

# D W E L L I N G P L A C E

At Home with His People



*Dwelling Place: At Home with His People*

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# Welcome

We are so grateful to spend the next five weeks studying God's word with you. Reading, understanding, and meditating on God's word transforms everything about our lives, and it is so important for us to do this together, as sisters in Christ.

This summer, we are utilizing biblical theology to trace a particular theme throughout the entire Bible instead of reading through one book of the Bible together. From Genesis to Revelation, the concept of the temple reveals God's persistent presence and his plan for restoration. By studying this theme, we will gain deeper insight into the character of God, his promises, and the power of his presence with us.

Although biblical theology is different from working through one book in the bible at a time, BREAD is still a tool that helps us to seek God as we study his word. Over the next five weeks together, we invite and encourage you to continue to be still, read the passages, examine the text, apply what you learn, and devote it all to God in prayer.

Thank you for joining us! Our hope and prayer is that studying the ancient and present temple will affect our worship, our community, and our personal walk with God, who is with us.

Clear Creek Community Church

Women's Teaching Team

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# He Dwells in a Garden

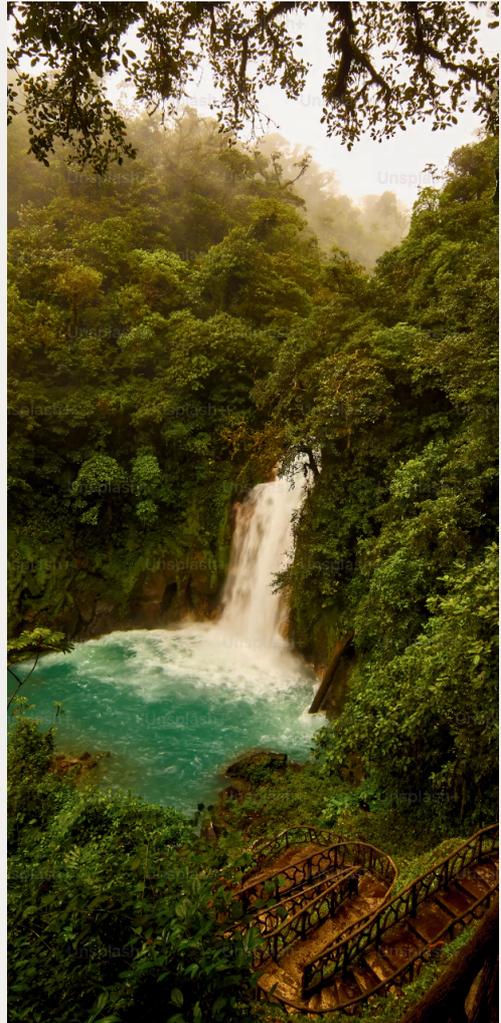
## *the first temple*

### THE GARDEN OF "DELIGHT"

Long before any intricate details were designed or beautiful buildings built, the story of God's dwelling place starts at the very beginning. On page one of the Bible, we catch a glimpse of God's presence on earth. As God creates the world out of nothing and brings order from chaos, God establishes the earth as his dwelling place.

Zoom in a little further, and we'll find Eden, the Garden of "Delight" where God's presence dwells freely with his people.

God's people participating in God's purpose, in God's place, living in light of God's presence – *the first temple.*



## DAY ONE

*Read Genesis 1:1-2:5. Use the margin to note the attributes of God.  
What is God like in this passage?*

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# 01 THE CREATION OF THE WORLD

**1** In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. **2** The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

**3** And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. **4** And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. **5** God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

**6** And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." **7** And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. **8** And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

**9** And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. **10** God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

**11** And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so. **12** The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. **13** And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

**14** And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, **15** and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so. **16** And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. **17** And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, **18** to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. **19** And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

**20** And God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens."

**21** So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. **22** And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” **23** And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

**24** And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. **25** And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

**26** Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

**27** So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

**28** And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

**29** And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. **30** And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. **31** And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

## 02 THE SEVENTH DAY, GOD RESTS

**1** Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

**2** And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. **3** So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

1. Complete the chart below according to what God made on each day of Creation.

Day	Filled with...		Day
01	Day & Night		04
02	Sea & Sky		05
03	Land & Plants		06
07			

Each day of the creation account ends with the same phrase:

***“There was morning and there was evening, the \_\_\_\_\_ day.”***

This phrase signals the conclusion of each day of creation. However, that phrase is missing from the seventh day because God’s intention was that the seventh day—the world resting in his presence and purpose— would never end.

2. Genesis 1:2 tells us that in the beginning, the earth was, ‘without form and void.’ Compare that description to God’s finished work in the chart above. What does that tell you about God?

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3. Compare the way God created mankind to the way he made the rest of creation. Then, compare the way he *described* each after he made them. Note the differences below.

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4. What can these differences tell us about God’s intentions toward mankind?

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5. Take a look back at vv. 26-27. When the word image is used in Scripture, it's often a synonym for idol - a statue representing the characteristics of the false god being worshipped. Why does it matter that, instead of a carved figure, God placed humans in his garden-temple to bear his image? What implications does that have for our purpose in life?

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Then God said, "Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

**Genesis 1:26-27**

The **trinity** is a word used to describe God in three persons: the **Father**, the **Son**, and the **Holy Spirit**. The relationship between these three persons has eternally existed. Therefore, love has eternally existed within God himself.

6. God made mankind in his image. How do we image God as individuals? Together?

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Genesis 1:28 is known as the “**Creation Mandate.**” Equal parts blessing and purpose, it gives us a glimpse of what God intended for mankind.

7. Read Genesis 1:28. What was mankind commanded to do? What does that tell you about God’s intention for mankind?

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8. Compare the creation mandate with the great commission. How are they related?

### CREATION MANDATE

And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

**Genesis 1:28**

### GREAT COMMISSION

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

**Matthew 28:18-20**

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*pray*

Thank God for the gift of his world and the honor of bearing his image. Ask him for the strength and wisdom to carry out his purpose in the world.

# Day 02

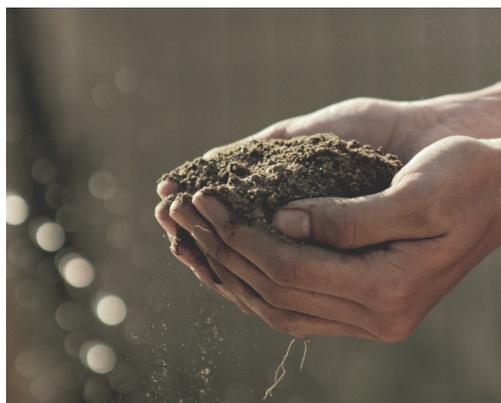
## *Life in his presence*

Yesterday we watched as God created the world and everything in it out of nothing. We saw that he made mankind in his image, and partnered with them to bring flourishing to his good world.

Today, we'll zoom in on life in the Garden-Temple: God's image-bearing partners enjoying the fullness of his presence.

