



# Sanctuary

by Shari Miller

**C**hurch buildings and their chancel areas are often referred to as sanctuaries.

The Oxford Online Dictionary ([www.oxforddictionaries.com](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com)) defines the word sanctuary as a place of refuge or safety.

Many traditional churches have stained glass windows. How could stained glass windows help the church building become even more of a sanctuary from the distractions of the outside world? What other characteristics of traditional church buildings remind us of sanctuary or refuge? See **Genesis 7:7** for one example.

Identify with a partner or in your small group your sanctuaries, your personal spaces where you feel protected and safe, where you can relax, be comfortable and secure. (Perhaps these sanctuaries may not be bound by physical space.)

During this Bible study, we will look at broken and restored sanctuaries. We will see why our personal sanctuaries are broken and that only our Savior Jesus, true God and true Man, can restore our brokenness. He is our Refuge and Peace!

## Opening Prayer

*Dear heavenly Father, we thank and praise You for Your gift of life! We confess the many times that we have sinned and have built a wall of sin between us and You. Thank You for sending Your Son to live a perfect life, suffer, and die on the cross to break down that wall of sin. We confidently look to our Savior, Who has become our Refuge and given us the peace that passes all understanding and the hope of eternal life. Thank You for sending Your Holy Spirit who calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies us in the one true faith. Bless our study of Your Word. Sanctify us in the truth, Lord, for Your Word is truth (John 17:17). In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

How is sanctuary defined in the following Bible verses?

**Exodus 25:8** \_\_\_\_\_

**Exodus 13:21-22** \_\_\_\_\_

**Psalm 96:6** \_\_\_\_\_

**Jeremiah 17:12** \_\_\_\_\_

**Revelation 15:5-8** \_\_\_\_\_

What picture of sanctuary does God give us in **Genesis 1:31a; 2:8-14, 25;** and **Genesis 3:8a?** \_\_\_\_\_

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What happens in the sanctuary of the worship service that shows our respect and awe of our Lord? Be specific. \_\_\_\_\_

What model does **Acts 2:42–47** describe? \_\_\_\_\_

### If time permits

Why do we stand and sit within our worship service? \_\_\_\_\_

### Broken Sanctuary

How was the sanctuary of the Garden of Eden broken? Read **Genesis 3:1–13**. \_\_\_\_\_

As a result of this broken sanctuary, what happened to all mankind's sanctuaries in **Romans 5:12**? \_\_\_\_\_

### Faith Talk

How does sin specifically shatter and break our personal sanctuaries? Discuss these three:

- the sanctuary of marriage;
- the sanctuary of the home and family;
- the sanctuary of your relationship with God.

### Restored Sanctuary

God's plan to restore our broken sanctuaries is outlined in **Ephesians 1:7–10** and **Colossians 1:11–13**. In your own words, how would you tell others about this Good News? Write it down! Share your witness with your group. \_\_\_\_\_

Our High Priest Jesus has become our Refuge, and we are now privileged by faith once again to enter into God's sanctuary — the gift from God Himself of a loving relationship with Him! Read and discuss **Hebrews 6:17–20**.

### If time permits

What gifts from God in the following Psalms characterize this restored sanctuary that we have with our God in Christ Jesus? **Psalms 18:30; 25:20; 29:11; 31:1–2; 34:8; and 36:7**. \_\_\_\_\_

What does God promise all believers in **John 14:25–27; Acts 1:8; and 1 Peter 5:10–11**? \_\_\_\_\_

What do we, as God's restored people, strive to do as a result of all that our Savior has done for us? See **Ephesians 4:25–32** and **Colossians 3:16**. \_\_\_\_\_

According to **Revelation 21:1–5a**, how does God describe the restored sanctuary in heaven? \_\_\_\_\_

### Faith Talk

Share with a partner or in the small group how the Holy Spirit has restored your previously identified personal sanctuaries where sin has broken them. Be specific.

### Faith Walk

1. Thank and praise God for His daily blessings in your life.
2. Rejoice that you are God's own child because of the saving work of your Savior Jesus!
3. By the power of the Spirit, seek the refuge of our Lord and dwell in the shadow of His wings.
4. Share the love of Jesus and the Good News of salvation with the women in your life.
5. Become part of a structured daily Bible reading plan.

### Closing

Share together the blessing of **1 Thessalonians 5:23** and **Philippians 4:7**: *Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.*

### Closing Prayer (sing or speak together)

"Children of the Heavenly Father" (*LSB* #725)

Children of the heav'nly Father  
Safely in His bosom gather;  
Nestling bird nor star in heaven  
Such a refuge e'er was given.  
God His own doth tend and nourish;  
In His holy courts they flourish,  
From all evil things He spares them;  
In His mighty arms He bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever  
From the Lord His children sever;  
Unto them His grace He showeth,  
And their sorrows all He knoweth.

Though He giveth or He taketh,  
God His children ne'er forsaketh;  
His the loving purpose solely  
To preserve them pure and holy. Amen.

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