



## **Sunday Teaching Discussion Guide: Where is God? Week 2: April 28, 2019**

### Recap:

- In the ancient world, temples were created as a dwelling place for the gods. Even the Israelites saw the temple in Jerusalem as proof that God was living with them. The temple in Jerusalem had been built, destroyed, and repaired over the course of hundreds of years. In one section of the temple was the Holy of Holies, where only the High Priest could enter once a year to experience the presence of God.
- Outside the temple, the money changers were exchanging Roman coins for coins “appropriate” for the temple at exorbitant prices and some were selling animals for sacrifice also for high prices. Jesus was upset at seeing the temple turned into what he saw as a marketplace, so he overturned their tables. Those around him must have been shocked by such an act.
- In a metaphor, Jesus says that he is the temple of God and that if they destroy the temple, he will raise it in three days, referring to his death and resurrection.
- For Christians, the presence of God is not found in a building or a temple. Instead, the presence of God is embodiment of the Word and Spirit of God. The Gospel of John refers to the Word becoming flesh and dwelling with man. As Christians, we don't have to look to the stars or to temples. We find God in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and we find God in each other as we live by faith in God.

### Discuss:

- What do you think makes a church, temple, synagogue, etc. a holy place? Why do you think a physical building has been important for religious people for thousands of years?
- READ John 2:13-22
- Do you think the image of Jesus driving away the money changers contrasts with other images that you have of Jesus (such as the peace-loving Jesus speaking the beatitudes)?
- Why do you think the disciples were confused about what Jesus was talking about ?
- How do you think Jesus as a temple and we, as people, as temples is a revolutionary and new idea?
- READ John 1:1-5,14
- Considering how light works, how is the image of Jesus as a light in the darkness and the darkness not consuming it as appropriate image for how Jesus operates in our lives?
- READ Galatians 2:20
- What do you think it means to live by faith in the Son of God?
- Do you find it hard to see God in other people? What makes it hard?

Pray: Invite members of your group to share prayer requests. Give a short prayer thanking God for your group discussion and asking God to be with the requests that have been shared.

### Read at Home: Additional Readings about the Temple

- 1 Corinthians 3:1-17
- Acts 17:22-31
- Revelation 21:22-26