### **GENESIS 2:5-9**

**5** When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, **6** and a mist was going up from the land



and was watering the whole face of the ground— **7** then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. **8** And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. **9** And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

## GENESIS 2:15-24

**15** The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. **16** And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, **17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

**18** Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." **19** Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. **20** The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. **21** So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **22** And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. **23** Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called Woman,  
because she was taken out of Man."

**24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **25** And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

1. Read verse 18. When God says that it is “not good” for man to be alone, it doesn’t mean Adam is bad. Rather, it means the creation of mankind was *incomplete*.

Why do you think God intended companionship for us? What role does community play in the life of a believer?

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2. Considering the Creation Mandate in Genesis 1:28 that we looked at yesterday, why do you think Adam needed a helper fit for him?

And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

**Genesis 1:28**

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3. Describe in your own words what you think life in the garden, with unrestricted access to the presence of God, must have been like.

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4. In your own words, describe the role of mankind in the garden. (Use verses 15, 19, and 20 for help). Who gave them the authority to perform this role?

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5. React to this statement:

**GOD DELIGHTS IN YOU AND DESIRES TO HAVE A LOVING RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU.**

Is this easy for you to believe? Difficult to accept? Why?

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6. How might knowing that God is love impact the way you pray? Worship? Share the gospel?

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*pray*

**Thank God for the gift of his presence and provision, and ask him for eyes to see the beauty of his plan.**



# Day 03

## *the Holiness of God*

Yesterday we saw that in his essence, God is love. He made mankind in his image and approached us with a posture of love. His intention from the beginning has been to dwell fully with mankind.

Today, we'll see how sin impacted our relationship with a holy God and look on his faithfulness as he extends a promise to an undeserving people.

Read Genesis 3:1-15.

### **GENESIS 3:1-15**

#### **The Fall**

**1** Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" **2** And the woman said to the serpent,

"We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, **3** but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" **4** But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. **5** For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." **6** So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. **7** Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

**8** And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. **9** But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" **10** And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." **11** He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" **12** The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." **13** Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

**14** The Lord God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,  
cursed are you above all livestock

and above all beasts of the field;  
on your belly you shall go,  
and dust you shall eat  
all the days of your life.

**15** I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and her offspring;  
he shall bruise your head,  
and you shall bruise his heel.”

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1. Compare the following verses. In your own words, describe the impact sin made on Adam & Eve’s relationship both with one another and with God.

And the man and his wife were both  
naked and were not ashamed.  
**Genesis 2:25**

Then the eyes of both were opened, and  
they knew that they were naked. And they  
sewed fig leaves together and made  
themselves loincloths.  
**Genesis 3:7**

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We’ve spent a lot of time this week thinking about what God is like. One way to describe God is to say that he is **holy**. God is holy because his pure perfection, power, and transcendence is unlike anyone or anything else.

To be **holy** is to be **set apart**; to be completely unique.

2. How might knowing that God is holy impact the way you worship? Pray?  
Share the gospel?

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Not only is God holy, but throughout the Bible, God calls his people to be holy as he is holy.

Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

**Leviticus 19:2**

But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

**1 Peter 1:15-16**

3. In what ways can you be holy (or 'set apart') as God is holy?

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4. Who in your life would be most impacted by your commitment to living a holy life?

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5. Write your thoughts on how sin caused problems with how we relate to God's:

PERFECTION	PRESENCE	PARTNERSHIP

6. Respond to the following three statements:

**GOD IS HOLY**

He is set apart. He is the only being who is completely perfect in every way. Therefore, God is the only one who rightly deserves worship.

**GOD IS LOVE**

Eternally existing as the trinity (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) God within himself is in an eternal loving relationship.

**GOD IS INVITATIONAL**

God has chosen to partner with mankind. He invites us to participate in bringing flourishing to his world.

Respond to these statements. Do they surprise you? Comfort you? Scare you? Which is the hardest for you to believe? Why?

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Therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

**Genesis 3:23-24**

Read Genesis 3:23-24 above. Earlier, we said that God is holy because his pure perfection, power, and transcendence is unlike anyone or anything else. But his holiness is also too pure for sinful humans to safely approach. The removal of Adam and Eve from the Garden wasn't just a punishment; it was protection.

**GENESIS 3:15**

15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

This is called the 'proto evangelium' or the first gospel. Within the curse to the serpent is a promise of faithfulness to mankind.

7. Rewrite verse 15 in your own words.

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Humanity will experience the consequences of their choices, but they're not cursed. Adam and Eve had a promise of redemption before they ever stepped foot outside of the garden.

He will redeem the world their sin distorted *and* he will allow them to participate in the reversal of their wrong.

*pray*

**Thank God for his mercy in the face of our failures. Confess how you have turned from God and his purposes for you, and praise him for his faithful promise of redemption.**

# He Dwells in a Tent

*Life outside the garden*

Last week began with all creation as God's temple and the Garden of Eden as a place where humans dwell in the life-giving presence of God.

It ended with the tragic reality of humans choosing existence apart from their life-giving Creator and experiencing the consequences of their choices. Humans were banished from the garden and no longer allowed open access to the presence of God.

Mankind's exit from the Garden is not the end of the story.

Despite their sin and rebellion, God remains steadfast in his purpose to fill the earth with his presence. Today, we will examine how the tabernacle shows us God's intention for his people.



## DAY ONE

In the very next chapters of Genesis, we begin to see glimpses of God's redemptive plan for all of creation. He calls out Abraham, promising that he would make him a great nation that would bless the entire earth. One of his descendants, Jacob, had twelve sons who, by God's faithfulness in Joseph, were saved from famine and led into Egypt. These twelve sons' descendants would become the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel.

Fast forward generations: the people of Israel eventually become enslaved for 400 years, disconnected from Yahweh's presence and purpose. God uses Moses to rescue them, leads them in an exodus from Egypt, and makes Israel his very own people. At Mt. Sinai he gives them the Ten commandments, the way of life that would enable them to be a light to the nations. In the midst of their journey, God provides a plan for a special tent in which his presence would dwell with his people in a new way.

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Read Exodus 40:18-38. Underline every instance of "As the Lord commanded him."

### 40 EXODUS 40:18-38

**18** Moses erected the tabernacle. He laid its bases, and set up its frames, and put in its poles, and raised up its pillars. **19** And he spread the tent over the tabernacle and

The **Tabernacle** was a **mobile place of worship** for the Israelites until Solomon built the permanent structure of the Temple.

put the covering of the tent over it, as the Lord had commanded Moses. **20** He took the testimony and put it into the ark, and put the poles on the ark and set the mercy seat above on the ark.

**21** And he brought the ark into the tabernacle and set up the veil of the screen, and screened the ark of the testimony, as the Lord had commanded Moses. **22** He put the table in the tent of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil, **23** and arranged the bread on it before the Lord, as the Lord had commanded Moses. **24** He put the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle, **25** and set up the lamps before the Lord, as the Lord had commanded Moses. **26** He put the golden altar in the tent of meeting before the veil, **27** and burned fragrant incense on it, as the Lord had commanded Moses. **28** He put in place the screen for the door of the tabernacle. **29** And he set the altar of burnt offering at the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the grain offering, as the Lord had commanded Moses. **30** He set the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it for washing, **31** with which Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet. **32** When they went into the tent of meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed, as the Lord commanded Moses. **33** And he erected the court around the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the screen of the gate of the court. So Moses finished the work.

