



BROAD STREET

BANNER

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From Where I Sit . . .

“A Living Sanctuary”

Have you ever driven into a city and seen the sign, “This city is a bird sanctuary.” Well that means to us, “Do not kill or harm the birds! They’re off limits to the public---protected from danger.” As used in the common sense, a sanctuary is a haven, a shelter, a protected area, a place of refuge.

Religiously, it refers to a consecrated place. The Hebrew word translated “sanctuary” refers to **“a consecrated thing or place, especially a palace, sanctuary (whether of Jehovah or of idols) or asylum:—chapel, hallowed part, holy place, sanctuary.”** Regarding the Jewish Tabernacle and Temple, it referred to the place of God’s dwelling, the holy of holies, the most sacred part of a religious building. The term is also used in the New Testament (**Hebrews 8:2**) to be the heavenly spiritual place where Jesus serves as our High Priest.

Since the birds are able to seek “asylum” in cities that are “bird sanctuaries,” we can defer to common usage of the word, at least on that point. Recently I heard a preacher comment about individuals who were calling the auditorium section of a church building the sanctuary. He felt this was a misuse of the term, and it appears he is right, if the term is being used religiously. What has happened is that common usage has taken a Biblical word and given application to what the world thinks the “holy place” for the church is – the auditorium. Since you and I are the temple of God (**1 Cor. 3:16**) as opposed to the church building being such, it would be far more appropriate for us to refer to Christians as the earthly sanctuary for God’s spirit to dwell in today.

Last week I heard one of our little girls from our Learning Center at Broad Street Preschool singing. I listened carefully and realized she was singing a popular spiritual song by Jaci Velasquez entitled “Sanctuary.” The chorus expresses this appropriate thought consistent with Christians being the temple of God:

*Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary
Pure and Holy, tried and true
With thanksgiving I’ll be a living
Sanctuary for you*

I want us to think about one other proper use of the term. Jesus is our sanctuary, where we can go to find our safe haven, or asylum. In **Isaiah 32:1-2**, a prophecy of the coming Messiah who would reign in righteousness portrays him as this type of sanctuary:

“Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”

Indeed Jesus is our “rock in a weary land,” and “shelter in the time of storm.” Have you learned to turn to him for all your cares. **Ephesians 3:20-21 (KJV)** ²⁰Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, ²¹Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

. . . . Terry Broome