

## **LETTERS TO THE CHURCH BY FRANCIS CHAN**

### **Chapter Summaries: Chapter 2 “Sacred” for October**

#### **Introduction:**

Stories of God’s dealing with the sacred that seem to us to be severe: Uzzah touching the ark of the covenant (2 Sam 6); King Saul’s sacrifice (1 Sam. 13); Moses striking the rock (Num. 20); Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5); Communion (1 Cor. 11). “We don’t understand what it means for something to be ‘sacred.’ We live in a human-centered world among people who see themselves as the highest authority.”

#### **Rushing into the Sacred**

We should not rush into prayer; we should cautiously address the name of God in reverence (Mat. 6:9; Luke 11:2), like the High Priest entering the Holy of Holies. We are not as careful with our words as we should be (Eccl. 5:1-3; James 1:19; Prov. 10:19). Yet we disrespect God if we don’t speak out when God commands us to speak (Jerm. 20:8-9).

#### **Sacred Mystery**

There is no greater honor on earth than to be part of God’s Church (Eph. 5:29-30). To think that in the Church we are joined to the body of God is a profound mystery (1 Tim. 6:16; Eph 5:32). We are constantly in the presence of God – that should cause you to pause and worship (Is. 6:2; 1 Pet. 1:8).

#### **A Small Piece of the Temple**

The glory of the Lord filling the temple (2 Chron. 7:1-4) is still happening today in us as the church, the temple of God (Eph. 2:19-22). We are the living stones of God’s temple, the Church (1 Pet. 2:5; Eph. 2:20). We are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16-17) built on the foundation of Christ. Can you imagine the trouble one would have been in to try to destroy the temple of God? That’s why Paul warns of those who try to bring division in the Church (Tit. 3:10). The temple in 2 Chron. 7 was dedicated with fire from heaven, and the temple of the church was dedicated by God with fire of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). How sacred is that!?

#### **A Small Piece of Heaven**

Revelation chapters 4-5 tells of the throne of God and the Holy Lamb of God as the eternal sacrifice for our sins – and in the midst of this divine sacred scene are our prayers as the bowl of incense.

#### **A Small Part of an Eternal Plan**

Each of us as members of the Church are part of an eternal plan (Eph. 1:4-5). He knew us from eternity and created us for special work (Jerm. 1:5; Eph. 2:10). As part of the Church of God we are here to make God’s eternal wisdom known (Eph. 3:8-10). It has been hidden in the past, a mystery, but now he has made it known in the Lord through the Church! How can anyone think they can be connected to God and not be, or want to be, connected to His Church? The sacred mystery of the universe is revealed in what God has done in His sacred Church through Christ! Are we guilty of cheapening something sacred by the way we think about the Church? We need to repent!