### **The Glory of the Lord**

**34** Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

**35** And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. **36** Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. **37** But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. **38** For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.

1. Who initiated this dwelling place for the Lord's presence? Why does it matter that the tabernacle was made by God's design rather than human design?

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2. Within God's instructions regarding the building of the tabernacle, there are also several requirements to prepare the sanctuary for Yahweh's entrance. For each verse, highlight what Moses had to do to ready the tabernacle to be God's dwelling place.

EXODUS 40:9	EXODUS 40:13	EXODUS 40:21	EXODUS 40:30-31
Then you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its furniture, so that it may become holy.	And put on Aaron the holy garments. And you shall anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve me as priest.	And he brought the ark into the tabernacle and set up the veil of the screen, and screened the ark of the testimony, as the Lord had commanded Moses.	He set the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it for washing, with which Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet.

3. What do each of these requirements signify about God's character and his presence with his people? Why was this system necessary?

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4. How does the tabernacle with its requirements differ from the temple depicted in the Garden of Eden? Which of these do you think seems like the better way to dwell with God? Why?

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5. How do you prepare for the presence of God? Do you consider his presence holy? Why do we often fear there are barriers to overcome and requirements to perform before we can be near him, even as his children?

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*pray*

**Today, praise God that he did not leave his people in their sin, without his presence. Confess where you still reject God despite his faithfulness, and pray that God would give you a new love and passion to seek him above all else.**

# Day 02 *presence made possible*

Let's think back to the Genesis narrative that sets the stage for the overarching theme of redemption that is carried throughout the rest of the Bible. What began with a world full of light, life and order became full of death, darkness and chaos as the result of humanity's choice to rebel against their Good Creator. The brokenness of the world and the pervasive nature of sin create a problem: how is a holy God going to dwell among a sinful people? How can sinful people come into the presence of a holy God?

Today we will explore the reality that while the tabernacle and temple were a gift from God, the sacred space was still marked by limitations and barriers. Today, we are going to look a closer look at the sacrificial system that may seem foreign to us, but was necessary for a sinful people to enter into the presence of a holy God.

1. Read Leviticus 16:15-19. Circle every use of "Atonement."

## LEVITICUS 16:15-19

### The Day of Atonement

**15** "Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it over the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat.

The **veil** was a thick curtain that separated the **Most Holy Place**, where the presence of God was, from the rest of the Tabernacle

**Priests** acted as a **mediator** between God and his people. They **oversaw the Tabernacle** and offered sacrifices to make **atonement** for their own sins and the sins of the people so that they could be in a right-standing relationship with God.

Only the **High Priest** entered the **Most Holy Place** one time per year on the **Day of Atonement**.

**16** Thus he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all their sins. And so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. **17** No one may be in the tent of meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the Holy Place until he comes out and has made atonement for himself and for his house and for all the assembly of Israel. **18** Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around. **19** And he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it and consecrate it from the uncleannesses of the people of Israel.

2. Think about life after the Fall. How has sin impacted our relationship with God and others?

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3. Why do you think there were barriers between God's presence and humans?

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4. Use an English dictionary to define the word "atone".

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5. According to verses 15, 18, and 19, what is required for atonement? \_\_\_\_\_

According to verses 16 and 19, why was it necessary for atonement and what did it do?

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6. What do the symbols and rituals communicate about God's desire to create a way for his people to come into his presence?

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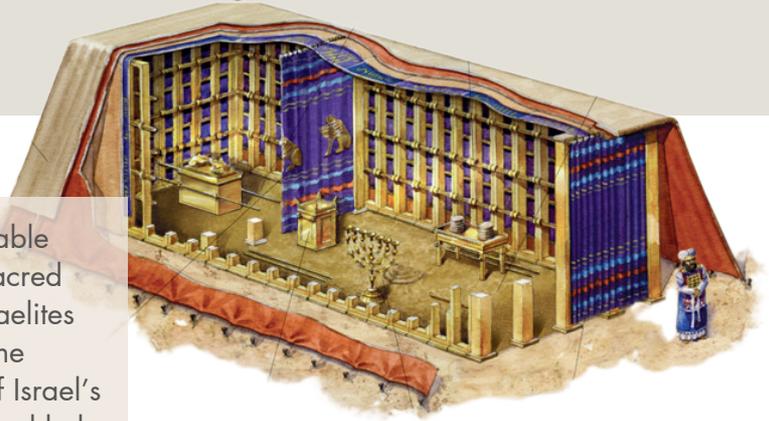
*pray*

**Begin in prayer today with thankfulness for God's presence with you. Thank him for his absolute goodness and holiness. Ask that he would convict you of any unrepentant sin in your life and rejoice that he has made a way, despite your sin, to be in his presence.**

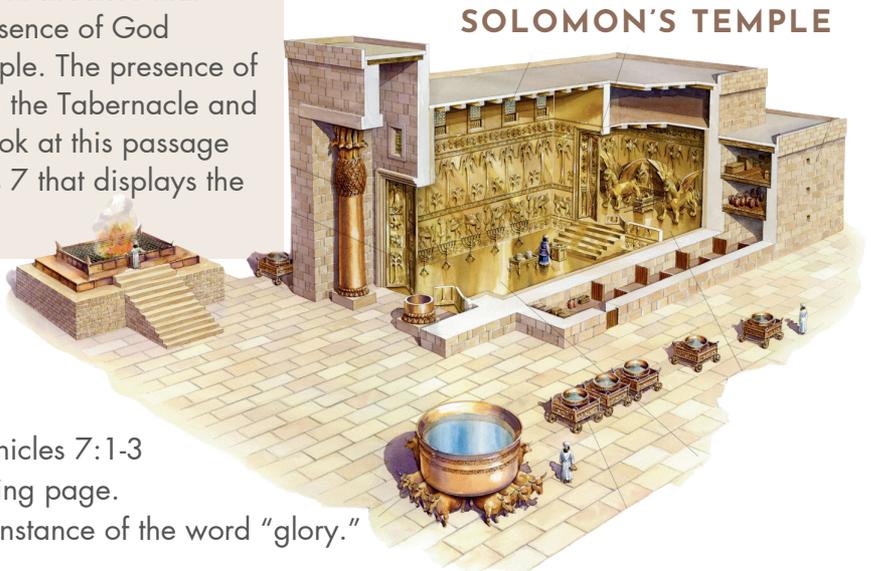
# Day 03

## *glimpses of the garden*

The Tabernacle was a portable structure that served as a sacred place of worship for the Israelites during their wandering in the desert. The establishment of Israel's kingdom in the Promised Land led to the construction of a permanent structure. Commissioned by David and built by Solomon, the temple was a permanent structure that housed the presence of God among his people. The presence of God filled both the Tabernacle and Temple, let's look at this passage in 2 Chronicles 7 that displays the continuity.



