

Introduction:

- Open with Dream from Buddy Mefford Oct 23, 2021
- Opening Texts:
 - “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16, ESV)
 - “In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.” (Ephesians 2:22, ESV)
- I said a few weeks ago, “There is a difference between having someone to come and visit and someone to come and stay.”
 - When someone comes to visit there is a known arrival and departure time. Why is that important? Because you know that life as you live it will return to ‘your’ normal.
 - When someone comes to visit you can throw stuff under the bed, under the sofa, put stuff behind the clothes in the guest closet.
 - When someone comes to visit you do a quick clean...thorough clean...so as to leave a good impression. “Cleanliness is next to godliness. Works with everyone but God.”
 - When someone comes to visit you can hide the stuff that you do not want others to see. You can mentally prepare to put on your ‘game face.’
 - But...when someone moves in there is no departure time. This is now your “new normal.” There is no hiding stuff. The fact is that over time all will be found out. After a few days/weeks the ‘quick clean’ disappears and new occupant knows exactly how you live. And the ‘game face’ disappears and the ‘real face’ comes out.
- Application: God’s preference is to not visit us but for us to become His holy habitation. Are you living a life that says “God I would love to have you come and visit!” or “God make me your dwelling place.” I really believe that we have to be doing the later. We need to be His habitation.

I. God Dwells In People

- A. From the very beginning God wanted a people who would be like Him and choose to fellowship with Him. Ones who would freely choose to love Him and dwell with Him.
 1. But with the entrance of sin into humanity and therefore separation from God, God set His plan in motion to redeem man to himself.
 2. This time He would not just live with man but He would live in him! God in us!
- B. God dwelt with man.
 1. God dwelt with man in the garden.
 2. God dwelt with man in a tent built by Moses according to the plan of God.
 3. God dwelt with man in a temple built by David according to the plan of God and built by his son, Solomon.
 4. God dwelt with man, Jesus. God as a man lived among us. By the plan of God. God in a man!
 - a) Emanuel - God with us. Mt 1:23, Is. 7:14.
 - b) Jesus - *If you have seen me you have seen the Father.* Jn 14:9
 - c) This was the picture of what it is to look like when God lives in man!
 5. God gave specific plans in each case for the kind of dwelling that He was looking to inhabit. For this move of God we are reaching for we must think in terms of God com-

ing to inhabit us and not just visit! For a city or a nation to be transformed it must become a habitation of God.

II. Believers Build A Habitation For God? How do you build God a habitation.

- A. First, we must establish what a habitation is.
 1. A habitation is a place where one dwells/lives. The Greek word for habitation means “a permanent residence.”
 2. This is not to be a temporary thing. Even Solomon when dedicating the Temple said, *“But I have built you an exalted house, a place for you to dwell in forever.”* (2 Chronicles 6:2, ESV) NOT A VISIT! It is forever!
- B. Second, we have to understand that God has chosen people/humanity to live in. We must become the Temple of the Living God! But we have to invite Him in.
 1. *“Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?”* (1 Corinthians 3:16, ESV)
 2. *“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”* (1 Corinthians 6:19–20, ESV)
 3. *“Thus says the Lord: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest?”* (Isaiah 66:1, ESV) *“All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.”* (Isaiah 66:2, ESV)
 - a) God made the heavens, the earth is His footstool. He made them.
 - b) But He also made us! And He wants to occupy the throne of our hearts.
 4. Jesus is the foundation that we build upon! He is the foundation and the cornerstone.
 - a) *“For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”* (1 Corinthians 3:11, ESV) PS 118:21-24
 - b) *“built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”* (Ephesians 2:20–22, ESV)
 - c) If you are going to be a dwelling place for God you must be born again. You must start with Jesus Christ, making Him the very foundation of your life. You have to build on Him.
 5. You must pay attention as to what you build with in your life.
 - a) *“Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.”* (1 Corinthians 3:12–15, ESV)
 - b) We should be holy without blemish. This speaks of our sanctification. You are as righteous as you will ever be because of Christ. But we are growing in Christ every

day as we put off the works of our flesh. *“so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.”* (Ephesians 5:27, ESV) Jesus is always washing us with the Word!

