

Small Group Guide – Week 7 GOD WHO DWELLS WITH US

The Church at Brook Hills

February 15- 21, 2010

Exodus 29-40; Leviticus 1-10

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Ask members of your group to share about a time when they felt the presence of God in an especially intimate way. Examples might include: a meaningful worship experience, a time of ministry, a special family event, on a retreat, observing a natural wonder, during prayer, etc. Did they feel humbled, awed, afraid, comforted, loved, blessed, etc?

Explain that this week's study introduces the Tabernacle, which was an expression of God's intimate presence, His dwelling place among His covenant people in the wilderness.

Option 2

Ask members of your group to share about times when they had to follow directions very carefully in order to succeed. Everything hinged on the details. Ask them to describe the situation and how they felt. Were they able to follow the directions as precisely as necessary? Why or why not?

Explain that this week's study introduces the Tabernacle, which was an expression of God's intimate presence, His dwelling place among His covenant people in the wilderness. God gave very precise details on how it was to be constructed and expected every detail to be followed precisely for a reason.

Review the Passage . . .

God revealed Himself to Moses.

- **God is merciful. God is just. God is jealous.**
- **God's glory is God's greatest concern.**
- **God gave Moses the desires of his heart.**

Discussion

- Read Exodus 34:1-14.
- How does God describe Himself in His appearance to Moses? What do those perfections/characteristics mean?
- Why do you think He revealed Himself to Moses this way?
- What are Moses' three requests of the Lord? Why do you think he made these requests?
- What is the Lord's response? What does His response tell us about Him?

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- From verses 10 and 14, what do we see as the intent of God's action?

Application . . .

- How do we sometimes misunderstand the mercy of God? How do we sometimes misunderstand the justice of God? Who can we look to in order to properly balance our perspective? (Colossians 1:15)
- How is the awesome work of the Lord shown among the nations today?
- What does it mean for God to be a jealous God? What does it mean for us to be jealous for God's name? How can we esteem Him more?
- Do you think we really God's presence with us, like Moses did?

God was with Israel in the Tabernacle.

- **The Tabernacle was the place where God's mercy and justice met.**
- **The Tabernacle was holy because God is holy. His presence was to be honored.**
- **God's people were led by His presence**

Discussion

- Briefly discuss Exodus 35-39, preparing the Tabernacle. Read Exodus 40. (At least 40:34-38.)
- How was the Tabernacle the place where God's mercy and justice met?
- How was the Tabernacle treated as holy (set apart) by the people? Why do you think God wanted the Tabernacle to be treated in such a special manner? Why so much care in the preparations?
- Read Leviticus 10:1-3 and Hebrews 10:19-22. Can we come before the Lord any way we want? What/Who is the only way we can draw near to God?
- Why do you think God's directing presence was so valued by the Israelites? (40:36-38) Do you think it was comforting? Frightening?
- How is the Tabernacle (God's presence) part of the answer to Moses' request in Exodus 34:9 and 33:18?

Application . . .

- How is God present with us today? Do we respect and honor the presence of God as we should? Why or why not?
- Do we rely on God to lead us today like the Israelites did? How so? How can we sometimes reject the leading of God?
- Do we follow God's commands for worship with the same intensity that the Israelites did? How do we prepare ourselves for worship? Do we worship in spirit and in truth? Do we lift up Christ above all in our worship?

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- God equipped His people to provide everything for the Tabernacle. What parallels can be drawn to the Church today? What parallels can be drawn to our individual lives?
- How is the Church, the new tabernacle, the expression of where God's mercy and justice meet?

The Tabernacle points to Christ and then to the Holy Spirit dwelling within us.

- **God in Christ came to dwell among us.**
- **The Incarnation is worthy of awe.**
- **The Holy Spirit indwells the children of God.**
- **The Spirit lives in us, guides us, and applies mercy/assurance and conviction to our hearts. This is an amazing truth!**

Discussion

- Read John 1:14. John is intentionally referring back to the concept of the Tabernacle in his word choice ("dwelt among us" ESV). Also read Colossians 1:19.
- How is Christ's Incarnation similar but superior to the Tabernacle? Read John 1:15-18. What do we see in Jesus that was not as clear before?
- Compare and contrast Luke 2:6-7 with Exodus 40:34-35. What do we see of God's nature in these two accounts?
- Read Hebrews 9:1-15, 23-28. How did Christ's death fulfill everything the Tabernacle (and later Temple) represented?
- Now God dwells in His people, how? Read John 3:3-8.
- Read 1 Corinthians 3:16 (note the "you" is plural; the church) and 1 Corinthians 6:19. Who is God's temple? Where is God's presence? How is this humbling? How is it also challenging?
- Read John 14:16-17; John 16:13; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:26-27; Ephesians 3:16-19; and 1 Thessalonians 1:5. How does the presence of the Holy Spirit within us help and strengthen us? What does He do in our lives?

Application . . .

- Read Philippians 2:5-11. How should the humility of the Incarnation affect our attitudes?
- Christ died once for sin. Contrast that with the incredible number of sacrifices required of the Israelites (daily, yearly). How should a full grasp of Christ's atoning death affect our view of our sin? How does this increase our gratitude and love for Christ? How does this cut off any possibility of salvation by works? When we are convicted of sin, to whom should we turn? When we feel guilty for already confessed sin, what should our response be?
- If the Church is God's Temple how should we treat each other? If our bodies are God's Temple, how should we treat ourselves?

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- How should the Holy Spirit's presence comfort us? Convict us?
- Why do you think our lives are not always characterized by the power of the Spirit?
- How does the Holy Spirit's presence in us confirm the love of God for us?
- Read Romans 8:26-27 again. How can these verses give us confidence in prayer?