**THE TABERNACLE**



**SOLOMON'S TEMPLE**

1. Read 2 Chronicles 7:1-3 on the following page. Circle every instance of the word "glory."

The idea of the Hebrew word for **glory** implies **heavy**, **weighty** and **worthiness**.

## 2 CHRONICLES 7:1-3

**1** As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. **2** And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord's house. **3** When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the Lord on the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the pavement and worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever."

2. How did the people of Israel react to the glory of the Lord filling the Temple?

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3. How does their reaction help us understand the significance of the event?

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While it's tempting to skim through the detailed descriptions of the blueprints for the Tabernacle and Temple, a closer examination reveals incredible connections that echo back to the Garden of Eden. The exile from the Garden left devastating consequences for humanity, but it was not the end of the story. Instead, it sets the stage for God's unwavering desire to dwell among his people once again.

Despite their failure, the initiating action of God reflects his unchanging desire to dwell among his people. The rituals and sacrificial system of the Tabernacle and Temple may seem bizarre to us today, but they were a gift of God's grace to provide access to his life-giving presence once again. Each element serves as a link back to the sacred space of the Garden of Eden and the physical structure becomes a symbol of God's enduring love.

4. Use the chart below to compare the design of the Tabernacle and Temple with the Garden of Eden. Look up the references from at least two lines on the chart, then use the last column to write your thoughts.

	GARDEN	TABERNACLE	TEMPLE	YOUR NOTES
<b>CREATION OF THE COSMOS</b>	Genesis 1:31	Exodus 39:43		
<b>SABBATH REST AFTER COMPLETION</b>	Genesis 2:3	Exodus 31:12-17		
<b>TREES</b>	Genesis 2:8-9		1 Kings 6:32 Ezekiel 47:1-12 Revelation 22:1-2	
<b>RIVER</b>	Genesis 2:10	Psalms 46:4	Ezekiel 47:1-12 Revelation 22:1-2	
<b>"KEEP" THE SPACE</b>	Genesis 2:15	Num. 3:7-8 1 Chron. 23:32		
<b>"WALK AMONG YOU"</b>	Genesis 3:8	Leviticus 26:12	1 Kings 6:11-13	
<b>CHERUBIM</b>	Genesis 3:24	Exodus 25:18-22, 26:1,31-34	1 Kings 6:23-28	

5. How do you think the garden imagery would have impacted the Israelites?

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6. Think about the design of the Tabernacle and Temple reflecting elements found in the garden. How does this remind us of God's ultimate purpose to fill the whole world with his presence?

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7. God considered every intricate detail in his design plans for the Tabernacle and Temple. How does that impact the way you trust his plans for your life?

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In the Garden, God set Adam and Eve apart and gave them a special assignment: to keep the Garden.

Similarly, he set apart the tribe of Levi as priests and gave them a special assignment: to keep the Tabernacle.

### **ADAM & EVE: PRIESTS OF THE GARDEN**

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

**Genesis 2:15**

### **LEVITES: PRIESTS OF THE TABERNACLE**

They shall keep guard over him and over the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they minister at the tabernacle. They shall guard all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle.

**Numbers 3:7-8**

Thus they were to keep charge of the tent of meeting and the sanctuary, and to attend the sons of Aaron, their brothers, for the service of the house of the Lord.

**1 Chronicles 23:32**

6. The words used to describe a priest's duties mean "to work and serve" and imply a continual upkeep of God's order. Compare the role of Adam and Eve in the Garden to the Priests in the Tabernacle. How were they alike? How were they different?

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7. How can knowing that God made a way for his people to have access to him both before and after the Fall impact your life today?

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8. Write your thoughts on how the construction of the Tabernacle and the rituals of atonement impact how we relate to God's:

PERFECTION	PRESENCE	PARTNERSHIP

*pray*

Thank God for his good purposes for all of creation and for you specifically. Ask that he would reveal his goodness and faithfulness to you and help you to trust in him completely.

# He Dwells in the Flesh

*and walks among us*

As we continue our study of the temple of God, we'll take a big skip forward in time – from the Old Testament to the New, from Babylonian rule to the Roman empire.

In John's gospel, we will see the apostle argue that the temple in Jerusalem is no longer central to faith in Yahweh, for God himself has come to dwell among his people in a radical new way.



Our passage today introduces John's account of the life of Jesus. Rather than beginning with the manger, John instead draws us back to the first verses of Genesis with some extravagant claims about the true identity of Jesus.

## DAY ONE

*Read John 1:1-27*

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**01** **1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. **4** In him was life, and the life was the light of men. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

**6** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. **7** He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. **8** He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

**9** The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. **11** He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. **12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

**13** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

**14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. **15** (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") **16** For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. **17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **18** No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

**19** And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" **20** He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." **21** And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." **22** So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" **23** He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

**24** (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) **25** They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" **26** John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, **27** even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

1. There are two different Johns speaking here:

1. **John the Apostle**, the author and narrator of this book
2. **John the Baptist**, whose story is being told in these verses.

Let's consider the claims that both Johns are making about Jesus over the course of the passage. What names, titles, and descriptions of Jesus do you see in these verses? Fill in the chart below.

VERSE	NAMES, TITLES, OR DESCRIPTIONS OF JESUS
1:1	
1:2	
1:3	
1:4	
1:5	
1:9	
1:14	
1:15	
1:17	
1:23	
1:27	

2. How would you summarize what John is claiming about Jesus? Why might this have been shocking to his first readers? Why should his claims matter to us today?

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3. Look back at verse 14, the central verse of today's reading. John is connecting Jesus to a thread that weaves throughout Scripture. Look at the verses below and circle the repeated word that John also uses in v. 14.

And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.  
**Exodus 16:10**

Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. And the glory of the Lord appeared to them.  
**Numbers 20:6**

And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.  
**1 Kings 8:10-11**

I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.  
**Psalm 63:2**

4. What do you think it would have been like to see the glory of the Lord? Why do you think God doesn't appear this way to us today? (*Hint: see John 20:29*)

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5. John (the apostle) gives us another connection to the glory of God in v. 23, when John (the Baptist) cites from the book of Isaiah. Let's look at the context of his quotation. Underline the phrase that John quotes and circle what Isaiah prophesies regarding God's glory.

**Isaiah 40:3-5**

A voice cries:

*"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

*Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.*

*And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."*

What is the gospel author claiming about the fulfillment of this prophecy?

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6. What aspects of these verses seem to have already occurred? Which parts seem to still be in the future?

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Look back at our passage from John 1 and the chart you completed. You might have noticed as you completed the chart, that you're just trying to look for stuff about Jesus, but stuff about John kept getting in the way. So let's take another look back.

7. What do these verses reveal about who John the Baptist was?

HIS IDENTITY	OTHERS' PERCEPTIONS	HIS SELF-IMAGE
vv.6-7	vv.19-22	vv.15,26-27

8. John clearly saw who Jesus is. How had this shaped his understanding of Jesus' identity?

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How had it impacted his perception of his own identity? How did this knowledge influence his activity?

