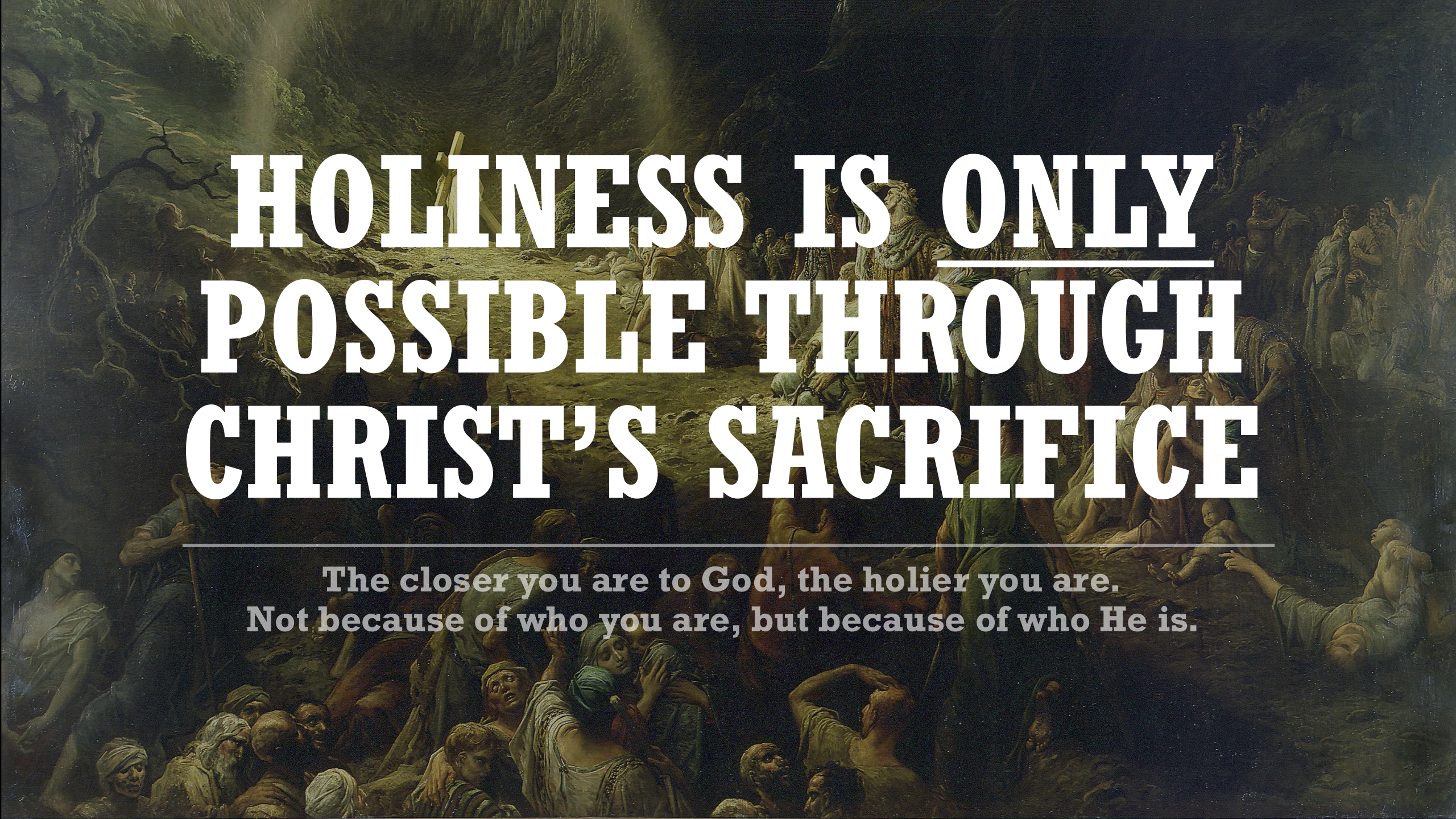
THE ONCE-FOR-ALL SACRIFICE

- The word of faith that we proclaim are the words of Christ, which are Spirit and life (**John 6:63**). Jesus Christ is the Word, and through our mouths we confess that Word. The Word of God, through whom all things were made, has paid the penalty of sin and death on our behalf once for all.
- So, like the sacrifices in the old covenant, the forgiveness of sin is predicated on the blood sacrifice that takes place at the altar in the Temple, which is now our tongue and our body (**Lev.17:11**).



