

Week 10 The Lord Among Us
Exodus 25-31; 35-40

Notes:

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Aim: To see the goodness of God dwelling among his people and respond by living holy lives to the glory of God.

Getting Started: As a group, recall the stages of the journey we have followed in Exodus from slavery to Mt. Sinai using only single words or sentences.

Pray for understanding as we read God's word.

What is God saying?

Chapters 25-40 are about God giving instructions to Moses about building the tabernacle (tent) and Moses constructing it as God commanded (with the significant interruption of the golden calf episode in 32-34)

Intro question: With so much of Exodus devoted to the tabernacle, what does this tell us about the importance of what is going on here?

It's something we should pay attention to and understand it's significance to the book.

Read Exodus 25:1-22

Quick question: What is God's purpose for building the tabernacle?

v8 so God might dwell among them

What's similar or different about God's plans for how to worship him compared with Israel's plan with the golden calf?

similar: There was a collection taken. Worship is focused in a place. Worship is of the Lord who brought them out of Egypt.

different: The calf was Israel's idea, the tabernacle is God's. The Israelites made the calf according to their own design. The tabernacle was made according to the word of God.

Where do you see the importance of God's word being emphasised in this passage?

the ark at the centre containing the word of God. The need to make everything exactly as the Lord commands.

Read Exodus 40:16-38

Quick question: What is the repeated phrase in this section communicating to the reader?

'as the Lord commanded him,' communicates the obedience of Moses and the people to the command of God.

What is the significance of the cloud covering the tent and God's glory filling the tabernacle immediately after Moses completed the work?

The work is approved by God. It's a visual representation of God's presence among them.

What is the purpose of the tabernacle? What does that teach us about God and his relationship with Israel?

It is God's dwelling place, his residence among them. It's designed to mediate the relationship between a holy God and sinful people. Sacrifice deals with their sin and allows them to draw near. God desires relationship with them despite their sin.

Why is God saying this?

Read Hebrews 9:1-12

How does Jesus fulfill and surpass the tabernacle system?

The way to the holy place (approaching God with confidence) not open for all people as long as the old tabernacle is in force. But Christ went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle (heaven itself) by the sacrifice of himself, obtaining eternal redemption for all who believe.

From the things we have been reading in Exodus, what do we share in common with Israel in our relationship with God? What is different?

common: He is our God and Father. God dwells among us. We relate to him through sacrifice. He rules us by his word.

different: our relationship is through faith in Christ, not the tabernacle system. We don't need man made temples, human priests, or repeated sacrifices. All people can draw near to God through Christ, not one priest, once a year. We have His Spirit indwelling us.

Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

What impact should the knowledge of God dwelling among them have on the Corinthians?

Believers united with Christ (the church) are the temple of the living God. They should acknowledge this reality as the fulfilment of OT promises. Therefore, they should live holy lives - separate from all forms of idolatry and false worship - to serve God in growing holiness.

Discuss how this reality can be (or has been for you) a powerful motivator for us to grow in Christ-like holiness?

Prayer Starters

- Thank God for sending Jesus to fulfil all that was written about him in the Old testament through his death and resurrection
- Praise and delight in God for dwelling among us by His Spirit and pray that would motivate us toward growing holiness.
- Pray that we would be regular and careful listeners to his word and that he would transform us by His Spirit to do what he says.

Growing Growth Group Suggestion

Plan to read 1 John (once or a few times) before next term. You could set up a reading plan for the group and comment on your messaging system.

In case you wanted to follow up from last week on spotting idols...

Questions to diagnose your idols:

What gets you up in the morning?

What keeps you up at night?

What do you fear losing?

What makes you happy?

What do you find yourself praying about regularly?

What do you need first in life before you'll serve God?

What do you spend a lot of your time doing?

What gets first place in my calendar?

What do you feel instinctively drawn to?

What do I worry about most?

What keeps me going?

What do I rely on when things get bad?

What do I think most easily about?

What prayer unanswered would make me abandon God?

What makes me feel the most self worth?

What am I proudest of?