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9. If we truly understand who Jesus is, we can't avoid his transforming influence. Look back at your chart where you listed the claims of John about Christ's identity. Which of those characteristics or titles have shaped your values and choices? What is one aspect of Christ's identity that you would like to understand more deeply – not just intellectually, but holistically?

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*pray*

**Thank God for the gift of Jesus, who reveals the fullness of God's glory to us. Confess to God where you have been distracted from how amazing it is that God chose to empty himself and unite himself with humanity. Ask that he would renew your heart to seek and know Jesus anew.**

# Day 02

Imagine walking into an ancient temple. From our modern perspective, it may feel like a foreign place: ornate carvings, gilded furnishings, candles burning, fragrant incense. There is likely a statue or idol depicting the deity honored here. In almost every temple, across centuries and continents, there would be an altar. And Yahweh's temple was no different: sacrifice was an integral aspect to Israel's worship.

As we read last week, Moses directed the building of the tabernacle as a dwelling place for God in the midst of his people. One of its notable features was a bronze altar at the entrance of the tent. When this altar was put into place, God gave instructions for their regular use.

Read Exodus 29:38-43

## 29 EXODUS 29:38-43

**38** "Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day regularly. **39** One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight. **40** And with the first lamb a tenth measure of fine flour mingled with a fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering. **41** The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it a grain offering and its drink offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the Lord. **42** It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the Lord, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there. **43** There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory.

1. Why do you think that God demanded these twice daily sacrifices? Why is this often difficult for us to understand or accept?
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After we're introduced to John the Baptist in John 1, the author quickly shifts our attention back to Jesus by sharing an encounter between the two in the very next verses.

Read John 1:29-34.

## 01 JOHN 1:29-34

**29** The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! **30** This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' **31** I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." **32** And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. **33** I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' **34** And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

3. What two titles does John the Baptist bestow upon Jesus here? What two actions does he say that Jesus will accomplish?
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John is the only biblical author to use the phrase Lamb of God, but the phrase would have had clear implications both his readers and John the Baptist's audience. In the Old Testament, lambs were a symbol of purity and innocence. When Passover was established, lambs' blood rescued the firstborn children from the angel of death. The idea that an animal's blood could stand in as a redemptive substitute is also present in the Day of Atonement ritual we studied last week. But John the Baptist anticipates a greater deliverance that would be completed on the cross. Let's look at how the author of Hebrews explains Christ's sacrifice in 9:21-26.

## 09 HEBREWS 9:21-36

**21** And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. **22** Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

**23** Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. **24** For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. **25** Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, **26** for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

4. In what ways did Christ's sacrifice differ from the Old Testament sacrifices?

	OLD TESTAMENT	CHRIST
WHO SPRINKLED THE BLOOD?		
WHERE WAS IT SPRINKLED?		
WHOSE BLOOD WAS SHED?		
WHERE DID HE ENTER WITH THE BLOOD?		
HOW MANY TIMES DID THE SACRIFICE OCCUR?		
WHAT DID THE SACRIFICE ACCOMPLISH?		

Christ's sacrifice made a way for us to be delivered from the guilt and shame of sin. Unfortunately, we often minimize his sacrifice by minimizing the weight of our own sins. Peter instead insists that the Lamb's sacrifice ought to change everything for us.

Read 1 Peter 1:14-19 on the following page.

# 01 1 PETER 1:14-19

**14** As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, **15** but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, **16** since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." **17** And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, **18** knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, **19** but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

5. How does Peter describe their lives before Christ (v. 14, 18)?

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6. To what objects does he compare the blood of Christ (v. 18, 19)? What do each of these similes emphasize?

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7. If we understand the negative impacts of our life without Christ and the worth of his sacrifice, how will our lives be transformed? How do we participate in this change?

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8. How will you pursue growth in holiness in your life today?

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*pray*

**As you pray today, thank God for the perfect, holy sacrifice of Jesus. Confess the deepest regrets, trauma, and pain of your heart, and give to God any shame or guilt that burdens you. Ask that he would help you to trust in the forgiveness you have in Christ and to experience true freedom as his daughter.**

# DAY 03



As we have looked at the first chapter of John this week, we've seen the deity of Christ and his willing incarnation in the midst of his people. We've heard John the Baptist's witness of Jesus as both Son and Lamb – the holy one who died as a sacrifice for our sins. Today we'll look at chapter 2 for one more

glimpse into the temple of God. Pray today that the Holy Spirit will speak clearly as you read his word and that you will be transformed as he speaks.

## JOHN 2:13-22

### Jesus Cleanses the Temple

**13** The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **14** In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. **15** And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. **16** And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade."

**17** His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

**18** So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” **19** Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” **20** The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” **21** But he was speaking about the temple of his body. **22** When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

1. Jesus’ actions in this passage may seem surprising to us – and certainly surprised those around him. What does Jesus do? What beliefs and emotions seem to spur his actions?

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The religious leaders question his authority to overturn the status quo of trade in the temple courts and ask him to authenticate his actions with a miraculous sign. Imagine the most massive, intricate building you can – maybe the U.S. Capitol, Notre Dame, or the Taj Mahal. Each of these was the work of hundreds of workers over many years, and the temple in Jerusalem was no different. Jesus rebuilding that temple in three days would indeed be miraculous, but John clarifies that Jesus’s meaning was completely lost on his listeners at the time.

2. What did they think he was promising to do? What was he actually promising to do?

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3. How is our understanding of the temple as God's dwelling place enlarged by Jesus' words here?

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Today's passage claims that **Jesus' body is the dwelling place of God**, and yesterday we looked at his role as our **sacrifice for sins**. The author of Hebrews also gives him one more role in the rituals of worship: **high priest**.

4. What does each of the following passages tell us about the priesthood of Christ?

### HEBREWS 8:1-2

Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.

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### HEBREWS 7:23-27

**23** The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, **24** but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. **25** Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

**26** For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. **27** He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

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### HEBREWS 4:14-16

**14** Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. **15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

**16** Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

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**JESUS IS THE TRUE AND BETTER TEMPLE, THE TRUE AND BETTER SACRIFICE, AND THE TRUE AND BETTER HIGH PRIEST.**

Only in him does the fullness of God dwell in flesh. Only in his blood can we be delivered from sin. Only by his priestly intercession can we be transformed into his likeness.

5. What would it look like for you to draw near to the throne of grace today?  
In what area of your life do you need to come to him for mercy and help?

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*pray*

**Draw near to the throne of grace. Run to your Father, who loves you. Rest in the person of Jesus. Be comforted by the presence of the Holy Spirit. In prayer today, rejoice in the presence and love of God, who is with you.**

# He Dwells in the Church

## *Life in the Spirit*

Last week, we saw that Jesus is the true temple, God's perfect presence not in a building, but in a person. What does it mean now that Jesus has ascended to the right side of the Father? Where is the temple now? Is the presence of God gone?

As we study Acts and the New Testament epistles, we will see that God's presence now dwells not in a building, not a single person, but among a people.



