

✠ John 14:1-14 ✠

IN NOMINE IESU

The temple was torn down. It was demolished by the Romans even as it was handed over to them by the Jews' apathy and rebellion against the God of their fathers. It was God's House, given to the sons and daughters of Abraham so that God would dwell among them and be their God. Yet they profaned the name of God by soiling His temple, calling it common as they sold and traded in her courts. They treated God's temple as just another place to engage in worldly pleasures and affairs, satisfying their greed in the courts of the Lord's house. And thus it was taken from them. It was destroyed because of their hard-heartedness and devotion to self-preservation. It was destroyed because they blasphemed the name of the Almighty. They delighted in wickedness and destroyed God's Temple by crucifixion.

But what they meant for evil, God meant for good. And so He raised His Temple from the ash heap of death and restored it to honor and glory and majesty, making His name dwell in His Temple not made with human hands. And from His Temple God gives to you His gifts of life and righteousness.

Thus has Jesus prepared a place for you. A place not built with brick and mortar, stone and wood, not a place conceived in the imaginations of men, but a place built by God, fashioned as the apple of His eye; the delight of His heart. A place where you walk and talk with God in the way that Enoch trod.

There is no army, no enemy that can tear this house down. There is no flood that can wash it away. There are no cracks in the foundation and no termite can chew through its walls. No tornado can destroy it and no fire can bring it to ash. It is the House of God, the dwelling place of the Almighty, the abode of the Holy Trinity.

Its foundation is fashioned with spear and nails and thorn, riveted to the Chief Cornerstone. Its walls are made and its roof is thatched with the pen of the apostles and prophets, building on the one Foundation, Jesus Christ, our Lord. And though such seemingly weak and ill-suited materials make for this house of God, it is strong enough to repel all the wicked and armies of Satan and stand firm for all eternity. It will endure forever; the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. It is the Ark of Salvation and those who dwell inside its walls dwell in safety.

This is the place that Jesus has prepared for you, O sons and daughters of Adam. He has gone to Golgotha, a willing Lamb, to build for you a house and home better than what your first parents lost. Here no sin shames and no guilt remains. Here lives are mended and broken spirits renewed. Here those who are bloodied by their sin and shame, and those who are beaten by the fists of Satan and sin take refuge. Here the exile and sojourner finds a place to lay his head. Here victims find justice. Here the destitute and poor find rest and riches. Here the sick and dying find healing and life.

Here is where our Lord, raised from the dead, brings you. He comes and gathers you to Himself here at pulpit, font, and altar. He does not take you to mountain peaks or beautiful ocean shores. He does not take you to your own wisdom and self-reliance. He does not empty your mind of all thought; indeed He fills it with thoughts of Him. He does not lift you high into the starry heavens and He does not leave you in your fallen house of sin and shame and death.

He takes you to where He is; to His Father's house, where there is room for all God's people. Behold the House of God, adorned with the tapestries of the blood of martyrs and the stain glass windows of choirs singing heavenly hymns. He has brought you here through water and His Word, joining you to Himself in the font of life.

Though you were not His people, He has made you His people through His holy flood; just as the Israelites were made one people under Moses as they were baptized into Moses in the waters of the Red Sea. You are a holy nation of priests offering the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, taking the Cup of Salvation and calling on the name of the Lord, dwelling in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of the new Jerusalem, the City of God. Where there is no need of the light of the sun for it is the Lamb who is the lamp unto your feet and the light unto your path. Where there is no need of locks or guards for the Lamb is your fortress and your protection. Where there is no despair and no lack, for the Lamb is your portion and your life.

This is enough for you. The farm may never pay all the bills on time; you may never have your dream job or your perfect place to live; your children may never really be as good as you want them to be; your spouse may never love you as you think you ought to be loved; your life may never seem fair when compared to others. But whether there is lack or there is plenty, whether there is famine or feast, you are content, O Christian, for you know Jesus and your life is in Him.

The life you live is not your own. You belong to the Father by the Son in the communion of the Holy Spirit. You are His and He has redeemed you to live under Him in His house; to serve Him in righteousness and innocence.

Therefore ask your dear Father in heaven for whatever you will. Ask Him for a better job; a better house; nicer clothes. Ask Him for whatever is your heart's desire and be confident that He hears you and knows your heart before you ask. For He not only knows what you need and when you need it, He also knows what you desire. He knows what will benefit you and what will harm you.

Therefore ask for whatever you will as a dear child asking your dear Father. And don't worry about if it's proper or nice or frivolous, ask your heavenly Father, He wants you to. He delights in you when you come to Him with your needs and desires, just as earthly mums and dads delight in their children when they come to them for help. Don't worry; He won't harm you just to teach you a lesson. He won't let harm befall you just to show you not to ask for your heart's desire. He's not waiting for you to screw up. God is good, and all good comes from Him. When you are dissatisfied, when you are angry with your lot in life, when you think God has it in for you or will not let you have what you know would be sufficient, then turn and repent for His Grace, His Holiness is sufficient for you.

Depend on Him and you will never be dissatisfied. For He not only does not give you a snake when you ask for a fish, He also does not give you a snake when you ask for a snake. Ask in the Name of the Son, by His death and resurrection, and you will find that the answer is 'yes'. For in Jesus is the 'yes' of all God's promises. You will live. You will prosper. You will know joy. You will know contentment. You will know satisfaction. You will know happiness.

But while in this life, you will know Golgotha. For this world is fallen. Here sin abounds. Here there is pain and suffering. You will be naked before all, exposed in your weaknesses and insufficiency. You will suffer all manner of evil for His Name's sake. Blessed are you. For you see God. This is enough for you.

All pain, all heartache, all want is swallowed up in victory; for the Lamb who was slain lives and He brings you into His Father's house where there is perfect contentment and joy, perfect unity and rest. So ask away, dear child, ask your true Father for all your heart's desires, He will not harm you or hurt you. He will protect you with the pen of His apostles and the marks of the nails and spear. He will not let the night have you. He will not allow the armies of darkness to overcome you. He will feed you from His Table and care for you with His life-giving Word. This is enough for you.

In the name of the FATHER and of the ✠ SON and of the HOLY SPIRIT.

✠ AMEN ✠