



SMALL GROUP LEADER

Temple

Temple

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Corinthians 3:16-17

Group leaders should:

- **"Set the table" for interaction and group discussion by (4 minutes):**
 - explaining the idea of the week's theme
 - explaining the context of the main passage(s) to be discussed
- **Debrief from weekly reading (8-10 minutes)**
- **Facilitating, Discipling, Guiding, Shepherding (30 minutes)**

Small Group Questions:

- 1. What does it mean for you to be the temple of the Holy Spirit?**
- 2. What does it mean for the church to be the temple of the Holy Spirit?**
- 3. What would it be like to experience church in this way?**
- 4. What needs to change for WBC to exemplify temple?**
- 5. What needs to change in your life for WBC to better exemplify the temple of God?**

***The breadth of information in this lesson is great. You may want to read the lesson out loud to your class. After that, teach briefly on temple, Jesus, and church. Then lead discussion using the discussion questions which focus on church.**

Temple

Biblical Overview

This week we will be discovering and discussing the theme of Temple. Temple is about the intersection of Heaven and Earth. Temples in the Bible are intersections - places where God's heavenly presence shows up on Earth to fulfill His mission. Temple is the place where Heaven meets Earth. Temple is about Heaven connecting with Earth. Temple = God. Temple is the place God is manifest on earth. Temple = God's Presence. Temple is the place where God is present with His people. Temple = God's Mission. Temple is about God's mission. The temple pictures God's mission of making His world new and filling it with worshippers. Temple = True Worship.

Garden of Eden

Eden was the garden temple. Place - Eden was where God intersected with Adam and Eve. Presence - He walked with them in the garden. Mission - to multiply and fill the earth with people who would know Him, love Him, and worship Him.

Tabernacle

The Tabernacle was a mobile temple. Place—The tabernacle was placed in the center of the camp of God's people. Presence - When Moses dedicated the tabernacle, the glory of the LORD filled and remained with the tabernacle, Exodus 40:34-38. Mission - With God's mobile temple in the center of the camp, God's people were to know Him, love Him, and worship Him as a witness to the nations.

Temple

The Jerusalem Temple was to be a permanent temple. Place - the temple was built in the center of Jerusalem. Presence - when Solomon dedicated the Temple, the glory of the LORD filled and remained in it, 2 Chronicles 5:2-14. Mission - with God's permanent temple at the center of the city of God, God's people were to know Him, love Him, and worship Him as a witness to the nations.

Temple Lost

Before the Babylonian captivity, the Glory of God's presence left the Temple because of Israel's idolatry and departure from the Lord, Ezekiel 10 & 12. For over 500 years the temple place is destroyed, the presence of the LORD was lost, and it seemed like the mission of God was left undone.

Jesus

Then came the perfect temple, Jesus! John 1:14 says "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us [tabernacled among us] and we beheld his glory." In this one verse we can see the place, the presence, and the mission intersecting in Jesus- the perfect temple. Everything about temple in the Old Testament is embodied in Jesus. Everything else in the New Testament about temple is a benefit flowing from Jesus.

Church and Believer

Today, the temple is the church and individual believers. Place - the body of believers, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 and the body of individual believers, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Presence - the indwelling Holy Spirit. Mission - to be Jesus' witnesses in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost places of the Earth.

New Heavens and New Earth

In the new Heaven and new Earth which is the new Jerusalem there is no temple, for the temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb, Revelation 21:22. God is moving everything to the fulfillment of the temple purpose of all things. All of creation will one day be the place where God dwells with His people and His mission is fulfilled.