Take a moment to thank God for his eternal and holy presence among his people. Ask that his Spirit would speak to you as we study what it means for the church to be the temple of God.

## DAY ONE

Read Acts 1:4-11

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**01** **4** And while staying with them he [Jesus] ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, 'you heard from me,' **5** for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

**6** So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' **7** He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or reasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. **8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' **9** And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. **10** And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, **11** and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

1. John the Baptist baptized with water, what does Jesus say his followers will be baptized with? What does Jesus say they will receive?

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2. In verse 8, what does Jesus tell his disciples they will become? Recall the Creation Mandate and the Great Commission from Week One of our study. What similarities do you see between the Creation Mandate and Jesus' promise in Acts 1?

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3. How does the Holy Spirit enable his disciples in the Great Commission? How have you experienced the power of God's presence?

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4. Read the passages on the following page. Circle every instance you see of fire, lightning, or a cloud in these foundational depictions of the presence of God descending to be with his people.

This was one of the **first** times God's **presence** appeared to Israel as they fled captivity in Egypt.

### EXODUS 19:16-18

On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire.

## EXODUS 40: 34-38

The experience of the Israelites when the Lord was first **present** in the **Tabernacle** and they began their journey through the wilderness.

Then the cloud covered the tent of the meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the Tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle y day, and the fire was in it by night in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.

After Aaron, the **first High Priest**, offered a sacrifice to atone for their sins, the Israelites watched as it was **consumed** by God.

## LEVITICUS 9:24

And fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar, and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

5. How do these verses depict the holy presence of God? Write in your own words how this might look if you witnessed it.

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Read Acts 2:1-4

## 02 THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**1** When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. **3** And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. **4** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

- 6.** Compare the experiences of those on the day of Pentecost (in the Acts passage above) with the Israelites in the Old Testament (on the previous page). In what ways are these experiences similar?

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- 7.** Use the following verses to complete the chart on the following page.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

**Acts 2:4**

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

**Exodus 40:34**

VERSE	WHAT WAS FILLED?	WHAT WAS IT FILLED WITH?	WHAT WAS THE RESULT?
Acts 2:4			
Exodus 40:34-35			

When God’s presence came to dwell with his people in the Old Testament, although God was leading his people from slavery to freedom, from death to life, Moses could still not be in the presence of God.

In Acts, the presence of God not only returns to dwell *with* his people, but his presence is now *within* his people.

8. What are three implications of God’s holy presence with you and in you?

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9. What did Jesus declare you will be when you receive the Holy Spirit?

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*pray*

**Praise God for his continued presence and faithfulness to his promises all throughout history. Thank him for the ways you have seen his presence and faithfulness in your life and ask that he would use you as his ambassador in your corner of the world this week.**

# Day 02

Yesterday we read about how the presence of God, his very Spirit, now dwells *with* and *in* his people.

Today let's discover the implications of this astonishing promise.

Read Ephesians 5:1-2.

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

**Ephesians 5:1-2**

In this verse, Paul brings together two themes of the biblical story: Image bearing and sacrifice.

## 01 | IMAGE BEARING

1. Recall Genesis 1:26 from Week One of our study. What is the created purpose of mankind? What is Paul calling disciples to in this passage to the Ephesians?

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

**Genesis 1:26**

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## GALATIANS 5:22-25

**22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. **24** And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

**25** If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

**2.** The Spirit of God is the presence of God in us. If the Spirit of God dwells in us, what is the fruit in our lives according to this verse? How can you keep more in step with the Spirit?

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.  
**Colossians 1:15**

## 02 | SACRIFICE

**3.** Recall the Old Testament system of sacrifice required because of God's holiness. How is Jesus described in Hebrews 9:26? How can our lives imitate who Christ is and what he has done for us, to the world and one another? How does this fulfill our created purpose?

for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.  
**Hebrews 9:26**

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

**Romans 12:1-2**

4. Read Romans 12:1 above. Jesus sacrificed his very life so that we could live. In this passage, Paul is calling us to sacrifice – not to die and give up – but to be *living* sacrifices. In order to truly live, we must sacrifice. List 3 ways you can sacrifice in order to glorify God?

SACRIFICE	GLORY OF GOD
01	
02	
03	

5. In the passage above, Paul describes our response to God’s mercy in Christ not only as offering the sacrifice of our bodies, but also being transformed by the renewing of our minds.

List 3 ways the biblical story we’ve studied this summer has transformed your beliefs and ideas that can lead to a transformed life.

OLD IDEAS	BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING	TRANSFORMED LIFE
01		
02		
03		

*pray*

**Thank God for the incredible reality of a new life, becoming a new creation in Christ. Confess specific ways you fail to bear the image of God, and ask that God’s spirit would empower you to look like and live like Jesus.**



# Day 03

## EPHESIANS 2:18-22

When Paul says “**both**” here, he’s referring to **Jews** and **Gentiles**. Jews were the people of Israel, through whom God first chose to reveal himself to the world. **Gentiles** are all non-Jewish people.

**18** For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. **19** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, **20** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, **21** in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. **22** In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

In this passage, Paul is reminding those who were outsiders, the Gentiles, that along with the Jews, they now have access to God himself in one Spirit.

1. How does Paul describe his listeners before they had access to the Father? (v.19a) How does Paul describe their relationship now (v.19b)?

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2. According to v.20, who is the the foundation of this new household God has created? Who is the cornerstone? Who is being built into the dwelling place for God by the Spirit?

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3. We tend to think of our spiritual lives as individualized experiences. How does this picture of the temple of God challenge that perception?

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### 1 PETER 2:4-10

4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For it stands in Scripture:

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,  
a cornerstone chosen and precious,  
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

7 So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

*"The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone,"*

**8** and

*"A stone of stumbling,  
and a rock of offense."*

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

**9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. **10** Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

**4.** Who is the living stone that has been rejected by men, but is chosen and precious? (see vv. 6 – 8 and Ephesians 2).

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**5.** In verse 5, what are those like living stones being built into? For what purpose?

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6. In verse 9, how are the listeners described? What are we to proclaim?

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7. If Jesus is our cornerstone, and also the living stone who has been rejected, what might imitating him look like? What are your honest fears about being rejected by the world, as Jesus was?

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In this passage, Peter describes who the church is already:

***A chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, God's people who have received mercy.***

What an amazing list of what we already have full possession of in Christ! He also describes this as an ongoing and future prospect. We are being *"built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood..."*

8. How is it difficult to live in this already-not-yet time of being a royal priesthood which is still being formed?

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9. How does being certain of our identity as chosen, royal, priestly, holy, god's own people, make us a people of hope?

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10. How does the gospel, the promises of God given to us fully and perfectly in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, give us assurance of who we are now and who we will be?

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11. Write your thoughts on how Jesus restores the way we relate to God's:

PERFECTION	PRESENCE	PARTNERSHIP

*pray*

Praise God for all he has redeemed and restored in you through Christ and his Spirit. Thank him for the gift of his presence in you and with you always, and ask him to show you how you can begin to reflect his character and partner with him in his purposes.

