

So Close

"When Jesus Comes Close, We Find Hope"

December 6-7

"Leave it as it is. You cannot improve on it. The ages have been at work on it, and man can only mar it—keep it for your children, and your children's children, and for all who come after you."

— President Theodore Roosevelt (Upon first seeing the Grand Canyon)

1. GOD DESIRES TO BE SO CLOSE, EVEN WHEN WE RUN AND HIDE.

⁸ *"Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as He was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" (Genesis 3:8-9).*

"Have the people of Israel build Me a holy sanctuary so I can live among them," (Exodus 25:8).

Mishkan

"dwelling place; habitation"

2. AT CHRISTMAS, GOD CAME SO CLOSE TO ALL.

¹ *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it," (John 1:1-5).*

"The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth," (John 1:14).

skēnoō (σκηνώω)

"to fix one's tabernacle, have one's tabernacle, abide (or live) in a tabernacle (or tent), tabernacle"

3. TODAY CHRIST IS CLOSER THAN CHRISTMAS.

¹⁶ *"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, so that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷ the Helper is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him; but you know Him because He remains with you and will be in you,"*

(John 14:16-17).

"Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?" (2 Corinthians 3:16).

²¹ *"In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit," (Ephesians 2:21-22).*

Group Discussion Questions

- 1.** In the message, we explored how God has always pursued closeness with humanity. From the Garden of Eden, to the Tabernacle, to Jesus, and now through the Holy Spirit within us. How have you personally experienced God's closeness in your life? Has there been a moment when you've experienced His closeness in a tangible way?
- 2.** Christmas reminds us that God came to be with us. But what does it mean that He now lives within us? Do you believe that God now makes His dwelling in you? How can this reality change our approach to our daily life, challenges, relationships, etc.?
- 3.** We don't have to wonder if God wants to be with us. Even when we run and hide He pursues us. How can we intentionally "make room" for God in our hearts and lives this Christmas season? What practical steps could we take to allow His Presence to shine through us to others?