TAKEAWAY #1

Critical Application.



HOLINESS IS ONLY POSSIBLE THROUGH CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

**The closer you are to God, the holier you are.
Not because of who you are, but because of who He is.**

APPLICATION: VAIN SACRIFICE

- A propitiatory sacrifice is not a rote incantation or mechanical exercise.

“These people draw near to Me with their mouth,
And honor Me with their lips,
But their heart is far from Me.
And in vain they worship Me,
Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”
(Matthew 15:8-9; cf. Isaiah 29:13)



APPLICATION: PURE SACRIFICE

- What is on your lips is what is in your heart (**Psalm 141:3-4**). By sincere heartfelt repentance, you participate in Christ's sacrifice for the atonement of your sin.

—His blood applies to you. His body applies to you.

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” (**Psalm 51:17**)



ALTAR OF RECONCILIATION

- This is why **Passing the Peace** happens first in corporate worship. We ought to reconcile with one another before we approach the communion altar of praise and worship in the Presence of the Lord (**Matthew 5:23-24, 18:20**).
- Repentance is sacrificial.
- Forgiveness is sacrificial.
- Humility is sacrificial.





JESUS WANTS TO BE CLOSE WITH YOU.

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(1 Thessalonians 5:23)

TAKEAWAY #2

Critical Admonition.

ADMONITION: PROFANE FIRE?

- Be careful what sacrifices you make on your altar.
- For on the same altar, God is praised and blasphemed, your neighbour is blessed and cursed, you are saved or condemned (**Matthew 12:36-37, 15:11; James 3:9; Proverbs 26:20**).
- **Evil tongue.** The words you use will either be a spiritual sacrifice of heavenly fire or be a hellfire that consumes you and sets the world ablaze. (**James 3:5-6**)