# He Dwells in a City

## *the new Jerusalem*

Imagine walking into a crowded theater, bustling with people heading for their seats. The stage before you is filled with an elaborate set, intricate in detail and constructed with great intention. As you study the furniture and backdrops, you can begin to picture how the design will perfectly display the play to come. As you wait for the lights to dim, you study the program, examining the cast, excited to see their talent as they take on each challenging role. With the right actors in place on the perfectly set stage, the drama is ready to begin.

In this final week of our study, we'll take the time to trace some themes throughout the entirety of the biblical story, from Eden to new creation. The temple of God has encapsulated for us our King's desire to dwell with those he loves. As we culminate our study of this biblical drama, let's take a closer look at the setting of the story and its cast of characters. Our hope is that this week will also offer you a pattern for how you can trace a theme throughout Scripture as you continue to study his Word after our study's conclusion.



## DAY ONE

*The cornfields of Oklahoma. Wicked's Emerald City. The prison cells of Chicago.*

*Every stage show brings unique challenges to a set designer as they seek to usher the audience into the world of the play. In the same way, our great Designer uses unique geography to show us his love and power, his goodness and grace. Today we'll trace that idea from beginning to end of the Bible, examining the features of the place in which God dwells with his people.*

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## 02 READ GENESIS 2:8-14.

**8** And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. **9** And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

**10** A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. **11** The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. **12** And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. **13** The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. **14** And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

1. What geographical features of the garden are described here? What would the location of its rivers seem to imply about the *altitude* of Eden?

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2. Genesis (and the other four books of the Law) was written by Moses as the nation traveled between Egypt and the promised land. What contrasts would the Israelites have seen between Eden and the wilderness around them?

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Throughout the Old Testament, rivers and trees are consistently seen as metaphors for growth and life – think of the tree planted by streams of waters in Psalm 1:3. But after their exile, the remnant of Israel was left broken, destitute, and nationless. In their darkest moment, the prophet Ezekiel was given a vision of the house of God, the destroyed temple, restored and made new.

He is like a tree  
planted by streams of water  
that yields its fruit in its season,  
and its leaf does not wither.  
In all that he does, he prospers.

**Psalm 1:3**

## READ EZEKIEL 47:1-12

**1** Then he brought me back to the door of the temple, and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar. **2** Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and behold, the water was trickling out on the south side.

**3** Going on eastward with a measuring line in his hand, the man measured a thousand cubits, and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep. **4** Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was waist-deep. **5** Again he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen. It was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. **6** And he said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?"

Then he led me back to the bank of the river. **7** As I went back, I saw on the bank of the river very many trees on the one side and on the other. **8** And he said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and enters the sea; when the water flows into the sea, the water will become fresh. **9** And wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish. For this water goes there, that the waters of the sea may become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes. **10** Fishermen will stand beside the sea. From Engedi to Eneglaim it will be a place for the spreading of nets. Its fish will be of very many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea.

11 But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt.

12 And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.”

3. How would you summarize Ezekiel’s description of this river? What is it like? What is its source? Where does it flow? What impact does it have?

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4. How do you think Ezekiel’s original audience of exiles would have been impacted by his vision? In what ways was the work of Ezra and Nehemiah a partial fulfillment?

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The book of Revelation records the vision granted to John the apostle, depicting the triumph of Christ and the new creation to come. In this passage, John is describing the New Jerusalem where God dwells with his people:

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

**Revelation 22:1-4**

5. What similarities do you see between the three passages we have read today? What do you think the biblical writers are trying to show with their use of repetition?

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6. What is the source of life and healing in these verses? What hope do these prophetic visions bring?

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7. What do we believe *the best life* looks like? Where do we tend to look for abundance and nourishment? How might your priorities be affected if you trust that life is truly found before his throne?

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*pray*

**Thank God for the hope you have in Christ. Ask that he would reveal to you where you seek goodness and abundance outside of him, and pray that your life would become centered and founded in God alone.**

# Day 02

The stage has been set: rivers flowing, the tree of life bearing fruit in God's presence. But who will fill the stage? God's people will dwell in God's place, under his rule and reign – but what will they look like? In Eden, we see the man and woman blessed and commissioned to fill the earth, with Eve's name displaying her calling as "mother of all living" (Genesis 3:20). But then we see a division grow, as Cain's children make their own path and Seth's descendants follow Yahweh. At Babel, the nations are divided as they refuse to honor God. But just when we think there are none who seek God, he chooses a man named Abram to follow him. But even in God's creation of a chosen nation, we glimpse the seeds of his vision for the future.

## GENESIS 12:1-3

**1** Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. **2** And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."



1. Who are the three people or groups who God promises to bless in this passage?

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2. How do you think God will bless "all the families of the earth"?

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3. Take a look at the following passages. What promises does God make about the nations in each?

VERSE	PROMISE
Psalm 22:27	
Psalm 47:8-9	
Psalm 67:1-5	

Though Israel had been set apart as God’s people, the plan was never ultimately to exclude all others. Instead, they were to be God’s instrument to image him throughout the world, drawing the nations to worship him. Isaiah shares a vision of this future fulfillment as well.

**Isaiah 2:1-4**

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

**2** It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
and shall be lifted up above the hills;  
and all the nations shall flow to it,  
**3** and many peoples shall come, and say:  
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
to the house of the God of Jacob,  
that he may teach us his ways  
and that we may walk in his paths.”  
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,  
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.  
**4** He shall judge between the nations,  
and shall decide disputes for many peoples;  
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war anymore.

**4.** What importance does the temple—*the house of the Lord*—have in these verses?

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**5.** How are the nations transformed by entering into his presence?

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At the conclusion of his ministry, Jesus calls his followers to preach the good news of the kingdom throughout the whole world, beginning in Jerusalem (Matthew 28: 19-20, Acts 1:8).

With this command and the previous passages in mind, read Acts 2:1-11.

### **ACTS 2:1-11**

**1** When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. **3** And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. **4** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

**5** Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. **6** And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. **7** And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? **9** Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, **11** both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

7. In the midst of this crowd, Peter preaches the gospel of salvation, and over 3,000 come to faith, both native Judeans and people from all over the known world. In what way was Pentecost a partial fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy and the other passages that we have studied today?
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### REVELATION 7:9-

12

9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

8. In this passage, we see John's glimpse of the final fulfillment of God's promises to the nations. How would you describe the people gathered before the Lamb in your own words?
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9. Why does this vision matter to the church today? In what way is our vision for Christian community often too small to align with Revelation 7?

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10. How can you live today in light of God's promises to the nations? Are there any attitudes or actions that you need to repent of? How can you work to celebrate the beauty of the diverse people of God?

