

"a peculiar people," who, because they are such, ought "to show forth the praises of him who had called them from darkness into his marvellous light." This temple, consisting of a people, is the only one which now remains on earth. The first kind of temple—the tabernacle, and the house which was "exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries," and the successive buildings raised in after ages on Mount Moriah by Zerubbabel and Herod—all these buildings have passed away. The Roman ploughshare has passed over their foundations, and "left not one stone upon another." The second temple, "the temple of his body," who for a season tabernacled amongst men, has ascended up on high, leading captivity captive. He "has gone to the Father," having "finished," on the cross, the salvation of man, and having perfectly "done the will" of his Father, as "it is written in the volume of the book." And now, in this dispensation, the third and only remaining actual temple, that of a holy people, is ever being built. "Every sinner that repenteth," causing joy in heaven, is another "lively stone" added to this "habitation of God through the Spirit."

These truths are not without their practical bearing on Christian life and conduct.

They teach us *negatively* that no building in brick or stone can, in the strictly Scriptural sense or use of the word, be called a temple, or tabernacle, or sanctuary. Places of assembly for Christian worship and instruction—that is, our churches and chapels—are to us what the synagogues throughout Judea were to the Jews. There were many synagogues, and but one temple for the nation. So with us there are now many churches and chapels (synagogues), and but one temple, we, "the blessed company of all faithful people," but one "house of God, which is the church of the living God" (1 Tim. iii. 15). Whilst many and minute directions were given by God, that the tabernacle should be "exceeding magni-

fical, and of fame and of glory throughout all countries" (1 Chron. xxii. 5), not one direction is given in the Bible concerning the style or adornment of other places of either Jewish or Christian worship. We may, then, conclude, from this silence of Scripture, that a plain building for Christian worship, and instruction, is as acceptable in God's sight as one "exceeding magnificent."

The *positive* lessons drawn from this subject are important.

Let us instance some taught by St. Paul.

I. The first is the value of sound teaching to believers. This is set forth in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. In chap. iii. Christians are called "God's building" (ver. 9)—*i.e.*, as Paul, in Ephes. ii. 10, says they "are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." Unsound teaching is compared to those vile additions to a magnificent building which tend to its destruction and defilement. The apostle cautions the unsound teacher by saying (ver. 10), "Let every man take heed how he buildeth" upon the foundation that had been laid, "which is Jesus Christ," and adds, in verses 16 and 17, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

II. Another practical use of this subject is the correction of some vices which had, in a corrupt city like Corinth, crept into the Church, or had not been renounced by some converts. In the 6th chapter of the First Epistle, speaking of their former impure and licentious manner of life, the apostle asks (ver. 9), "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" He then specifies, particularly in the 9th and 10th verses, who the unrighteous are, and adds, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." To show the Christian con-