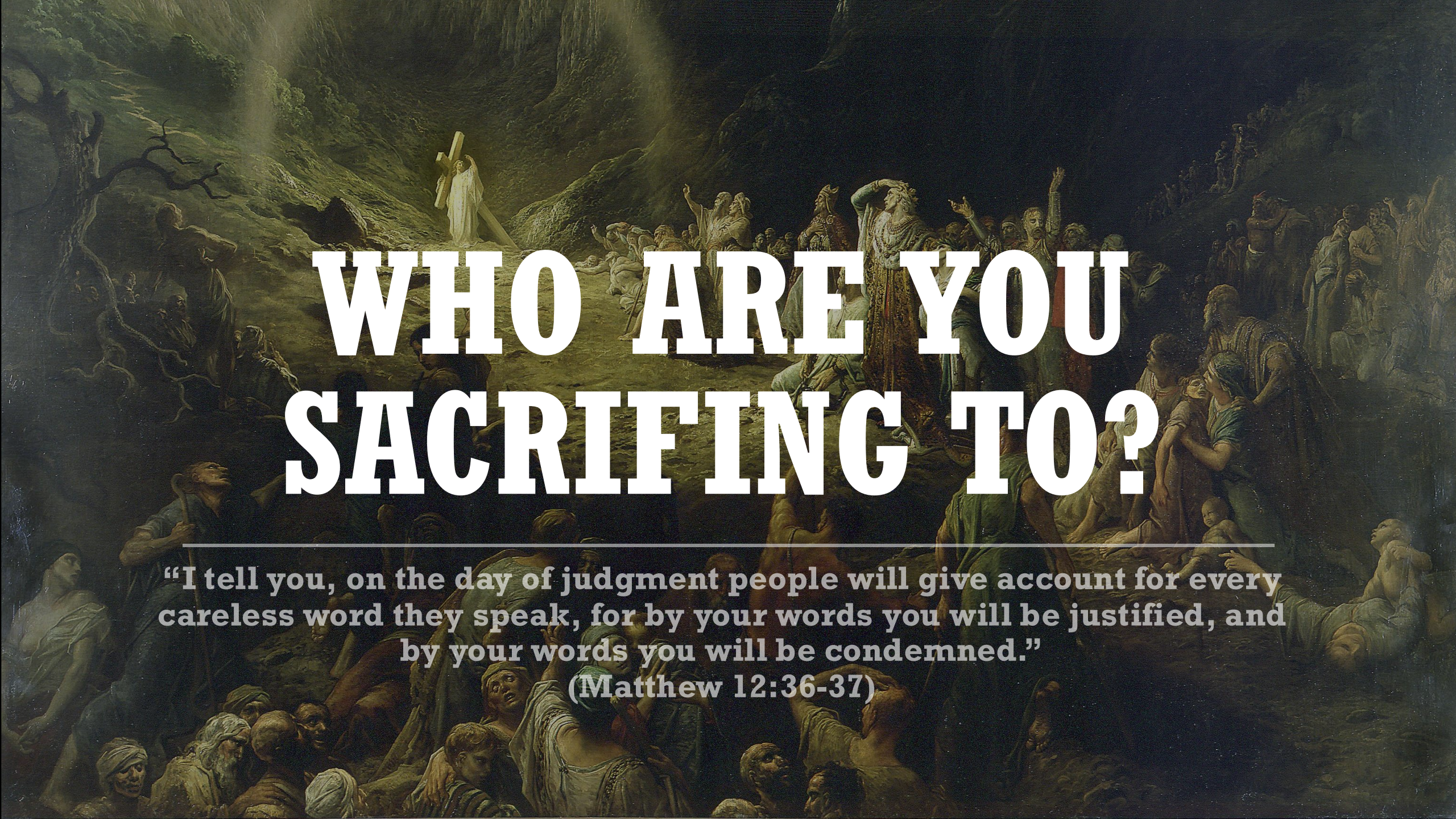
PROFANE SACRIFICES DISTANCE YOU FROM GOD

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue,
and those who love it will eat its fruits.”
(Proverbs 18:21)

ADMONITION: PROFANE FIRE?

- Consider Nadab and Abihu (**Leviticus 10:1-2**) who were consumed by offering profane fire before the Lord.
- In the same way, you ought not participate in the Temple if the altar is set ablaze with strange fire, lest you be consumed, too.
- So—If evil words are profane sacrifices...





WHO ARE YOU SACRIFYING TO?

“I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

(Matthew 12:36-37)

TAKEAWAY #3

Critical Exhortation.

EXHORTATION: PRAY.

- James says that we bridle our whole body when we maintain self-control over our tongue:

“For we all stumble in many ways. **And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, **able also to bridle his whole body.**” (James 3:2)**



EXHORTATION: PRAY.

- Paul says that our proper spiritual worship is bodily:

