

## “The Tabernacle: Space for God” // Exodus 25–40 // *Rescue: The Book of Exodus* #15<sup>1</sup>

### Bumper/ Announcement

**\*\*VAMP\*\*** Before we dive into our final message on Exodus, I just want to acknowledge, Summit, how much we have to thank God for right now. This has been one of the most incredibly fruitful seasons of our church’s history. Praise God.

- I’ve already told you about the **26k people who physically came to Easter at TSC**...and we’ve celebrated the **270 ppl who took steps of faith through baptism** in the two weeks after Easter.
- We just keep hearing the most amazing stories... and there is simply no way we can tell them all. But I can tell you a couple: Pastor Josh at our Apex campus talked about a homebound lady named Jasmine with a severe case of MS who is paralyzed from the neck down--she communicates through a device in her mouth that types out her words. She’s been watching online for a while, we visited with her recently and she gave her life to Christ. She’s asked to be trained on how to share the gospel so that she can share with people that come visit her. She’s connected with a small group now and they zoom her in and once a month they meet at her house.
- At the CPC we baptized a guy who is a rap producer in Durham. We asked him how he got here and said he learned that everytime he released an album the crime rate in Durham goes up

and he didn’t like that so he just looked up a church and found ours came for a few weeks and trusted Christ and then got baptized. He was our ever face forward baptism. When the elder baptizing him said, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,” he just put himself under face first and when he came up the elder was looking at him a little funny and said, “What, did I do it wrong?” and the elder said, “No, that was fine.”

- One more: Our Summit College crew at NC State did this inviting campaign where they took little Easter Eggs with a little Summit Easter inviter card in them and put them out all over campus... They put thousands of them out on Saturday night... and NCSU grounds and facilities promptly came out and gathered them all back up--except for one. One had fallen down one of the little holes in the ground where the sprinkler head goes so they didn’t see it, and the next morning when the sprinkler came on a girl was walking across campus and the egg flew out and literally hit her in the chest. She picked it up and opened it--this girl didn’t go to church; but she was curious, so she made a last minute decision to come to Easter service. Well, At the end, when I gave the invitation, she came up and a Summit College leader met with her and felt led by the Holy Spirit to walk her through the story of the prodigal son and she said, “I think this story is about me!” and she gave her life to Christ right there and she is going to be baptized when she returns to campus this August. Listen, if God has determined to get your attention, not even ‘grounds and facilities’ can keep him from getting to you. Amen?

<sup>1</sup> Sources consulted: Tony Merida, *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Exalting Jesus in Exodus* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2014); Tyler Staton, “[God Dwells Among Us](#),” April 27, 2023, Bridgetown Church; Tim Keller, “[God With Us](#),” November 10, 2002, Redeemer Presbyterian Church;

Jen Wilkin, [God of Freedom](#) Bible study. Brad Cooper, “The Tabernacle as a Paradigm for Communion with God.” Ray Vanderlaan, “Making Space for God: The Tabernacle,” in *That the World May Know* video series. I took my title here largely from his.

**Two other things I'll mention briefly:** A couple of weeks ago we hosted our Summit Collaborative retreat here--Summit Collaborative is our domestic church planting arm--we had all the pastors back for a retreat. Get this, y'all: this Easter we had a combined 90,000 people in churches we've planted in the last decade. And in the last year, we've gone from 1700 college students in our Collab Churches to more than 3000. And we commissioned our largest church planting class ever this year: 15 new churches this year! The classes are getting bigger because it's no longer just the church planting teams we are raising up, but the churches we've planted are also raising up teams now. It's the power of multiplication at work.

**Finally**, on Tuesday we hosted our Send 100 Celebration. Our goal, you've heard, is to send 100 new missionaries overseas in 3 years. Well we are currently in year 2 of that goal, and I'm happy to let you know that **23 people have been deployed to the mission field** already...AND this past Tuesday **(PIC)** we **commissioned 29 more** to be sent. What God is going around the world is, in a word, breathtaking. They're planting churches in some of the most unreached and unchurched places on the planet, from South Asia to East Germany. It's incredible. So far, Summit, we've planted 90 churches here in the United States and more than 500 overseas.

