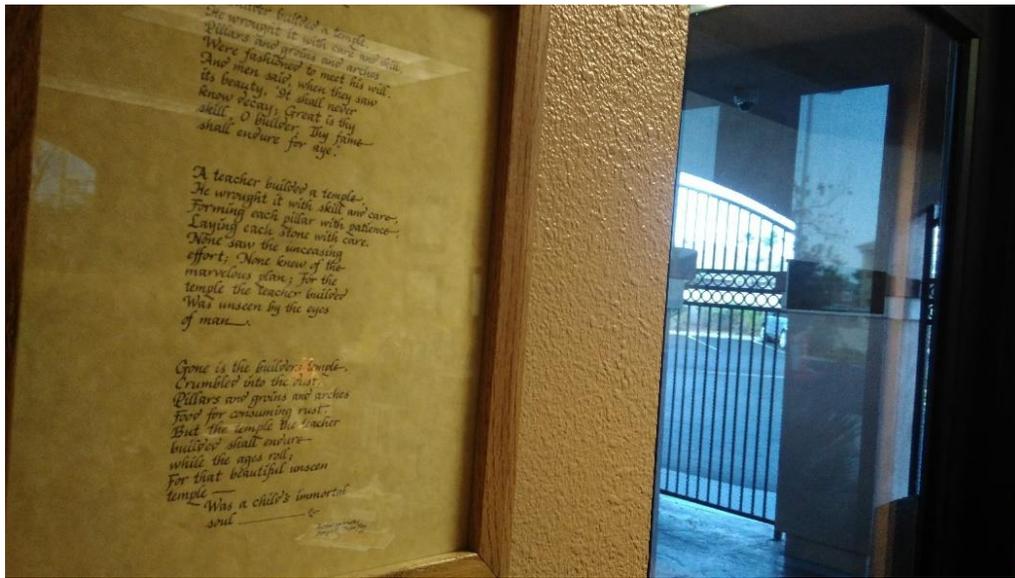


Two Temples



This poem was a parting gift from calligrapher and friend Helen. For 32 years it has journeyed with me from office to office in four states and on two continents. Today its place is by my office door to notice each time I step out.

The Two Temples (AKA “The Builder”) - Author Unknown

*A builder builded a temple,
He wrought it with care and skill,
Pillars and groins and arches
Were fashioned to meet his will.
And men said, when they saw its beauty,
“It shall never know decay;
Great is thy skill, O builder, Thy fame shall endure for aye.”*

Solomon builded a temple. It was considered among the wonders of its time. I wonder what impression it made on the Queen of Sheba who visited with her retinue and train of wealth-laden camels.

Herod builded a temple. It too was considered among the wonders of its time. It must have been quite a sight when Jesus Christ visited with his retinue of disciples.

My congregation plans to build a church. We hope and pray it will be a wonderful base from which we can, by God’s blessing, lead people of our community, of our nation and of the world to follow Jesus.

*A teacher builded a temple,
He wrought it with skill and care,
Forming each pillar with patience,
Laying each stone with care.
None saw the unceasing effort;
None knew of the marvelous plan;
For the temple the teacher builded
Was unseen by the eyes of man.*

People who have not taught simply cannot understand what good teaching requires. Teaching is holistic: it takes the whole teacher. The poet mentions skill, care, patience, effort and planning. Teaching is physical, mental, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. Unlike building construction, nearly all that effort is unseen.

*Gone is the builder's temple,
Crumbled into the dust,
Pillars and groins and arches
Food for consuming rust.*

Solomon's Temple was in operation for 400+ years but then Nebuchadnezzar and his army of Babylonians arrived and put an end to that project.

Herod's Temple remained intact and in operation for 90 years. Just a few years after its completion, General Titus and his army of Romans arrived and put an end to that project.

The duration of my congregation's building project...TBD.

*But the temple the teacher builded
shall endure while ages roll;
For that beautiful unseen temple
Was a child's immortal soul.*

Teachers get the point. It's your hope and confidence whether preparing in secret or proclaiming in public. Teacher, your efforts span the ages. Your results, by the blessing of God, are immortal; won't it be fun to see your students' immortal souls in heaven!

Together let's pray...

May my teaching drop as the rain,
my speech distill as the dew,
like gentle rain upon the tender grass,
and like showers upon the herb.

For I will proclaim the name of the LORD;
ascribe greatness to our God! – Deuteronomy 32: 2,3