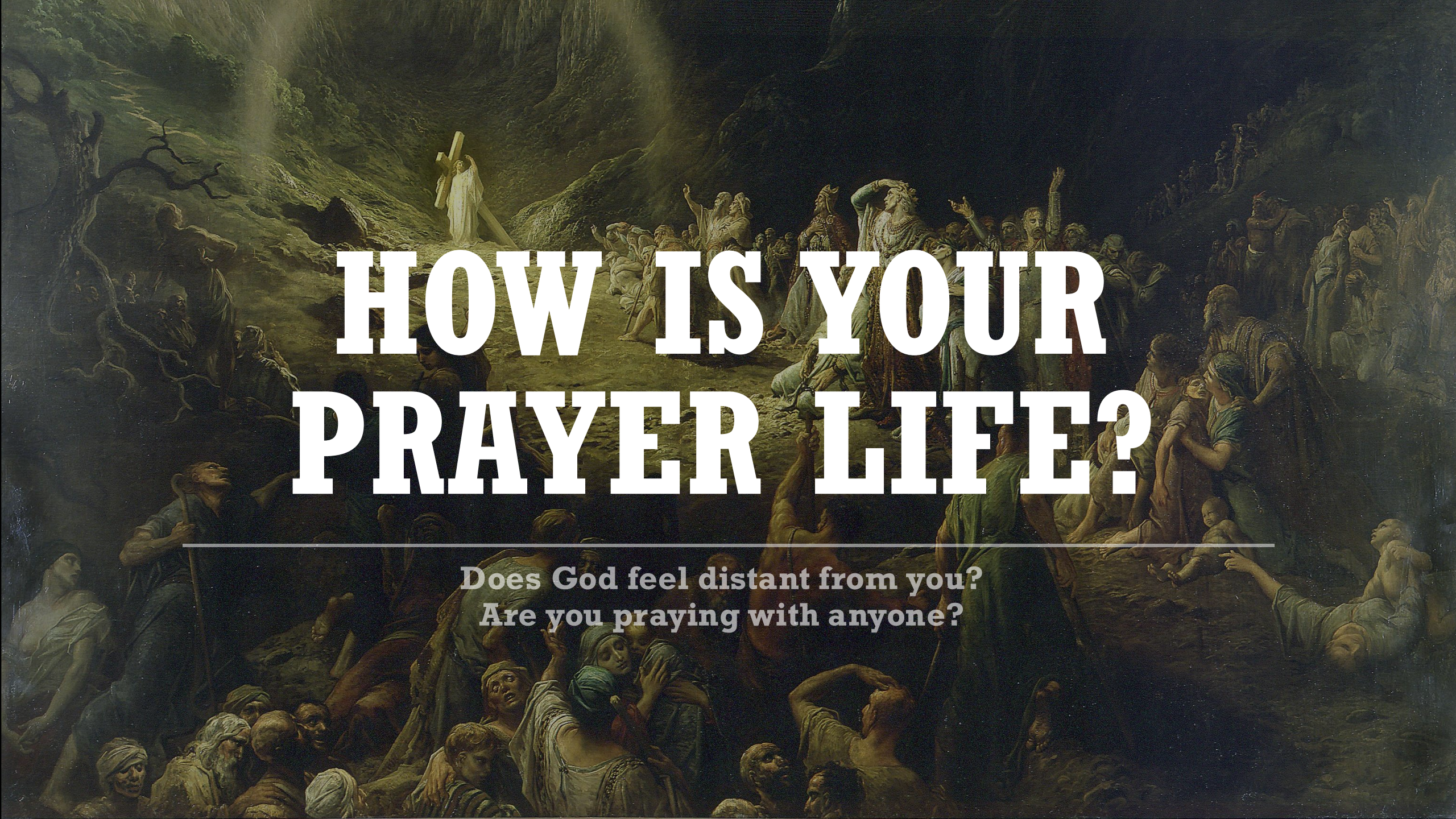
“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”
(Romans 12:1).



EXHORTATION: PRAY.

- **Harmonized—having self-control over our words should steer our body toward proper spiritual worship through unceasing sacrifices to God.**





HOW IS YOUR PRAYER LIFE?

Does God feel distant from you?
Are you praying with anyone?

EXHORTATION: PRAY TOGETHER.

- **Prayer bridles our body.**
- **Prayer is to burn continually without ceasing:**

“A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.” (**Leviticus 6:13**)

“Pray without ceasing” (**1 Thessalonians 5:17**).