Could we put our hands together now as an offering of thanksgiving for all of this? Let's pray: *"God, thank you, this makes us hungry for more. Show us your glory, we pray."*

## Introduction

OK, **Exodus 25** if you have your Bibles... **Quick survey:** You can only choose one: Beach, mountain or lake. How many of you are Beach people? Mountain people? Lake people?

I like them all, but I think I'd probably say I'm a mountain person. I am from West Virginia... so, country roads, take me home. There are two distinctive features of the mountain drive I've always loved: one is **the runaway truck ramp** and the other is the **scenic overlook**. When I was a kid, I was always fascinated by **runaway truck ramps (PIC)** and I secretly hoped we'd have the chance to use one one day. Looked like a fun hill with little ridges. Now I realize how terrifying it would be to be in a situation where you needed one. In 2013 there was this crazy incident on I-40 where a rookie driver, literally just days on the job, was bringing his rig down the mountain when his brakes gave out--his tractor trailer that was hauling 80,000 lbs got to over 100 mph, and he was doing his best just to keep it on the road, and it kept just gaining speed, and he looked up and saw that traffic had come to a standstill and he's going 110 MPH with 40 tons of freight, but just before the back end of the traffic jam was one of those ramps. He plowed into it at over 100MP and it just about killed him. But it literally saved not only his life but also all the people in those cars in the traffic jam. Thank God for the runaway truck ramp!

**The other feature of the mountain drive** is the scenic overlook **(PIC)**, where you can stop for 5--10 minutes and just take in the landscape. I love these--because, I mean, what good is driving in the mountains if you don't stop and enjoy it? Two features--one about rescue, the other, beauty.

What's that got to do with Exodus 25? The Holy Spirit ends the book of Exodus by giving instructions for the tabernacle, and you'll see that both of the features--rescue and beauty--are supposed to be part of their daily walk with God.

**Remember, this whole Exodus journey has been like a 101 course in how to walk with God.** If you picked a new time to come back to church, this is your moment. In the events of the Exodus we learned “the melody of salvation”—the basic patterns of how God saves us—a melody we’re going to hear played over and over again throughout the rest of the Bible.

**Then, we saw God take his people through “Wilderness University,”** (which we called **Wilderness U**), where he gave them basic training in how to trust him. Then at Mt Sinai, God gave them the Law—it was like a marriage covenant—to show them the kind of people he wanted them to be, but they failed at that almost immediately in the Golden Calf incident, but then God revealed himself, Exodus 34, as the a merciful God who keeps his side of the covenant even when we break ours.

**And that whole journey comes to a head in the instructions for the tabernacle.** You might think that’s strange for this book to end there—why would a building design be the culmination of this journey? It’s because this building is going to encapsulate their relationship with God. God is literally going to dwell among his people, and **God’s presence with his people has always been the point of this whole journey.**

This Tabernacle is going to be mobile, at least for right now, so that it can go wherever Israel goes. Eventually, when they settle down, they’ll convert this tabernacle into “the Temple.” In fact, many think that King Solomon, who built the Temple, actually built it around this tabernacle. But for now, it’s mobile. The walls are made out of cloth and all the furniture has holsters for poles so it can all be picked up and moved quickly.

Here’s what I’m going to do today: I’m going to take you on a tour of the structure of the tabernacle—we will cover 15 chapters of the

Bible—and then show you how you can incorporate this structure into your walk with God... which is why I gave you **this card**. **Make sure you have this out:** I’ll be referring to it several times throughout the message.

First, let’s take a tour. This will be like one of those Big Bus Tours where you stop at something in the city and the tour guide tells you what you’re seeing but you stay in the bus and then they take you to the next thing.

**Our 1st stop on the tabernacle tour is The Outer Courts – (27:9–19)**

This was the way you came in; the only way to enter. Only Jews were allowed in here and it came to be associated with praise and worship. It was big—about 10,000 sq feet, and later, when the tabernacle was converted into the Temple, this Court would be subdivided into a place for Gentiles and one for the Jews, so that the Gentiles could observe God’s people worshipping. But for now, it’s only Jews that can enter here. The **first thing** you came to in that outer court was...

