

TEXT 2 Chronicles 5:11-14; Matthew 21:12-16

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES 1 Chronicles 29:1-9; Isaiah 56:7; 1 Timothy 3:14,15

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that the church is God's House, and that because it is holy and the place where we come to offer Him worship, we should respect His House.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord. — Leviticus 19:30

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. — Psalm 26:8

**ANSWER
TITLE:** **Get It Straight, George!**

**SEARCH
TITLE:** **God's House**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Solomon's Temple: Up to the time of the building of the Temple, Israel had gone 400 years with only a tent as God's tabernacle. The Temple was built by 30,000 Israelites, over 150,000 Canaanites (1 Kings 5:13-16; 2 Chronicles 2:17,18; 8:7-9), and was seven years in the building (1 Kings 6:38). Every part of the Temple was prepared away from the site and put into place without the sound of hammer or axe or any tool of iron (1 Kings 6:7). The Temple stood for over 360 years, and was destroyed by Babylonians in 586 B.C. In size, the Temple was a chapel rather than a cathedral—a sanctuary intended as a house of God, not a building to hold vast gatherings of people. It measured about 90 feet long by 30 feet wide by 45 feet high, and was divided into two sections. Part of the inner section was curtained off to form the sanctuary. In

front was a 15-foot entrance porch and along the sides were storerooms.

Since the Jews from abroad were not allowed to use their own money to pay the annual Temple dues, their currency had to be exchanged. The money-changers set up their businesses in the outer court of the Temple, in the Court of the Gentiles, and charged a high fixed rate of exchange. Even the poor people who could afford only the cheapest sacrifice (two pigeons) were charged extortionate prices. The priest turned a blind eye to all these happenings. No wonder Jesus chased them out, especially since they had been told about this earlier!

YOUR OPENER

God's House

RESPONSES

1. Allow time for your students to name some of the benefits. They may mention that church attendance gives an opportunity to hear and study the Word of God in greater depth, that it offers fellowship, strengthens unity, and provides a place for praising God and for praying together. Why are each of these important to the believer?

2. We are not to be rash or hasty in what we say. We are to be more ready to hear than talk. Allow time for your students to reply, then zero in on specifics concerning what we talk about and listen to. Do they think there is fault in discussing business deals, sports, or other secular subjects in God's House?

3. We can help to keep the church clean. Lead the class in a discussion showing that maintenance of the church building is a very important function. Can the students think of ways to help? Have any volunteered to help? If not, why not? Talk about the fact that litter and chewing gum discarded in the wrong places can be a dishonor to God's House.

4. Allow time for your students to discuss this. Some of the behaviors mentioned might be: chewing gum, loud talking, reading magazines, excessive use of drinking fountain or restrooms during the services, running, reading comic books, passing notes, and playing games. Guide your students to an awareness that individual conduct in God's House is an important factor in receiving God's blessing or, on the other hand, receiving God's judgment.

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KEY VERSE: Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. — Psalm 26:8

A house of prayer! Yes, that is what God wants His house to be called. God's plan, which He gave to Moses, included the construction of a church in the wilderness—a tabernacle with a place where God's presence would dwell. Today, God desires His presence to be in every church and in every life. If the manner of worship and respect for God's House is followed as prescribed in His Word, God is pleased to dwell in that church.

1. Hebrews 10:25 cautions us against "forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." This shows us the importance of attending church. What are some of the blessings or benefits of church attendance?

2. Jesus drove out the money-changers and condemned other vices which corrupted His Temple. In reading Ecclesiastes 5:1,2, what instruction is given concerning our conversation in His House?

3. In what way can we honor God's House other than by our attendance and watching our conversation? See 2 Chronicles 29:15.

4. In what ways might a person, knowingly or unknowingly, dishonor the house of God by his behavior?

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ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. When the Temple which Solomon built was dedicated, the trumpeters and singers were as one—unity prevailed. The unity of the worshipers brought an overwhelming demonstration of God’s glory. God’s glory, or presence, is just as surely in His house today, and because His presence is there His house should be honored. Describe how you think a church service would be carried out if Christ were visibly present.