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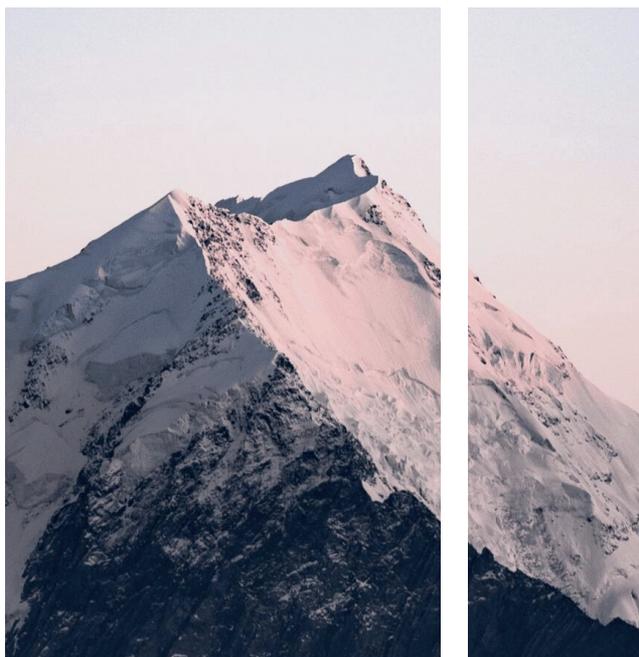
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*Pray*

**Praise God for his covenant faithfulness and love for all people. Ask that through God's Spirit, you would be empowered to embody this same faithfulness and love to everyone around you. Pray that your character, life, and hope would reflect the good news of the gospel in your world.**

# DAY 03

The stage has been set: flowing rivers, a glorious throne, life-giving fruit growing in abundance. The cast is filled with those who have heard the call from every corner of the globe. And the drama that began in the very heart of God plays before us, and the show must go on. Today we'll complete our study of God's dwelling place.



In the first week of our study, we examined the temple-garden that God planted for his people, where heaven met earth in perfect communion and peace. But Eden was lost to the serpent's lies, and unrighteous humanity was forced from God's presence. But his pursuit of his children persisted, marked by the building of the tabernacle as his dwelling place in their midst. When the tabernacle worship was established, Yahweh vowed to be with them.

## EXODUS 29:43-46

**43** There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory. **44** I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests. **45** I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. **46** And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God.

1. What specific promises does God make in this passage?

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2. In what ways does the establishment of the tabernacle stand out from the experiences of God's people who lived before Moses?

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Just as in Eden, the perpetual sins of God's people bring destruction and exile from his presence. But in the midst of their domination by a foreign empire, Christ comes to dwell among them, inaugurating a new kingdom and welcoming in those who believe. In this passage, Jesus is speaking to his disciples after washing their feet and serving them the Last Supper.

3. Read John 14:1-20 and underline each promise of the presence of God.

## JOHN 14:1-20

1 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?"

**3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. **4** And you know the way to where I am going." **5** Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" **6** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. **7** If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

**8** Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." **9** Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? **10** Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. **11** Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

**12** "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. **13** Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

**15** "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, **17** even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you."

4. How would you explain in your own words the implications of the identity that Jesus is claiming here?

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5. What radical new shift is Jesus promising in v. 16-17?

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Even in the midst of these extraordinary claims and radical promises, we see a still more future fulfillment: And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

Let's read Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25 to get a glimpse of the vision that John was given, long after that meal with Jesus.

### REVELATION 21:1-4

**1** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. **2** And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling

place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. **4** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

## REVELATION 22-25

**22** And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. **23** And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. **24** By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, **25** and its gates will never be shut by day —and there will be no night there.

6. What words, phrases, or ideas do you notice that connect to other passages that we have studied in the previous few weeks? In what way is this passage the culmination of our entire study?

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7. How does the certain, future reality described here bring you hope today?

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8. How has this study helped to illuminate God's character to you over the past five weeks? What has led you to grow in love for him?

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9. How has this study shaped your desire to grow in holiness and Christ-likeness? How does the certain, future reality described in this passage, bring you hope today?

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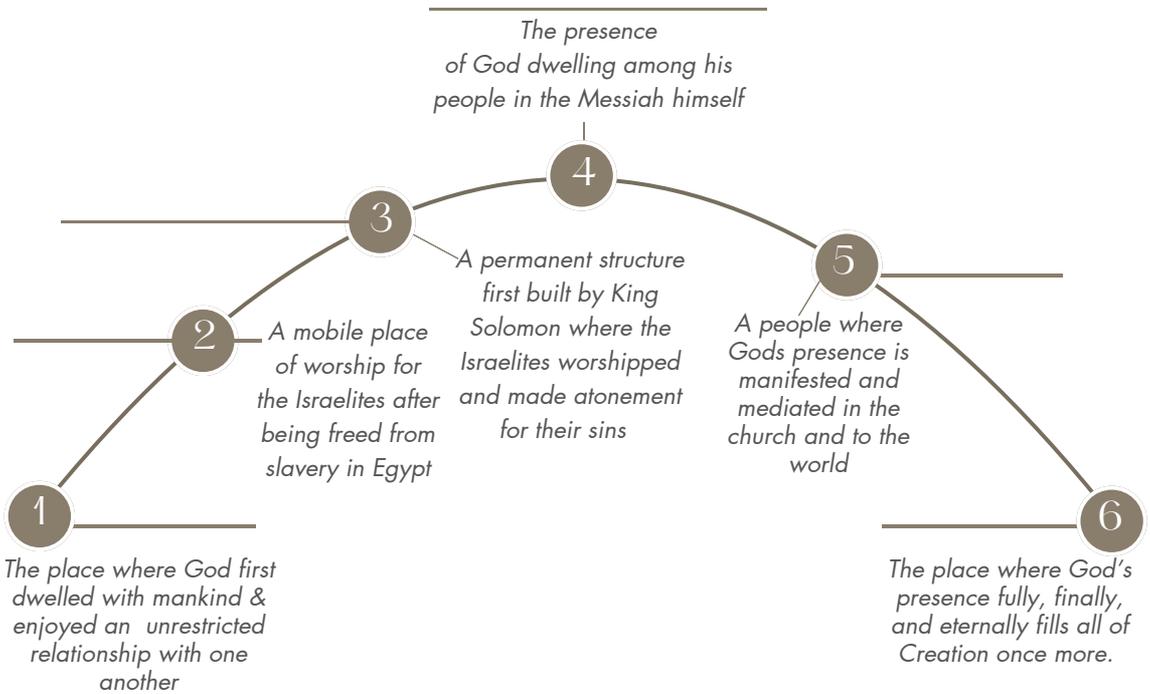
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*pray*

**As you pray today, confess to God and mourn all the ways this world disappoints and frustrates you. Praise God that he is good, holy, loving, and faithful to his promises to make all things new. Ask that he would help you live in light of the hope of his promises, rest in his grace, and by his Spirit, in his Son, mediate his presence to the world around you.**

# Dwelling Place

*at home with his people*



The Temple

The Tabernacle

The Garden

The Church

New Creation

Christ

# D W E L L I N G   P L A C E

At Home with His People

*Long before any intricate details were designed or beautiful temples built, the story of God's dwelling place starts at the very beginning. On page one of the Bible, we catch a glimpse of the way things were meant to be: God's people, participating in God's purpose, in God's place, living in the light of God's presence.*