**2. The Brazen Altar (27:1–8)** (or ‘The Altar of Burnt Offerings’)

This was a big box about 7.5 ft long x 7.5 ft wide x 4.5 ft. high. It was coated with bronze and filled with rocks so you could offer sacrifices on it and then burn them. At least once a year, the head of each family in Israel would bring a sacrifice to this altar; the priest would bind the sacrifice, lay it on the altar, and then the head of the family would lay his hand on the sacrifice’s head and confess the sins of his family and as he did the priest would slit the throat of the offering and then they would burn it on this altar.

Each of the corners of the altar had a horn on it, and those horns served two purposes. The most practical purpose was they would use it as a post to tie up the animal to be sacrificed. But the second purpose was to serve as a place someone could cling to for mercy if

they'd been accused of a crime. If you were accused of a crime and someone was coming after you for vengeance, you could grab hold of these horns and they couldn't touch you until you could stand trial. It's like when you were playing tag as a kid, this would have been "base."

Next you have... **3. The Bronze Laver (Exodus 30:17–21)**

Now, **important:** the altar of burnt offering is as far as the average Israelite could go; only the priests could go beyond this point. The bronze laver was a gigantic basin filled with pure water that priests could use to wash their hands and feet before they entered the Holy Place.

It was just their hands and feet. When priests were dedicated to the ministry, they went through a thorough ritual washing in which they were washed from head to toe. This was just for their hands and feet.

It pictures daily renewal in your walk with God. This is not salvation, where you are thoroughly washed--that's already happened back here at the brazen altar, the altar of burnt offerings. This is ongoing renewal and restoration, cleansing yourself from the daily defilement that clings to you as you walk through the world.

Next we have: **4. The Table of Showbread (Exodus 25:23–30)**

This was a gold-plated table that had 12 fresh loaves of bread on top, one, of course, for each of the 12 tribes of Israel. On the Sabbath day, the priests working in the Temple would eat this bread and fresh loaves would be put out. The reason that's significant is that in Egyptian worship, priests put out food for the god to eat. The bread in the Jewish tabernacle was not for God to eat; it was for the priests to eat, representing Israel. In pagan worship you take care of the god; in true worship God takes care of you. We're not feeding God or carrying him or meeting his needs; he's feeding us and carrying us. So,

the priests ate the bread on the Sabbath as a picture of that, symbolizing the rest Israel had in God's care of them.

Next we have... **5. The Golden Lampstand** (or today, what we would call a "**Menorah**") (**Exodus 25:31–40**)

The actual one was made of solid gold; it would have been 5 feet tall and weighed abt 75 pounds--the size and weight of, say, a 10 yr old.

What does the shape of this lamp remind you of? It's shaped like a bush--like a burning bush--with 7 branches. This lamp symbolized the presence of God. This lamp, by the way, was the only source of light in the Holy Place--this area was really dark, shrouded by these heavy curtains. This lamp was the only source of light, and it was to be kept lit continually, symbolizing the constant light of God's presence w/ his people. **Ex 27:20** says that the fuel for this lamp was to be made from crushed olives--they had to be crushed, not ground or milled. I'll tell you in a few minutes why that is important.

Next we have... **6. The Altar of Incense (Exodus 30:1–10)**

As we approach the Holy of Holies, we come to the **altar of incense**. This altar was lit twice daily, once in the morning and once in the evening, and it symbolized two things--**first**, the prayers of God's people, rising like incense up to God's throne. And **second**, it created another cloud barrier between the people and God.

Interestingly, there were 4 horns built onto this altar, too. These horns, however, represented power, not mercy. What's being represented here is that the power of God is accessed through prayer.

Lastly we come to... **7. The Holy of Holies (Exodus 26:34)**

This final place was closed off to everyone--except the High Priest and him only once a year. This room had one piece of furniture in it: **the**

**Ark of the Covenant (PIC).** The Ark was a gold-plated box, and inside that box were 3 things: 1. A copy of the 10 commandments; 2. A pot full of manna; and 3. Aaron's staff, which had miraculously budded (he had a walking stick and it came to life and grew flowers, and it became a symbol of God's life-giving power).<sup>2</sup> Priests at the time taught, btw, that that box represented the human heart--our hearts should possess those 3 things at all times--God's law, the daily manna of his Word, and his miraculous, life-giving power.

On top of the Ark was a mercy seat, covered by two cherubim, each made of gold, each facing each other with their faces bowed toward the ground. And in the place between the cherubim, the literal presence of God dwelt in fire and cloud.

