



Where God Wants To Be: Ezekiel 43:1-7

March 2, 2025

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Group Leader Notes

Welcome to the conclusion of our series on Ezekiel, *The Me We Want to Be*. We've been asking ourselves what kind of people we want to become. In week one, Pastor Leah described Ezekiel's initial vision of the glory of the Lord, and his commissioning as a prophet. Last week Pastor Joshua discussed the valley of the dry bones where we learned that God does his best work in graveyards. Today we turn our attention to Ezekiel's visions of the temple.

Questions: Where does God want to be?

Bottom Line: We become the me we want to be when we allow God to be where he wants to be – at the center of our lives.

Take Home Message:

When we follow Jesus, when we make his way our way, when we build our lives on his teaching, when we allow his Spirit to live in us and transform us, we become vehicles of God's presence, sharing his love with the world.

Memory Verse: 1Corinthians 3:16

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?

Main Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 43:1-7

Then the man brought me to the gate facing east, ²and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory. ³The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when he^[a] came to destroy the city and like the visions I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown. ⁴The glory of the LORD entered the temple through the gate facing east. ⁵Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

⁶While the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speaking to me from inside the temple. ⁷He said: "Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites forever. The people of Israel will never again defile my holy name—neither they nor their kings—by their prostitution and the funeral offerings^[b] for their kings at their death.^[c]

Other Scripture References

1Kings 6:11-13

Ezekiel 47:8-12

Ephesians 2:19-22

Teaching Points:

- The Temple was designed to be a portrait of the Garden of Eden, the place where God and his people could live together. The Temple was created to be the hub of God's life-giving presence.
- The glory of God is when we experience God's presence in a way that moves us to worship and serve and follow him.
- The presence of God isn't something we just experience, it's something we also practice.
- The presence of God was never meant to stay in the Temple.
- When we truly worship God, it transforms us into "mobile hotspots" of God's presence, taking his presence wherever we go.

Group Discussion

Begin in prayer before reading and discussing the text.

1. For centuries, the prophets warned the people to change their ways. But if there's one thing people don't want to do, it's change our ways.
 - Why are we so resistant to change?
 - How does change make us feel?
 - Describe a positive life-giving change you experienced or are currently in the midst of.
2. Read Ezekiel 8:9-10

⁹ And he said to me, "Go in and see the wicked and detestable things they are doing here." ¹⁰ So I went in and looked, and I saw portrayed all over the walls all kinds of crawling things and unclean animals and all the idols of Israel.

Every person alive has something at the center of their lives, something that demands their best attention, something that commands their allegiance. We were designed to worship something and if we are not worshiping God, something else will fill the space.

- What do our modern-day idols look like?
 - Consider what you spend most of your hours doing, what gets priority over everything else?
3. Dinna Louissaint, a member of our congregation has been leading our efforts to partner and support hundreds of Haitian migrants. She said, "I just want everyone to know that they are not forgotten, that there is someone who loves them and cares for them, no matter what, someone who will do things for them that they could never imagine."
 - Have you ever received this compassion, care, and generosity?
 - If yes, what did it feel like and what does it mean to you?

4. As we head into Lent, consider some practical ways that you can re-center your life on Christ:

- Join a group going through the Prayer Practice course
- Join our weekly campus prayer nights for Lent on Thursday evenings
- Invite someone to come with you to church during Lent
- Let God use your gift to bless others
- If you have other ideas, please discuss with your group

Let's Pray