

SERMON BASED CURRICULUM

**Date & Sermon Series:**

March 12/13, 2016; Altars

Speaker:

Pastor Joel Schmidgall

Scripture Focus: Exodus 27:1-3,8

Note To Leaders:

This weekend we discussed the history of the Tabernacle and the importance of entering into God's presence with a lifestyle of praise. These questions provide a framework to prompt or foster discussion in your small group. Don't feel you have to use all or any of these questions and you don't have to make it to the end! Use the questions that best fit your group and let discussion flow.

Icebreaker Suggestions: Have you ever had to wait on something that was out of your control? What did you do in the waiting period? How did it pan out?

Sermon Series Questions:

1. What thoughts are still resonating with you from the sermon?
2. What was most encouraging or challenging about this weekend's message?
3. In what ways did the history of sacrifices and the structure of the Tabernacle change your perspective on worshipping God?

Specific Questions:

1. Pastor Joel gave specific details discussing how the Tabernacle was structured in order to reach the Holy of Holies, the presence of God. He said, "You can't bypass the altar. In order to get into God's presence, you have to go through sacrifice." What are some things you do to prepare getting into the presence of God?
2. Acacia wood is one of the hardest trees. In fact, it only grows in the severest conditions of a desert. We often think that our hardest conditions disqualify us, but God can use them and make something beautiful out of them. Your circumstances are a tool. What circumstances are you going through? How do you think they can be used as a tool by God?
3. If getting to God's presence means you have to go through sacrifice, that means we will all experience pain. The promise God has given us is that he will never leave or

forsake us. What pain are you currently cursing?

4. Oftentimes, we think of the altar as clean and perfect, but in reality, altars are messy with tears and hang-ups. What does your altar look like? What does it mean for you that sometimes altars are messy? Is it comforting to know you can come to the altar just as you are?

5. In the Tabernacle, someone would grab the horns of the altar and resolve in prayer to God. The horns were grabbed in times of desperation. Psalm 18:2 says, "The Lord is the horn of my salvation, my stronghold." What horns do you need to grab a hold of while you are waiting on God? Are you waiting in the presence of the Lord?

6. Pastor Joel shared a family phrase, "I can't never did." This means when you think you can't, you'll never do it. Ever feel like you just can't? What's your initial reaction when you hit that first hurdle? Do you stay there? Seek after God? Or push for a second wind? What would happen if you kept pushing until you gained speed again?

7. Does a miracle happen there if we don't have a prayer for it? What miracles do you need to be proclaiming and praising? Who do you need to be interceding over like Ella did over Mr. James?

Challenge/Pray/Act:

Take time to purposefully wait on God this week. Wait in God's presence this week. Don't just go for help. Go for praise.

Pastor Joel said that sometimes, we live at a surface level blessing. What if you are missing out on the blessings God has for you because you are caught up in the hurrying? Take time to wait upon God and pick up the blessings God has for you this week. Write a list of the things God speaks to you about in a journal. Circle those in prayer. Then, go to the altar in praise.