Once a year, on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies and sprinkle blood on the mercy seat on behalf of the whole nation.

There. Those are the elements of the tabernacle. But let me point out a few things you may not have noticed.

### ***1. The Tabernacle recreates the Garden of Eden.***

*A few things stand out to the careful reader. In the instructions for the Tabernacle, 7 times God speaks to Moses. Each time it says something like, "The Lord said to Moses..."<sup>3</sup> Can you think of somewhere else where God spoke 7 times? In creation. By the way, the last of the times God spoke to Moses about the tabernacle it says: "And the LORD said to Moses, "...Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations..." The last statement is about the Sabbath, just as in the original creation, the 7th statement God made was about the Sabbath.*

There's more: Exodus 27:13 tells us that the direction of the gate was always to face **(BACK TO TEMPLE PIC)** due East--wherever they set it up, the gate had to Face East, which is significant because East was the direction Adam and Eve had been driven out of the Garden of Eden after they sinned. Gen 3:24 says that God drove them out of the Garden toward the East and placed a cherub angel with a flaming sword to guard the East entrance.

Well, worshippers at the tabernacle came in from the east and the first thing they came to was the brazen altar where a sacrifice was both killed and burned. The picture? This brazen altar was the place where the flaming sword of God's judgment was extinguished.

It gets even better: Exodus 26:1 and 26:31 tell us the curtains separating the people from the Holy Place and Holy of Holies had cherubim woven into them and we've already talked about the cherubim that guarded the top of the Ark where the glory of God dwelt. This is all a re-creation of the Garden of Eden.

And remember the menorah? It was shaped to look like the tree of life.

The message is clear, right? God has recreated a way back into his presence after our sin had driven us out. God is restoring his presence with his people, because that's always been the point. It's the whole point of the Exodus.

Interestingly, btw, the original creation story took only 2 chapters to tell. More than 50 chapters are devoted to developing the

<sup>2</sup> Ex 25:16; Numbers 17:10; Ex 16:33-34; Cf. Hebrews 9:4. 1 Kings 8:9 tell us only the tablets remain by the time we get to the construction of the Temple.

<sup>3</sup> 25:1; 30:11, 17, 22 and 34; and 31:1 and 12.



tabernacle.<sup>4</sup> Let that sink in: It only took God 2 chapters to create the sun, moon, the stars, and all the molecules and atoms in our universe. No big deal. The harder work was providing our salvation.

Here's a second thing you may not have noticed: **II. The Tabernacle was a mobile Mt Sinai.** Remember, Mt Sinai, where God had given them the Law? Ex 19 says it had been a mountain of smoke and fire with a great barrier between the people and God that no Israelite could cross lest they be killed. Only Moses was allowed up into the mountain to meet with God.

Now you have the Holy of Holies where only the high priest can go in once a year to stand directly before God.

The furniture in the Holy Place recreates Mt. Sinai. The golden lampstand, representing the presence of God, was like the burning bush Moses encountered on Mt Sinai. And the smoke of incense is like what? It's like God's presence with them in the cloud. **The point: This is a mobile Mt Sinai.** The people weren't supposed to just meet with God at Mt Sinai and move on. God went with them, because the point has always been God's presence with his people. In fact (and those of you who go with us to Israel will learn this)--Scholars **are not even 100% sure today where Mt Sinai even is.** Anyone who tells you they know is lying to you. Moses didn't record it because after they built the tabernacle it didn't matter--the presence of God was the point and that was now in the tabernacle. So the mountain was irrelevant.

Most importantly, **III. The Tabernacle sets us up for Jesus.**

The Apostle John, talking about Jesus, makes the most unusual comment about Jesus in his introduction to his life--unusual unless you know what you're looking for. John says: **"And the Word"** (Jesus)

became flesh and dwelt (lit. he 'tabernacled') among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Jesus, God's ultimate word in creation, was, according to John, a walking tabernacle (**put up PIC of CARD**). Everything we see pictured in the tabernacle was fulfilled in Jesus.

