

August 6, 2023

Series: The Story, Ch. 7, Pt. 3

Sermon: Where God's Glory Dwells

Text: Ezekiel 1-48

Sermon Outline:

1. God's glory has been revealed. (1-3)
2. God's glory is not contained. (8-11)
3. God's glory will be experienced fully. (40-48)

The book of Ezekiel is defined by three main visions:

- In chs1-3, God comes to Ezekiel and calls him to prophetic ministry.
- In chs8-11, Ezekiel is shown a replay of God leaving His Temple and His city, Jerusalem.
- In chs40-48, he is given a hope-filled vision of a future when God again dwells w/ His people in His Temple.

Discussion Questions:

1. It would be hard to describe an iPhone to someone living in the 1980s! How much more difficult to describe Heaven to someone living on earth? But iPhones are a reality now and likewise Heaven will be a reality for those who trust Christ. How often do you think about Heaven? Do you yearn for Heaven or does the unknown make you hesitant? If the latter, how can you cultivate a longing for the glory that is to come?
2. Read Ezekiel 1:4-28 and notice the number of times "like" or "likeness" or "appearance" is used. There is no way to fully comprehend the glory of God. Consider John 1:14 and discuss how we do see His glory in Jesus. How can both be true?
3. God's glory leaves the inner sanctum of the Temple—the holy of holies in 9:3. Then God's glory leaves the Temple complex in 10:18. Then God's glory leaves the city itself in 11:23. God's glory was not contained by an Ark, or a temple, or a festival, or a city, or a nation. Israel had gotten to a point where they loved those **things**, those **places**, those **experiences** more than they loved God himself.

The challenge we sometimes face is trying to recreate, recapture, or re-live some religious experience from the past: a retreat, a conference, a season of spiritual "highs" that we had... back then.

Or you might struggle to connect with God apart from a particular person or place: the church you grew up in, or a favorite style of worship; maybe devotionals by your favorite Christian author, or the sermons of your favorite preacher... and that's what you love, what fills your spiritual tank up.

And sometimes what can happen is that over time we slowly drift to a place where what we love, enjoy, or seek isn't God, but the things of God.

Has this ever been your experience? How can you truly seek God rather than the things of God?

4. Read Ezekiel 43:1-5 regarding the glory of God returning to the temple. Also read Revelation 21:22-27 where we see that the point was never the temple. The point of everything then and even in the church now (the building, music, preaching, discipleship, fellowship, etc.) is to point people to the glory of God in Jesus Christ His Son. How should that perspective impact how we think about worship and ministry in and through our church?