- c) *“What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”* (2 Corinthians 6:16, ESV)

III. Habitation Construction May Look Like This

- A. Love! God is Love. His habitation must be filled with ever increasing love!
1. 1 Cor 13:4-7 *Love is patient...* We love God and we love others and we love ourselves.
 2. *“Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”* (John 14:23, ESV)
 3. We will always be growing in love! By this, will all know that we are His disciple...by the way we love one another.
- B. Worship - A dwelling place for God is filled with worship.
1. God is surrounded by worship in heaven. Rev 4, 5. That is his atmosphere!!! He comes alive there.
 2. God inhabits the praises of His people. Ps 22:3 He is attracted to our praises and dwells in our worship.
 3. Prayer is a part of this. We talk to God and hear from Him. We get more intimate with Him, knowing His heart and His desires for our lives.
- C. Ministry - are not all my servants flames of fire. Freely we have received freely we give!
1. Are not all my servants flames of fire. *“Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.”*” (Hebrews 1:7, ESV)
 2. *“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace:”* (1 Peter 4:10, ESV)
 3. *“you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”* (1 Peter 2:5, ESV)
- D. Becoming great disciples and making awesome disciples. A disciple is a person who has put their faith in Jesus, governs their life by Jesus teaching and passionately pursues Jesus mandate - make disciples.
1. Putting off the works of the flesh
 2. Putting off the grave clothes and putting on Christ.
 3. Purifying ourselves as He himself is pure. 1 John 3:2-3

Conclusion:

- Lets start building a place where God can live forever!
- *“In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”* (Ephesians 2:22, ESV)

*Lord Prepare me to be a sanctuary...
Resting Place*

DREAM: "THE TIME TO OPEN THE SHEEP GATES IS UPON US"

October 23, 2021

In the dream I found myself with a small group of people inside a large fenced in pasture. We had everything we seemed to need, plenty of food, comfortable couches for lounging, relaxing, we were overindulging ourselves in drink and food, everyone's needs seemed to be met. We seemed content. But as I looked around, something was off, and out of place. I began looking outside the pasture and I saw a great war going on. I saw bands of mercenaries roaming the land hunting down people to kill them. I saw creatures and monsters attacking people as they ran and hid in fear. But inside the pasture, there was nothing like that, we were completely oblivious to what was really going on outside the pasture. I grew increasingly alarmed at the state of the people inside the pasture, they had no drive, no desire, they seemed lethargic. They all had made for themselves little cubicles of isolation from each other, they would occasionally come out of their little areas to eat and drink with others, but then retreat back to their little safe places, like a kid who built for themselves their own little forts. Inside the forts was everything that they loved and cherished. Little toys and trinkets that they had collected over the years, were lined up on tables and desks. As I entered one little fort, I accidentally began knocking over tables and desks as it was not big enough for the both of us. I accidentally broke many of their little toys that they cherished so much. There were toy rings and cars, boats and action figures. They became so upset with me as I had messed up their fort and broke some of their most valuable toys. They were enamored with them and were so protective of them. All along still completely unaware of what was going on around them. They were in their safe place, an environment that they had control over. They spent most of their time alone except when they were hungry and thirsty, then they would emerge from their forts and gather at tables and eat and drink to their hearts content. Once they finished eating, there was tons of left-over food that was just discarded. It was very good food, very high end, but they treated it like it was just ordinary and nothing special, they just grabbed what they could and then hurried off back to their tents. As I walked around, I noticed that some of the people in the tents had hidden things, I saw some with women and men that had entered their tents, and some were hiding hidden sin that they were entertaining and engaging things that was corrupting them. There were so much hidden things being done in some of the tents. As I found my own tent, it had a big wooden door, as I opened it, I saw it was like a stair well, an old ancient wooden stairwell that led up to another level. I saw a small boy standing at the landing of the stairwell but between the boy and the stairs was a pile of toys, garbage, boxes full of old things, all piled up to the point it was blocking the little boy from going up the stairs to the next level. As I stood there and looked at the boy, he had a desire to go up to the next level, he felt called to it, and saddened that he could not seem to overcome the large pile of things blocking him from ascending the stairs. I felt a sense of sadness for the boy, I wanted to lift the boy up and place him on the stairs, but as I reached in, I hit a mirror with my hands. To my surprise, the little boy was me, I was just standing in front of a mirror seeing myself as the little boy unable to get over the pile of debris blocking the stairs. I then heard a voice from

God and he said yes this is you, its time to put away anything that is hindering you so that you may climb the stairs to the next level. You see yourself trapped and you feel unable to overcome this pile of things in front of your path. You still see yourself as a little boy, powerless to move the obstacles. But you are not a little boy anymore, be the man I have called you to be and step over the things in the boxes that are full of past regrets, past hurts and disappointments. Remove the toys and items in your life that so easily take your attention from my voice and the call on your life. It's time to go to a place you have not been before.