- **Jesus was the door**, John 10:7, the one way we can enter the presence of God.
- **Jesus was the sacrifice on the brazen altar**--the flaming sword of God's wrath for sin dropped onto him, and his blood was poured out on the altar so that all those who grab hold of this horn of mercy find forgiveness and safety forever.
- **Jesus is our daily cleansing.** John tells us that if we confess our sins, he (Jesus) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and *cleanse* us from all unrighteousness. In Eph 5:25 Paul says that Jesus washes us daily through "the washing of water by the Word." That's a clear reference back to this bronze laver. Through his Holy Spirit, Jesus is our daily renewer.
- **Jesus is our table of showbread.** When Jesus did the miracle of the feeding of the 5000 where he multiplied the bread and the fish, do you remember how many baskets full of leftovers it says they took up after the miracle was over? 12. Do you remember the number of loaves on this showbread table? 12. Jesus said, John 6:35, "I am the bread of life," and those who *feast on me will never be hungry again*.
- **Jesus is the Golden Lampstand of God's presence.** In John 8:12, right after forgiving the woman caught in adultery, Jesus stood in front of the Temple and proclaimed, **"I am the Light of the World."** I am the presence of God. (BTW, *how beautiful is it that when Jesus made this statement, it was right after forgiving a woman caught in adultery?* I often wonder, "Why did he choose

<sup>4</sup> Exodus 25–40 (minus 32–34), design, construction, clothes for priests, etc. All of Leviticus (27 chapters) which is about purity, worship, holiness, and

festivals—all of which are tabernacle-centered. Numbers 1–10 which regulate encampment and care of the tabernacle.

that moment to make this claim?” It’s because this light is not just a revealing light, it’s a healing light. It not only reveals our sin, it cleanses us from our sin if we let him. In fact, when I was working on the message this week, and I wrote down John 8:12 in my notes, I felt like the Holy Spirit said to me **“Don’t just tell them I’m the light of the world, tell them *why* and *when* I said this... it was right after forgiving a woman caught in adultery.”** You see, I don’t know, but I feel like there might be a woman in here today in adultery and you know it’s wrong and you want out of it and God is saying, “You need to come back to me. I will forgive and restore you and cleanse you with the light of my presence—it’s not just a revealing light, it’s a healing light—but you have to bring this into the light.” Again, I don’t know. But maybe that’s you and you know God is talking to *you* right now. I’m telling you: Obey that word. This Golden Lampstand is not just a revealing light; it’s a healing light.

- **Revelation 21:23** says this about heaven: “**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.**” The only light we’ll need in heaven is Jesus. Remember, this lamp was the only light in the Holy Place. In heaven, Jesus, the Lamb, is this 7-pronged, Golden Lampstand. By the way, I’m trying to show you that when you read the OT and understand it, it puts the NT in so much more color. There are so many more things for you to learn.
- **(BACK TO TEMPLE PIC)** And, do you remember the detail about where the fuel for the lamp came from? It had to be made **from crushed olives**, not ground or milled. Well, the night before Jesus died, Jesus went to pray where? In the **Garden of Gethsemane**--and Gethsemane in Hebrew literally means... ‘oil press’--It was a place where they crushed olives. As Jesus prayed, the capillaries of his face began to burst and blood came out of his face like great drops of sweat. Jesus’ crushed body is the fuel that brings the presence of God back to us, and because the fuel was made by his crushed body, that light can be HEALING and not just REVEALING.

- **Jesus is our altar of incense.** John says Jesus as our Advocate stands before the Father day and night interceding for us--before the throne of God above I have a strong and perfect plea, a great High Priest whose name is love, who ever lives and pleads for me. Furthermore, Paul says, his Spirit intercedes for us and through us with groanings that cannot be captured in human words.
- **Jesus is the Holy of Holies.** The moment that Jesus died, this curtain was torn in two, from top to bottom, showing that the way had been opened for all to enter the very presence of God.

**BTW, usually sacrifices were brought in this way into the tabernacle.**

They brought the sacrifice in through the gate and stopped here (Brazen Altar), and then the priest would go in and represent them before God. ***That was the direction of the sacrifices every day... except one.*** On **Yom Kippur**, the day of atonement, the direction was reversed. On that day the sacrifice involved two goats. One goat was tied up to one of the horns on the brazen altar; the other was sacrificed and his blood was taken in by the High Priest and sprinkled on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant. BTW, when the priest was in there sprinkling that blood, the people were always nervous, because if the priest didn’t come out, it meant that God had not accepted the sacrifice. Something was wrong--maybe the Priest was unclean or they hadn’t repented or something wasn’t right. And if God was displeased, that priest wouldn’t make it out, he’d be struck dead. That was where the tradition (or legend) developed that they would tie a rope to the High Priest’s ankle so they could pull him out if he were struck dead. But **when the High Priest did finally appear**, everyone would cheer--the sacrifice had worked. For another year, God had been reconciled to his people.

