



InTENTionALLity

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Eternally Speaking Now

The other day, my son asked to go **camping**. I responded without much thought, saying, "Yes, that's a great idea. You and dad should put a date on the calendar to do that again."

"No, Mom," Zach clarified, "I want all three of us to go together."

"Oh, honey, that's okay. I am fine not going," I said, as if doing him a favor. "This has always been something you and Dad do," I added, matter-of-factly.

"But Mom, this is something I want *you* to do *with* us.
You've never gone with us.
This is something I really want to do with you."

At that, I both melted and cringed.
I knew deep inside that saying "yes" to this was important, but...
sleeping on the ground in a **tent** in the heat
with spiders and mosquitos

and swimming in murky lakes with mysterious slimy things
and walking in the dark
to a bathroom shared with strangers
in the middle of the night with unseen rodents
and not bathing for days unless you like cold showers
(*gasp*)
ranks among the least of my interest and tolerance levels.

Does anyone relate?

In my defense, let me say this:
I've gone on ten missions trips in foreign countries.
Each trip was as challenging as it was awesome, and
each one offered serious training in selflessness and discomfort.
To me, the discomfort makes sense when there's a purpose.
But...rustic camping in a **tent** for the fun of it?
Hmmmm.

I both sheepishly and confidently confess I'm a glamper girl at best;
but I knew that wasn't an acceptable reason to decline Zach's request.

*Only a day prior, I'd been contemplating (once again)
how fast time is flying on our parenting journey,
shocked (once again) by how few years we have left with Zach before he is an adult and
we launch him off on his own.*

As this flooded my thoughts, I grit my teeth and decided I'd agree to the (not-so-great-in-my-mind) adventure. I said yes to my son, although I secretly admit now that I hoped he'd forget about it.

Days later, I realized how all this talk about **camping** and **tents** meshed amazingly well with my preparations for that week's women's Bible study, which "just so happened" to be about the tabernacle, or temple in Scripture.

The Lord had gotten my attention,
and what He revealed was wonderful!

To begin, here are the biblical definitions for the words tabernacle and temple. (This is a compilation of both Hebrew and Greek root words.)

Tabernacle, Temple:
residence, dwelling place,
habitation, house,
sacred place,
TENT

Yes, you read that right. **Tent.**

There are almost 700 Scriptures that contain the words tabernacle or temple. As I examined them, I was compelled to make a list of all the marvelous things that happened in both the Old and New Testament temple. (Find all the verses [here](#))

Look at what happens in God's temple:

It's where we meet with God and
where God speaks with us and teaches us.

It exists for the name of the Lord and is dedicated to Him.

Offerings and sacrifices are made to Him there "continually,
as an ordinance forever."

God's temple is intentionally and skillfully created by Him,
with wisdom. It is artistically designed by the Lord,
with specific instructions and measurements.

It is ornate and beautiful.
It's great, wonderful, and valuable.

It's for those who seek the Lord,
a place of cleansing, holiness, and sanctification.

It is a house "for the God that nothing can contain."

It's a place for praising and thanking the Lord, with
music, singing, songs, instruments, and shouts of praise!
And when this occurs, His glory fills the temple.

Jesus is there.
He is *found* there.
It is where He is "about His Father's business."
In His house, Jesus destroys, casts out,
and scatters what may defile it.

At the pinnacle of the temple is where Jesus speaks His Word and rebukes satan,
sending the enemy fleeing.

In the temple, Jesus heals the blind and the lame.
He prophesies.
He comforts those in widowhood
as we fast, pray, and choose to never leave.

We come to the temple early in the morning and hear Jesus.
It's where we meet daily with an attitude of gladness
and in unity with brethren. This results in multiplication.

It's where we stand up
and tell others about and testify of Jesus!

Isn't this list astounding?

Before you think all this temple talk is about going to church, you may want to think again. Yes, going to church is extremely important, but that discussion is for another writing.

This is about the Lord's tabernacle,
and His temple is no longer a physical structure
or man-made building. It is...**you**.