The dream now shifts me back to the pasture, as I walked around the people who just seemed content to remain in the safety of the pasture, in the failure, I felt a sense of frustration as I could see what was going on outside the pasture. I also saw a war coming that was about the push it way to the gates that led to the pasture. As I approached the gate, I noticed that it had not been open, but closed for many years. If you have ever opened an old wooden gate that has been shut for years, it is very difficult as the weeds have grown up around it so thick that it takes great efforts to open them. As I pushed the gate open just enough to get myself out, I saw a pile of debris, very tall weeds, small sapling trees and very tall thistles were blocking the entrance of the gate and not allowing me to open it wide. I heard God's voice again speak and he said" **The time for the Sheep gates to be open is upon you**". I felt a sense of urgency to get that gate open as the lost sheep of God were about to come in large numbers. I started trampling down the thistles which causes some pain as the stickers pierced my skin, but I just kept stomping them down, trampling over the weeds and breaking the small trees down so that the gate could be opened wide. This made the people inside the pasture worried; this was upsetting their way of doing things, this was causing a flurry of activity as many tried to run and grab their toys and favorite things that they cherished so much as people began piling into the gates trying to escape the war on the outside. People began grabbing their things and clutching them in their arms but there was too much to carry. I looked down at a pile of the things on the ground and I noticed there were other things that they were not grabbing. I saw cases and cases of batteries. I told the people; it was time to drop the things they were carrying and clinging to and start loading your arms with the batteries as we would need them to help others as they come. Some listened and dropped what they were carrying as they finally understood that those things were not going to help others find their way to the pasture, but the batteries were power that would give light to the flashlights that they were carrying that had no batteries. As small groups gathered, we went outside the gates to help many into the pasture so that they could find their way to safety. Immediately many ran in with great excitement but were quickly attacked by many small snakes that caused some to run in fear. They attached themselves to our hands and bit us with a very sharp bite, they appeared to be poisonous, and a great fear came over some of the people causing them to drop the batteries and run back to their own tents. I began yelling to them to not stop, they are not poisonous, they only look like they are, even their bite, although annoyingly painful, it was temporary, we must keep pushing in. The attacks seemed to come out of nowhere and everywhere. The first phase was just the snakes, but the next phase was with a stronger enemy. It approached us like very quickly and looked very menacing. It had the tail of an alligator, the body of a large Komodo dragon as it could move quickly, and it had armor plating all over the body even on the head like an ancient dinosaur. It had a forked tongue and continually hissed and spoke unidentifiable words in its hiss. As I looked around, I saw many people who seemed out of place, then I realized that many did not have any armor for protection. Some were very

protected as they were covered head to toe with armor. I saw some people who were wearing someone else's armor, it did not fit them, or it was even incomplete with a top part but no bottom part. We knew if the people did not find their own armor and get it on, they would not make it through the battles. As people finally began to find their own armor and put it on, they were finally empowered to engage into the battle and fight against the larger monsters that were approaching. I felt in my spirit that these were the strong men that were angered that we had moved past the little snakes and were still engaging. I notice one of the strongmen begin approaching me rapidly, they were fast and fierce. It has a small head and was very protected and a forked tongue that was always hissing. It first attacked with its tail, as most of the time they get you to focus on their mouths and you do not see the tail coming. I caught the tail under my arm and was able to cut it off its body. It now regrouped and came at me with its mouth, very angry, very determined to destroy me. I managed to grab its head and noticed that the thing was not as strong as I thought, it definitely looked menacing, but under all that puffed up armor, it had a very little mouth. As I raised it up, I noticed that its underbelly was not protected on its thigh area, I heard a voice from God again and he said, you must attack the throat and choke it as that was the only way to defeat it. I felt a sense that shutting up its mouth and ability to speak and breath was that only way to stop it. The battle continued as I woke up.