



# THE PERSON OF CHRIST

## WORKSHEET - EPISODE 5

### *Temple: Jesus Christ, the Church, Your Body*

#### “The temple of his body”

1. Temples have long been a focal point for human contact with the divine.

- The Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem (ca. 1000 BC), rebuilt and expanded as the Second Temple following its destruction in ca. 586 BC, was important in the life and ministry of Jesus.
- But Jesus ultimately condemns the corruption that had overtaken the life of the Jerusalem temple ([Matthew 21:12–17](#)). Instead of being a focal point for God, it had become a focal point for greed and personal gain.
- He predicts its total destruction, which occurs in AD 70. In doing so, he points to his body as the true temple. This is because his body is the body of God Incarnate. No temple built with hands could contain God, but now we have access to a temple that is truly divine and life-giving.

#### “your body is a temple”

1. St Paul elaborates on the idea that the Body of Christ is the true temple, and he identifies this Body with the Church ([1 Corinthians 12](#)). As members of the Church, we are members of his Body, and thus we too are temples ([1 Corinthians 6:15–20](#)).

- The highest among these temples of God is the Theotokos, the Mother of God. She bore God in the flesh, giving her the title “temple” in a special and unrepeatable sense.
- But thanks to her role as temple, we too can now become dwelling places of God, true tabernacles of the Holy Spirit, by our union with Christ, in both soul and body.
- St Caesarius of Arles (ca. AD 468–542) compares our body and our soul to the outer and inner altars of the ancient Temple: by living a life of purity and virtue in body and soul, we are manifested as temples of God.

#### Reflection & Discussion

1. If Jesus Christ is the Temple, why do we still build physical temples or churches? And why go to church if our own body is a temple of God?
2. Jesus cleansed the ancient Temple because of corruption. How does he deal with greed and other human failings in the institution of the Church now?

#### Further reading

1. [1 Kings 8; John 2:13–22](#)
2. [St Gregory Palamas, Sermon on the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple](#)