6. The names of six individuals are listed below. They are famous or infamous characters, depending on their attitudes toward God’s House and holy things. Tell what each did, and the result of his/her action.

Nadab and Abihu — Leviticus 10:1,2

King Josiah — 2 Kings 23:1-3; 2 Chronicles 34:26-28

King Uzziah — 2 Chronicles 26:16-20

King Hezekiah — Isaiah 37:14,15,33-35

Anna — Luke 2:36-38

How can these people be examples to us today?

7. How much money did King David give toward the building of God’s House? Why do you feel he gave such a large amount?

8. David’s generosity affected his countrymen and they also offered willingly for God’s House: 5,000 talents and 10,000 drams of gold, 10,000 talents of silver, 18,000 talents of brass, 100,000 talents of iron, also precious stones. The people rejoiced and King David rejoiced with great joy. What does this tell us about the value of a good example in regard to honoring God’s House?

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5. Allow time for your students to describe what they think would take place. Some key thoughts to consider: What would the behavior be? How would the people participate? What would be the concerns of those present? Take the discussion a step further and ask how Christ might respond if He were an observer and everyone in the church participated as they generally do.

6. Nadab and Abihu. They offered strange fire on God’s altar and were devoured by fire from God.

King Josiah. He made a covenant to serve God, and the people consented. God spared him from seeing the destruction of Jerusalem.

King Uzziah. His heart was lifted up and he went into the Temple to offer incense, which was the priests’ duty. He was smitten with leprosy.

King Hezekiah. He used God’s House for a place of prayer. God answered his prayer and delivered him from his enemies.

Anna. She served God with fastings and prayers in the Temple. God blessed her by letting her be on hand to see baby Jesus and to recognize Him as the promised Redeemer.

The point of this question is to encourage students to talk about the blessings that come to those who honor God’s House and use it rightly. This may also be an opportunity to touch on the responsibility of parents to instruct and correct their children as to the necessity of honoring God’s House.

7. Three thousand talents of gold and seven thousand talents of refined silver—valued at more than 400 million dollars. David gave this amount because he had set his affection on God’s House. Lead the class to understand that God had given all this wealth to David in the first place, so David was happy to give it back to God by giving toward the construction of a building where He would be honored.

8. Class discussion should bring out the importance of honoring God’s House in whatever way is our opportunity. One may not have great wealth to give to build or maintain God’s House, but everyone can reverence His House and help keep it clean. Everyone can and should consider God’s House as a place of prayer. God always hears and answers honest prayer. A positive example for good is a good example to follow.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What does the word *respect* mean?

In what way is showing respect in the house of God honoring God?

What is our responsibility toward the house of God in regard to litter, secular books, visitors, ministers, ushers, chewing gum, the nursery, instruments, senior citizens, excessive or loud talking, and the altar?

How should we conduct ourselves in God's House?

Why do you think it is necessary to be quiet in church?

We call our church God's House. Why do you think it is?

What can we do to show our respect for God's House?

What can we expect if we respect and honor God's House? If we do not?

Why is it important to always have order in the church?

If we see someone is being disrespectful in God's House, as George was in our ANSWER story, what can we do about it?

THINGS TO DO

Bring tracing paper and a picture to class. Explain that we are like the picture and others are watching our example in church. If we don't love and respect God's House our friends will see how we act and may copy us. Refer to the tracing paper.

Put on a skit in the department or class showing how not to act in God's House. Then show how we should act and explain why. Some things portraying how not to act are: chewing gum, wiggling, talking out loud, playing around, reading comic books, or doing puzzles.

Bring a simple board game such as checkers and tell the class you are going to play it, but with no rules applied. How far would you get in the game? Discuss how confusion would result. Liken this to the confusion in a church if no order or discipline were required.

Using pictures (posters, snapshots, magazines, etc.), take your students on a "Walk Through the Church." If you can't find enough good pictures, you might like to draw the outline of your church and designate squares as rooms for the different workers. Have a picture (or space) to represent the different workers such as Greeter, Usher, Organist, Sunday School Teacher, Librarian, Secretary, Choir Director, Custodian, Minister. As you introduce a worker ask each student to tell one thing he could do to help that person do his job—something to keep God's House special.