



The Desert Tabernacle-God lives with His People, is the final series in our study of the book of Exodus. The focus is now on the portable worship center. God created His people for worship and He is specific in His desires for how and why we worship. From the layout to furniture, God details everything for a specific purpose.

"I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people." Leviticus 26:12

At the core of God's covenant promise is not only that he will be our God and we his people, but also that he will *"walk among"* us. The Old Testament tabernacle is literally an entire world of references, allusions and foreshadows of Christ and the church. In this study, you will be filled with hope and assurance, knowing that Jesus Christ, the true tabernacle, has come to redeem his people, living stones, and unite us to him, the one true foundation, so that we would become the eternal temple of the living God. Pray that the Holy Spirit will open our eyes, just as He did with the disciples of Jesus on the Emmaus Road in Luke 24. *Pray that the Holy Spirit will transform us more and more into the image of Jesus Christ as we seek to know the Lord experientially through the Word. May we seek to experience the love of God in Jesus Christ as we read and meditate on the tabernacle story (Ephesians 3:14-19).*

April 18 **"Worship Matters"**

The Word: Exodus 25:1-9 (35:4-9)

Feel: In Exodus 24 God confirmed his covenant with Israel in a public worship service. This service included a call to worship, a confession of faith, a reading from God's word, and a celebration of communion. This was all done in the glorious presence of God, on the basis of a blood covenant. It was a complete worship service. Virtually the only thing the Israelites didn't do was to take an offering!

Know: Everything that we are and do flows out of our relationship with the Lord. God created us in His image so we might love Him and have fellowship with Him, not because we have to but because we want to. God is seeking people who will worship Him *"in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:23-24).

Desired Outcome: Together, we construct the Church with the materials that God has prescribed: the preaching and teaching of the Word, and Christ and him crucified; the administration of the sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper; and fervent prayer.

April 25 **"God's Custom Furniture"**

The Word: Exodus 25:10-40 (37:1-23)

Feel: It is interesting that the instructions for the construction of the tabernacle begin, not with the actual tabernacle itself but the Ark of the Covenant.

Know: Notice the placement of God's word in the midst of the Tabernacle. The foundation of our life in God is Christ, the living Word of God.

Desired Outcome: We should marvel at the idea that now God no longer dwells in manmade structures but instead dwells within us because of the advent of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. Do we take for granted God's indwelling presence? Do we take for granted the forgiveness of sins? We can quickly presume upon God's grace rather than treasure it and recognize that it is undeserved.

May 2 “God’s Tent”

The Word: Exodus 26 (36:8-38)

Feel: Because it was constructed like a portable tent, the tabernacle could travel with the people into the Promised Land, the first portable worship center!

Know: The Lord’s presence in the midst of their camp not only reminded Israel of their privileged covenant relationship with God. It also was a continual call to them to fulfil their role as mediators of the knowledge of the Lord to all the nations of the earth.

Desired Outcome: just as the tabernacle reminded Israel of God’s presence, the cross, should cause us to recall the privilege of the intimacy we have with God through Christ Jesus. Christianity looks a lot like religion from the outside until you get to know Jesus from the inside to really grasp his love, mercy and purpose.

May 9 “Furniture and Fashion” (note-Ascension Day is May 13)

The Word: Exodus 27-28 (38:1-7, 9-20; 39: 1-31)

Feel: God dwelled in the midst of Israel, which was an honor and privilege for the people of God. Access to God’s presence, however, was an entirely different matter.

Know: Unlike Israel, we are no longer confronted with the altar every time we enter the confines of the tabernacle. Rather, Jesus Christ the perfect, holy and righteous high priest who has offered himself as a sacrifice, bringing us the forgiveness of sins and giving us his own righteousness.

Desired Outcome: Do not think that we can somehow atone for our sins if we ask God to forgive us many times. We should rest assured and rejoice that when we ask for God’s forgiveness we have it because of the sacrifice of Christ. As the psalmist says, ‘*As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us*’ (Ps. 103:12). Rejoice, knowing that your heavenly Father forgives you on account of the perfect sacrifice of Christ and clothes us in His righteousness.

May 16 “The Presence of the Lord”

The Word: Exodus 33:12-23

Feel: The good news was that the Israelites were still going to the Promised Land, even after the great sin of the golden calf. The bad news was that God wasn’t going with them. It was just too dangerous. In his holiness, God might have to destroy the Israelites for their sin.

Know: Throughout the Bible story. God forgives sin and God punishes sin. We can’t live without God, but we cannot live with him. The tension is left unresolved until “*the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth*” (John 1:14). In the Son, we see God’s glory, and we live.

Desired Outcome: We, too, enter the heavenly tabernacle to meet with God when we worship as He commands. We come to corporate worship not merely to be passive spectators or to be entertained, but to meet face to face with the living God in heartfelt worship. wants us to hear his voice speaking in Scripture. He wants us to trust in his promises, depend on his grace, and live by his Spirit. And he wants us to talk to him, growing more intimate with him through prayer.

May 23 “A Covenant Restored” (Pentecost)

The Word: Exodus 34

Feel: Moses had won God’s promise to accompany the people in their journey, but would He forgive the people for their sins? Would He accompany them like a policeman watching a criminal or?

Know: By the grace of God, Moses achieved his purposes: God promised to go with the people, God showed Moses a glimpse of His glory, and God forgave the sins of the nation. Moses could return to the camp with the second tables of the law and tell the people God had forgiven their sins.

Desired Outcome: God wants something more than our worship and first fruits of our labor (money). He wants our very lives. This is the way that we show our love for God: by putting our time and our gifts at his disposal. He has given his Son to be our Savior. Now our work, our relationships, our families, our homes, our ministries, our bank accounts, even our vacations—all these things belong to him. It is when we finally learn this that we begin to serve God the way he really wants to be served and love him the way that he has taught us to love.

May 30 “The Glory of the Lord”

The Word: Exodus 40:20-37

Feel: All through Exodus we see God working to save his people, and whenever he explains why he is saving them, he says it is for his own glory. The description of God’s presence in this passage is reminiscent of what we have seen throughout Exodus.

Know: The glory of God, the presence of God, the face of God is the ultimate experience. Moses hungered for it. Psalm 16 says, “... in thy [face] is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” What that means is all the pleasures, all the joys, all the beauties, and all the loves you’ve ever sought are in this, or all those you’ve ever experienced are just dewdrops compared to this, which is the ocean.-Keller

Desired Outcome: Where is God’s glory today? The body of every true believer is the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19–20), but so is the local church (3:10–23) and the church universal (Eph. 2:18–22). God does dwell in His people, and it’s our responsibility to glorify God individually (1 Cor. 6:20) and collectively (14:23–25). The best way to grow in sanctification is in community. A protection, a family to grow with.

A Question to continue asking: What does this passage teach me about God, about my sins, about Christ’s redemptive work, and about how I am to live for the glory of God?”

Resources:

“*God In Our Midst*” by Daniel R. Hyde (Ligonier Ministries)

“*Christ and the Desert Tabernacle*” By J. V. Fesko (Darlington, England: EP Books)