And then, after the High Priest emerged, he would walk straight back over to this other goat, the one that had been tied to the horn of the brazen altar, and the High Priest would lay his hands on the head of that goat and confess Israel’s sins, and they would then send that goat outside the camp into the desert to die, symbolic of their sin being carried away from them. (This is where the term “scapegoat”

actually came from.) One goat was sacrificed; and one goat had all the guilt of the people placed on him and he was sent away. BTW, this is awesome: it was considered a bad omen if somehow that goat wandered back into the camp--right? Like he was bringing the guilt of the people's sin back? So Jewish rabbinic tradition tells us that there was usually someone waiting just outside the tabernacle to grab the goat and throw him over a cliff or something to make sure he didn't come back.

OK, so, remember, when Jesus died, he was taken "outside the camp" to be crucified. He was both goats--the one who shed his blood for our sin and the one who carried our sin away forever. And then the veil was ripped in two and the way into the Holy of Holies was opened once and for all.

Ahh... but then after he died, for a couple of days he was gone, and we were all nervous. Had it worked? Did God accept the sacrifice? *Maybe we were too sinful, or maybe it just didn't work...* But then, after 3 days... through his resurrection he pulled back the curtain and stepped back out of the Holy of Holies as the assurance that God had accepted his death as the payment for our sins. And the people cheer.

What that means is this place, the Holy of Holies, is no longer a place fraught with danger that only the High Priest can enter once a year. It's where we can boldly, whenever we want, with any of our needs. What a privilege we have! The way is open for all who would come. The flaming sword of God's judgment has dropped onto Jesus. There is no more threat of punishment for sin. Jesus paid it all.

And then remember, on Pentecost, it says a group of 120 disciples were standing just outside the Temple, when they heard the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and then a fire came out of the Temple--if you read it carefully in Acts it implies it was a single ball of fire that came out--and then that ball of fire subdivided into little tongues of fire that came to rest the heads of each of the disciples. The very fire of

God's presence once contained in the Holy of Holies behind a thick, impenetrable curtain now lives in us. Try and tell me you're not special. You're a walking Holy of Holies!

God's presence with his people has always been the point. In the Garden of Eden, God had walked with his people every day but they sinned and drove themselves out of his presence. So, God built a tabernacle so he could dwell in their midst, though he was still separated behind several threatening barriers. But then Jesus came, who was God tabernacling with us and now, in the person of the Holy Spirit, the God of the Holy of Holies has taken up residence *IN* us and we can have communion with him every day. Try and tell me you're not special. Try and tell me you can't overcome sin. Try and tell me that God doesn't have a plan for you. He put the Holy of Holies inside of you. There's literally no more precious place on earth.

*Which brings me back to... this card.*

## A Devotional Journey Through the Tabernacle

**Hebrews 9:24** says the tabernacle is a copy of the very throne room of God. "For Christ (after his death) 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."

**This tabernacle is a copy of God's throne room, which means you could use the structure of the Tabernacle as a way to come into God's presence every day.** And that's what I've tried to give you through this card. (BTW, special shout out to my friend Brad Cooper, pastor of NewSpring Church down in South Carolina, who gave me this idea. He says he uses something like this every day in his quiet time, and actually prays through it with his kids in the car on the way to school.)



Stop 1: **1. The Outer Courts //** This should be characterized by **Thanksgiving //** Psalm 100:4 says, “Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise.” So, here’s the prompt I gave you:

- **Praise! What am I thankful for today?**

Praise, you see, brings you into the presence of God. Pastor Brad calls praise “the password into God’s presence.” Psalms 22:3 says that God inhabits the praises of his people. So, start there--start by telling God what you love about him and what you are thankful for from him. And don’t rush through that. Linger there. Sing or listen to a worship song if you want.

