



LIFEGROUPS

Series: *Encounter*

Scripture: *Various*

Date: May 11 & 12, 2019

Message: *The Place of Encountering God*

—[LET'S START]—

God created each one of us unique. How do you most enjoy spending time with God? Is there a place that you have set aside to meet with Him? Can you recall a time where you became very aware of the reality and presence of God?

—[LET'S TALK]—

1. **GRATITUDE AND PRAYER:** What happened last week for which you are thankful? What challenges do you see in your life? Your family? The World? As a group, take some time to pray. Thank God for the beautiful ways that He has been at work, and pray about the challenges that those in your group are currently facing.

2. Read Genesis 12:1-8.

This week, Pastor Dale talked about the progression of how God's people have encountered Him. Dale took on a progression from the GARDEN ———ALTAR———TABERNACLE———TEMPLE———JESUS. As you read about Abraham's initial encounter with God, what strikes you about Abraham's response? What do we learn about God from this passage?

3. Altars are also called "stones of remembrance." They were generally built in places where God had clearly worked in the lives of the people. What are some "stones of remembrance" events in your life – places or times where God clearly worked in a life-defining way in you?

4. Read Exodus 40:34-38.

This is a monumental moment for the Children of Israel. The setting up of the tabernacle concludes with the arrival of the presence of God. What does this passage teach you about God? Why do you suppose God wanted a tabernacle constructed for Himself? What does the tabernacle teach us about God?

5. Read 2 Chronicles 5:13-14. - In this passage we see the arrival of the presence of God in Israel's first temple. What strikes you about the people and God in this passage?

6. Read John 1:14, John 14:16-18, and Acts 2:1-4. What do these New Testament passages teach us about God and people?

—[LET'S ACT]—

Pastor Dale concluded his sermon by talking about the reality that as Christians the Holy Spirit dwells within us. This week, let's make a concerted effort to live in the awareness of the presence of God. Let's hold each other accountable to be people who are 1) following Jesus, 2) being changed by Jesus, and 3) living on mission with Jesus. We can't live on mission for Christ apart from His Holy Spirit's work in us. Each day this week, let's pray that we would be filled with the power and the presence of God. Let's pray that we would see people with the eyes of Christ, respond with the heart of Christ, and act with the hands and feet of Christ. Let's come back next time prepared to share how God worked through us in the days we lived in and through His power.

—[SERMON REVIEW]—

- In every culture people have places where they believe they can meet with their god(s).
- You cannot truly come into the presence of God and not worship Him!
- To inhabit the presence of God is to become a continual worshipper and so everything that Adam and Eve did was an act of worship because:
 - They were continually sensitive to the presence of God.
 - They consistently obeyed the voice of God.
 - They entirely submitted to the will of God.
- Sin destroyed Adam and Eve's intimacy with God.
- How can we recover and experience what Adam and Eve once had?
 - To become so fully aware of His presence that we lose ourselves and delight only in Him!
 - That's what it means to sincerely worship God!
- We can follow the clues in the Old Testament to see how we get to the place as a community where we can sincerely worship God.
 - After leaving behind his pagan faith to follow God, Abraham built an altar to God where he would call upon the name of the Lord (Gen. 12:1-8).
 - After victory in battle, Abraham refused to accept the spoils of war, instead he acknowledged that God was his provider (Gen. 14:18-23).
 - When asked to sacrifice his son on an altar, and then being stopped by the Angel of the Lord, Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh, which means the Lord will provide (Gen. 22:12, 16-18)!
- The next time God met man wasn't in an altar but in a burning bush (Exodus 3:4-7).
- God told Moses that He didn't want to just meet with individuals but Abraham's entire family (Exodus 3:12).
- After being delivered from the Egyptians, Moses led the people to a mountain, where God met with Moses. Just as God warned Moses to take off his sandals for he was stepping on ground made sacred by God's presence, He warns Moses to make sure the people fear and honor His presence on the Mountain. The people kept their distance while Moses went up into the presence of God and received the law and the instructions to build a portable

Tabernacle that would serve as a dwelling place for God among His people (Exodus 25-31, 35-40).

- What made the Tabernacle unique was the presence of God. The Tabernacle became a place marked by the fear of the Lord, obedience to His word and unquestioning surrender to His will!
- Eventually the Tabernacle was replaced by a permanent Temple built by Solomon. The Temple took seven years to erect and was completed around 959 B.C. (2 Chronicles 5:13-14).
- When Jesus arrived on earth and began His public ministry He announced that He was now the new dwelling place of God (John 1:14)!
- There is a progression that we have seen so far:
 - ALTAR——TABERNACLE——TEMPLE——JESUS
 - But Jesus is not the end of God’s dwelling. As believers, we can be filled with God’s Spirit. His Spirit indwells us (John 14:16-17, Acts 2:1-4)!
- God who dwelt among His human creation in the Garden now indwells human kind. Despite our sinfulness and rebellion God used it to do something exceedingly better. He no longer dwells without but within.

—[NOTES]—
