

Second Hand Preacher

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 19, 2017

1 Corinthians 3:16-23

I remember being told as a young aspiring athlete that my body was a temple. We were to eat only foods that built up the temple. I was fortunate that my Mom generally cooked healthy meals and, even though I would have candy and pop occasionally, I did a decent job of building a temple to be a high school wrestler. Working out my body and getting enough sleep also aided in the temple of my body serving me well.

St. Paul uses that image of the body as a temple for the Christians in Corinth. The temple would have been a powerful image for people of that day. Some were probably converts from Judaism and all would have known of the great temple in Jerusalem. Paul wasn't as concerned with the Corinthians physical make up, although I'm sure he cared. He was using the temple image to stand for their spiritual life. He wanted them to be strong when it came to spiritual wisdom. He didn't want them weak so they might fall for anyone not speaking the truth. The Corinthians lived in a confusing time with so many cultures trying to shape these relatively new Christians. Paul used wisdom from scripture to shape these Christians in order that they become spiritually strong. This made them worthy of being called a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Do we pollute our temple spiritually? This might happen because we watch something on television that isn't good for us. Perhaps we get into petty gossip or use language that tears down a temple rather than build our temples up. When we tear others down, we actually hurt ourselves as well. If we can grasp the wisdom of God and live as to benefit the community as a whole, then we can build strong temples. As believers, our duty is to create heaven right here on earth. When we live for each other; we glorify God. This is the type of wisdom we should all live.