Stop 2: **2. The Brazen Altar //** Think of this as **Embracing the Cross //** Eph 1:7 says “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace... “ ((Hebrews 9:19–22))

- **Notice what I’ve written: Rejoice that because of Jesus, there is nothing you could do that would make God love you any more, and nothing you have done that would make him love you any less**

This is the gospel! Rejoice in it daily. God accepts you not on the basis of how well you’ve done but on the basis of Christ’s finished work. I come before God literally with Jesus’ righteousness credited to my account because all my sin was placed upon him and that means I couldn’t be more righteous in God’s sight than I am right now. I couldn’t be safer or more beloved. There’s nothing I could do that could make him love me more and nothing I have done that makes him love me any less. So, spend a few moments holding onto those horns and just rejoice in them. **Thank God for Christ.**

<sup>5</sup> And Deuteronomy 32:47, “For this is no idle word for you; it is your very life.”

And then go on to station **3. The Bronze Laver //** Let this represent daily **Cleansing & Renewal //** Again, 1 Jn 1:9 says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” ((Rom 12:1–2))

*Listen: You don’t need to be re-saved every day. That’s already happened once for all back at the brazen altar. You’ve already been forgiven and cleansed from head to toe. But, you do need daily cleansing and renewal. Here are the prompts I’ve given you:*

- **Confess: Where have you sinned and need forgiveness?**
- **Ask God to cleanse and renew your mind, heart and body for his service.**

Confess your sins, whatever they are. **Take that runaway truck ramp!** Get back on the road with God.

Next stop: **4. The Table of Showbread //** Scripture Feeds Us // Matt 4:4 says “Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God,” a quote from the Exodus. In John 6:35 Jesus tells us that he is “the bread of life.”<sup>5</sup> ((Deut 32:47))

- **I gave you this prompt: Spend time in God’s Word. Let it feed and sustain you. Embrace his promises.**

Rehearse God’s promises in the morning until they feed your soul and flood you with confidence and change your outlook on people and the day! **George Mueller** used to say it was his ‘sacred duty’ each morning to get his soul happy in God before going about the day. The greatest thing I can give to everyone in my life-- my wife, my kids, my coworkers, to you--is a soul happy in God, brimming with confidence in his promises--because then I won’t walk around like a

sad sack of unbelief, or even worse, with an emptiness that causes me to use you to fill some void in my heart. When my soul is happy in God, I can love people and not use them. I can forgive them instead of resenting them.

**So, stop 4: Spend time in God's Word every day.** BTW, do you have something good you use for a daily Quiet Time? Let me encourage you to use the **Summit Daily Revival** feature on our **Summit app**... I use it every morning. I do that and another one called **Lectio365**; these two tools are the best way for me to start my day feasting on Scripture.

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**Stop 5. The Golden Lampstand //** These represent **God's Glory and Presence //** ((Jn 8:12))

*Here's what I have written as a prompt for you:*

- **Worship in the light of God's presence through song or quiet adoration or through a song, or through declarations.**

**This is different from thanksgiving.** It's meditating on who God is and who he is to you.

**Ps 16:11** says, "*In your presence is the fullness of joy, and at your right hand are treasures forevermore.*" So, **sit in the light** of his presence.

**Name those qualities about God you love most.** Call them out. You say, "Why do I need to name them? God already knows what they are." Yes, but just calling them out fills your soul with faith. "*God inhabits the praises of his people.*" Which means as you pray, he comes. Put them into a song. For most of us, we should probably use a song someone else has written.... I know some of you are gifted as songwriters, but if you don't have that gift, don't be one of those weirdos that's always making up tunes for God. God is like, "I love you, but I know good music from bad." You say, "Yeah, but he just

likes to hear our songs. it's like me with my 2 year old--I love to put their terrible drawings up on my refrigerator." Yeah, I'm sure when you were a new Christian, God put your songs up on his refrigerator, too... but if you're still drawing stick figures for your parents when you're 35, your parents are gonna stop putting those pics up. So, I'm just saying, *feel free to use someone else's song*. God's not weird. Don't be weird.

The main point: Spend time in the light of God's presence and watch your heart fill with joy. **And Eph 1:18:** *Ask God for eyes to see him more clearly.* Ask God to show you more of himself. In **Eph 1:18** Paul prays, "*God, open the eyes of my heart and fill me with the spirit of wisdom and revelation that I may know what is the hope to which he has called me, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe.*" Ask God for greater knowledge of him.