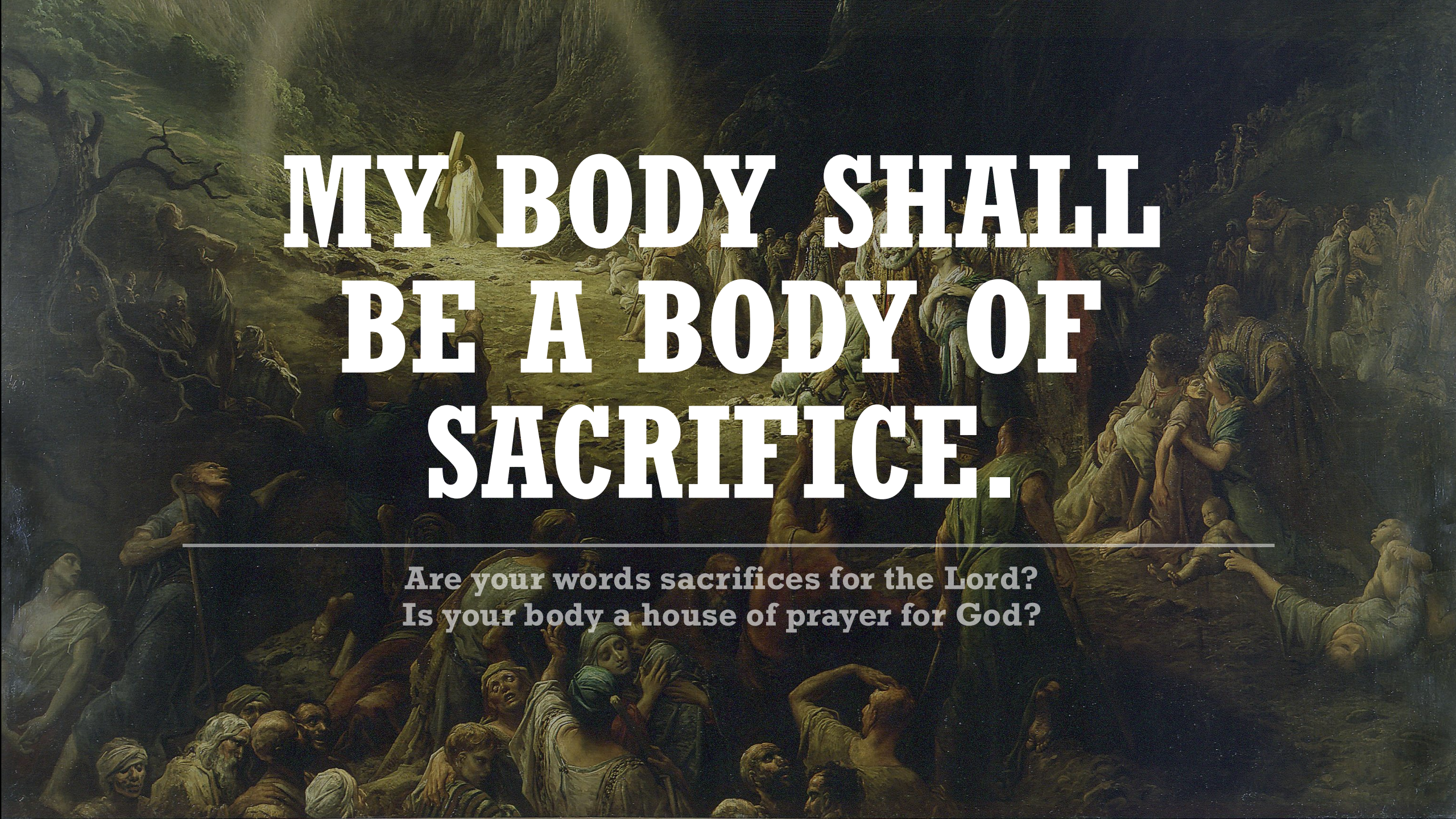
- **WHY?!**





MY HOUSE SHALL BE A HOUSE OF PRAYER.

Let us not neglect corporate prayer!
Sacrificing together is integral to the fullness of our faith.
(Matthew 21:13; Isaiah 56:6-8)




MY BODY SHALL BE A BODY OF SACRIFICE.

Are your words sacrifices for the Lord?
Is your body a house of prayer for God?

SUMMATIVE POINT

Critical Application.



BE HOLY. SACRIFICE DAILY.

**“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”
(James 4:8)**

INTERCESSION

Pastoral prayer of application.

CALL THE ELDERS

*Prayer in the Isles — altar call, confession of sin, anointing of the sick,
pastoral intercession and prayer, praise and worship*

James 5:13-16; Psalm 103:2-5

BENEDICTION

Priestly Blessing

BENEDICTION

Now may the glory and love of God the Father,
The peace and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
And the power and communion of the Holy Spirit,
Be with you all this week.
Amen.

2 Corinthians 13:14