We who have placed our trust in Jesus and surrendered our lives to Him now have His Spirit dwelling within us-- and God says as a result that *we now are His temple*. His tent.

***"Do you not know that you are the temple of God
and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"***
1 Corinthians 3:16

***"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who
is in you, whom you have from God,
and you are not your own?"***
1 Cor 6:19

Take time to reread the above list of what happens in God's temple, this time considering it in light of *you* being that very **temple** described. (Feel free to print it, too.)

Miraculous, isn't it?

May we each take caution, though.
All this glory is accompanied by warnings as well.

The temple verses also reveal this:

The temple can be plundered.
It can be taken into captivity by the enemy,
as a result of resisting God, disobeying Him,
and stubbornly refusing His guidance.

Adultery desecrates it.
Idolatry shames it.
Worry, stress, envy and fear can torment it and make it sick.

Within the temple, many minds question Jesus' authority.
Indignant attitudes and unbelief can push their way in,
convincing us that Jesus is not the God He says He is.

Sadly, Jesus can be standing right in front of us in the temple,
and we can miss the fact that He is Messiah.

That's sobering.

God's **tent**-- your being-- was designed for spectacular things. May it be coupled with **deliberate, daily determination** to use it for His glory and not for the enemy's desecration.

"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are."

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

CHALLENGE

There's a beautiful transition of the "temple theme" in God's Word. **Please don't miss this. It's magnificent.**

- The tabernacle began as a literal **tent**, with curtains and wooden poles, established as a portable meeting place for God and His people as they traveled through the wilderness.
- Then, King Solomon built a permanent, awe-inspiring, ornate structure of precious gems, gold, bronze, wood and stone that experienced both godly use and godless abuse, both tragic destruction and blessed reconstruction.
- After a new one was built years later in Jerusalem, while His disciples reflected on its grandeur, Jesus spoke a prophecy of His resurrection, along with a shocking declaration.

***Jesus answered and said to them,
"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."
Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and
will You raise it up in three days?"***

But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

John 2:21

Did you catch that last sentence?
He was speaking of
the temple of *His* body.

All along, this tabernacle throughout Scripture represented not only a meeting place for God and man,

and not just the embodiment of the Lord's presence;
but it also was a picture of...
Jesus Himself.

Wait.
I thought *we* were the temple of the Holy Spirit.
We are.
We are because Jesus **is**.

Because Jesus, the temple of His own Spirit, dwells within us,
we are now His temple. We are where He dwells, where He resides.
We are His habitation, His sacred place.

We are His tent in which He camps.

Cool, huh?
It's about to get cooler.

In John 15:4, Jesus says, "***Abide in Me, and I in you.***"

In John 14:16-17 He goes further,

***"And I will pray the Father,
and He will give you another Helper,
that He may abide with you forever—
the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive,
because it neither sees Him nor knows Him;
but you know Him,
for He dwells (same Greek word used for 'abide')
with you and will be in you."***

Do you recall the biblical definition of the word abide?
(*Enjoy reading two previous writings about it **here** and **here**.)*)

To abide means to remain.
To stay.
Yes, even *stay overnight*.
To **camp**.

If I may propose, in a simple and sweet way,
it's like the Lord is saying,
"Camp in My tent, and I in yours."

Do you want to know the best part of all this?
Our **future tent**.
It's eternal.
It's Jesus Himself.
Here it is:

"For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

2 Corinthians 5:1

And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God."

Revelation 21:3

So, let's go **camping!**

It doesn't just happen- *we need to make a choice.*

Let's be **intentional** about utilizing God's temple as it was designed.

Are you **ALL** in?

Jesus is.

Despite your fears of discomfort and of the unknowns, in the midst of life's mosquitoes, darkness, and strangers, even if you're a sticky hot mess,

He **camp**s in your **tent** and fills you with His glory.

Will you **camp** in His and glorify Him?

P.S. Just to let you know, our family has set a summer camping date. It will be sweaty, grimy, uncomfortable, and gloriously unglamorous.

I trust it will be one of our best family memories.

Well, at least for my son. (Smirk)

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