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**Next, stop 6. The Altar of Incense //** These are your **Prayers of Intercession //**

*Here's the prompt I gave you:*

- **Intercede for others, letting your prayer rise like a pleasing aroma to God. Pray for your family, church, community, and the world. Don't just pray to God, pray with him.**

That's what **Psalms 141:2** **literally says.** *Let my prayers rise before you like the evening sacrifice of incense.* Oh, and I've gotta show you this one. Put **Revelation 5:8** up here: "*...the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding... golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.*"

Revelation tells us that God collects all our prayers like incense in a bowl! I know it feels sometimes like God doesn't always answer your prayers, at least on the timetable you wanted; in fact, sometimes it

doesn't even feel like he's listening at all. But this scene shows you he heard every single one of them and collected them all in a bowl--the Psalms says he also collected all our tears in a bottle, too--and there's coming a time when God will answer all those prayers, or the essence of them, with one gigantic yes. Not one was ever ignored, no tear was ever forgotten. So, in the meantime, let them rise like incense to him that he collects into bowls.

On the Daily Revival on the **Summit App**, we give you daily prayer requests to get you started. Prayers for you, the church, our missionaries... Again, it's a good place to start.

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Lastly, **7. The Holy of Holies //** Think of this as **The Fullness of the Spirit // Heb 10:19–22**

Here's what I gave you:

- *Ask for the **fullness of the Spirit** and yield yourself to him completely. Abide. Listen. Be still and know that he is God.*

In **Eph 3:19** Paul tells us to pray to better understand the height, width, breadth and depth of God's love because then we will be filled "with all the fullness of God."

**Eph 5:18** tells us to be "filled with the Spirit." Paul wouldn't give us that command if we were already as full as we could be. Yes, you got the Holy Spirit when you first got saved. But I'm telling you, there's a fullness, a greater richness of experience of his presence, that you can experience if you'll simply ask for it and earnestly seek it.

Here's the 2nd prompt I gave you:

- *Ask for **new spiritual gifts** by which to serve God and others*

1 Cor 14:1 tells us to eagerly desire spiritual gifts--manifestations of the Spirit's power in our lives--and Paul says especially that you may prophesy. To 'prophesy' means to relay messages directly from the Spirit to others. Every day this year I am asking God for more of the gift of prophecy. You gotta be careful with it--and there are rules for it--we'll talk about those more later, but maybe you could consider praying the same with me.

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\*\*\*VAMP\*\*\*

Notice the last instruction on your card: **Let this pattern guide your time with God—not as a ritual, but as a relational rhythm to draw near to him daily because that's why God gave us the pattern of the tabernacle.**

**You have to make space for God**, which was the **title of this message**. The tabernacle was literally the center of Israel's life. Your daily time with God should be the center of your life.

So, put this card in your Bible, and if you've never started a quiet time, use this and our Summit app and start tomorrow!

Listen, **there's probably no spiritual discipline I recommend more than a daily time with God.** Daily time with God is how you will actually change your life. It's what James Clear calls "an atomic habit," one good habit that becomes a gateway for a bunch of other good ones. Listen, hearing an inspirational sermon once a week won't do it. You need to daily meet with God in his tabernacle. I am pretty confident in saying that those of you who are consistently walking with God are already doing this, and for those of you who are just playing around at church and really struggling spiritually, you drag yourself in here every week, you probably aren't doing this. So let me encourage you, **if you're serious about growing in Christ**, start this habit **daily**.

**And that brings us to the end of Exodus.** The book that establishes the melody of salvation and shows us the basics of walking with God. It ends with a vehicle for daily spending time in the presence of God, because that's always been the point: ***God's presence with his people has always been the point of this whole (Exodus) journey.***

*Have you enjoyed our study through Exodus? I know I sure have. And look at all the fruit God has given us during it! **369 baptisms** during this series! (Who said preaching the Old Testament wouldn't bring spiritual fruit? We don't need to unhitch ourselves from the Old Testament—there's good stuff in there!)*

**And where are we headed next, you ask?** Well, we're going to the other end of our Bibles... to the book of Revelation! Summer of 2025, get ready for weird. So, be back for that.

Let's pray