



Sermon Questions

Date: *December 10, 2023* | Scripture: *Exodus 40:34-38*

1. Read the passage from the sermon together. What do you find convicting? What do you find challenging? What do you find confusing?
2. What do you think it was like to be an Israelite in the wilderness during Exodus?
3. Though God makes his presence dwell with his people in the tabernacle, Ex 40:35 tells us there is still a barrier that separates God from his people. Read Hebrews 9:1-14, 10:19-25. How does the author of Hebrews show the fulfillment of the tabernacle? What does that mean for us?
4. How does God dwell with us today as Jesus is in heaven? How do you experience this?
5. Last week you were invited to remember when you first made the conscious decision to follow Jesus, when you realized that God was with you personally. This week as we reflect on the tabernacle, we see God with his people through the danger and isolation of the wilderness. Think about your own story. When have you experienced a sense of God being with you through your own “wilderness journeys”? How has God protected you through your times of danger and isolation?

Inward Grace in Action

Earlier in Exodus, God gives Israel the ten commandments. The second commandment states “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them,” (20:4-5). Back then, idol worship was the norm—that was the standard way to approach gods. But the Lord teaches Israel, “That’s not how our relationship works.”

The heart of the second commandment is the principle that we must love God the way God wants to be loved, and we must approach him the way he wants to be approached. Israel followed the directions to build the tabernacle perfectly, and at the end, God came to dwell with his people. The tabernacle itself teaches Israel that the Lord is not like other gods. He is not a distant god who requires their service or whose attention is hard to get. The Lord is always with his people. He dwells among them. He will not be extorted or bribed by offerings to give his followers whatever they want. God will graciously provide all their needs as gifts, out of the love and charity of who he is. Service of God is not to win his heart, it is to worship him as the God who loved us first. We, too, must learn to love God the way he wants us to love him and approach him the way he has told us to.

- How do you try to get to God? How do you see your neighbors or our broader culture get to God?
- How does the gospel tell us how we get to God? (To put it another way, how has God come to us?)

ACTION: The Bible teaches us how to love God on his terms. During your time in Scripture this week, open and close your time with prayers asking God to teach you how to love him the way he wants to be loved.