

## MISNOMERS - #1

I happened upon Nehemiah 10 recently and noticed that “the house of the Lord,” or “the house of our God,” was used nine times there. (nasb) It was a familiar term that got me to thinking.

Really now, don't we often think of our church building as being “God's house,” or “the house of the Lord?” And doesn't that indicate that we expect to meet Him there? And isn't it the primary place where His people expect to engage with other believers?

And doesn't it seem to justify some added expense in making our church building nice? After all, we rationalize, “He deserves that.” “Make your pledge right here, for more of that self-serving Kool-Aid.” (Feel free to challenge that.)

This misnomer is one of multiple ways that we bring the O.T. concept of God's people into the N.T., thus handicapping our truly becoming the Church. Yes, it is true that in the O.T. the tabernacle or the temple were God's dwelling place, where Israel met together in His presence, but Jesus totally - as in TOTALLY - transformed that.

WE, the saints, are the Church, the Body of Christ, and buildings do not validate that. It is only validated by our individually embracing the purposes of the Father, and by our fellowshiping with and encouraging one another whether it be “two or three” or thousands. Sometimes it happens better over coffee than in our beautiful and comfortable sanctuaries with their state-of-the-art technology.

In fact – and fasten your seatbelt on this one – God only dwells in your church building when a saint is there. Otherwise it's just a building which, in terms of God's Presence, is more closely related to an office, warehouse or airplane hangar than to the tabernacle or temple. Consider Acts 17:24, “The God who made the world and everything that is in it, - - does not dwell in temples made by hands.”

This misnomer deceives us, and minimizes our sense of needing to take up our cross and follow Jesus in the way that truly makes us His dwelling place. We substitute one “house of the Lord” for another. What think you?

More to come.

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March 4, 2021