



BIBLE FOUNDATIONS COLLECTION

God's Presence From Eden to the New Creation

A beginner-friendly guide to God dwelling with His people throughout Scripture

PURPOSE

Understand what Scripture means by God's presence, follow the theme from Eden to new creation, recognize how Jesus brings sinners near to God, and live faithfully through the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

One of Scripture's greatest promises is also one of its simplest: God will dwell with His people. Humanity enjoys fellowship with God in Eden, but sin brings hiding and exile. God appears to the patriarchs, rescues Israel, reveals His glory at Sinai, and dwells among His people in tabernacle and temple. After exile He promises to return. Jesus comes as Immanuel—God with us. Through His death and resurrection sinners are reconciled, the Spirit lives within believers and among the church, and the story ends with God dwelling openly with His redeemed people in renewed creation.

SIMPLE DEFINITION

God's presence means that God is truly near, active, known, and relationally available to His people. God is everywhere, yet Scripture also describes special ways He reveals His glory, dwells with His people, and brings them into fellowship with Him.

Key passages: Genesis 3:8–24; Exodus 25:8–9; 33:12–23; Psalm 139:1–12; Ezekiel 37:26–28; Matthew 1:18–23; John 1:1–18; 14:15–23; 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; Ephesians 2:19–22; Revelation 21:1–5, 22–23.

MEMORY ANCHOR

The story moves from God's presence in Eden, through tabernacle and temple, to Jesus and the Spirit, and finally to God dwelling with His people forever.

Scripture translation

Short quotations are from the Berean Standard Bible unless otherwise noted. References allow readers to verify each statement in context.

A prayer before you begin

Father, help me understand Your presence throughout Scripture. Show me how Jesus brings sinners near, teach me to live by Your Spirit, and deepen my hope for the day You dwell openly with Your people forever. Amen.

How to Use This Guide

- Follow the theme from creation to new creation.
- Distinguish God's universal presence from reconciled fellowship.
- Watch for gardens, mountains, cloud, fire, glory, tabernacle, temple, living water, Spirit, and tree of life.
- Take God's holiness and the problem of sin seriously.
- Recognize Jesus as Immanuel, true temple, sacrifice, and mediator.
- Follow the Holy Spirit's work in believers, church, holiness, and mission.
- Look toward bodily resurrection and renewed creation.

The presence story at a glance

- EDEN · God dwells with humanity. Genesis 1–2.
- SIN AND EXILE · Humanity hides and leaves the garden. Genesis 3.
- PATRIARCHS · God promises to be with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Genesis 12–50.
- EXODUS AND SINAI · God rescues Israel and reveals His name, holiness, and glory. Exodus 3–24.
- TABERNACLE · God dwells among His covenant people. Exodus 25–40.
- TEMPLE · God places His name in Jerusalem; His glory fills the temple. 1 Kings 8.
- EXILE AND PROMISE · Glory departs; God promises cleansing, Spirit, and return. Ezekiel 8–11; 36–37.
- JESUS · The Word becomes flesh; Immanuel is the true temple. Matthew 1; John 1–2.
- CROSS AND RESURRECTION · Jesus bears sin, opens access, and rises. Matthew 27–28; Hebrews 9–10.
- SPIRIT AND CHURCH · God lives within and among His people. Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 3; Ephesians 2.
- MISSION · Jesus remains with disciples among all nations. Matthew 28.
- NEW CREATION · God dwells openly with His people forever. Revelation 21–22.

Companion 3Nails guides

- Biblical Timeline — place the presence story in history.
- Major Events — review the events advancing God's purpose.
- People and Places — meet the people and locate the settings.
- Bible Maps and Geography — trace Eden, Sinai, Jerusalem, exile, Galilee, and the nations.
- The Covenants of Scripture — understand the relationships through which God dwells with His people.
- The Kingdom of God — explore the relationship between God's presence and reign.

Part One · God Is Present Everywhere

God cannot be confined

God created everything. He is not part of creation, limited by space, or contained inside a building. No place exists outside His knowledge, authority, and sustaining power. 1 Kings 8:27; Psalm 139:1–12; Jeremiah 23:23–24; Acts 17:24–28; Colossians 1:15–17.

God is not creation

God is present throughout creation, but creation is not God. Trees, mountains, stars, animals, and people are not parts of Him. Creation reveals His power and wisdom but must never be worshiped. Genesis 1; Psalm 19; Isaiah 40; Romans 1:18–25.

Universal and relational presence

Scripture speaks of God being with someone, dwelling among His people, revealing glory, hiding His face, judging, or welcoming people near. This does not mean He travels through space as a creature would. It describes how people experience His activity, favor, fellowship, revelation, discipline, or judgment.

Memory anchor: God is everywhere, but reconciled fellowship with Him is a covenant gift made possible through Jesus.

Part Two · Eden: God With Humanity

Creation and garden

God creates an ordered world and makes humanity in His image to represent His rule and care for creation. He plants Eden, provides abundantly, and gives the tree of life. Adam and Eve live without shame in fellowship with God, one another, and creation. Genesis 1–2; Psalm 8.

Eden as temple-like space

Many readers see Eden as temple-like because God and humanity meet there and its eastward entrance, cherubim, precious materials, river, and tree of life echo later sanctuary and new-creation imagery. The connection is helpful, though Genesis never explicitly calls Eden a temple.

Sin disrupts fellowship

The serpent questions God's word and character. Adam and Eve disobey, become ashamed, and hide. God judges; relationships, work, bodies, and creation are affected. They are expelled, and cherubim guard the tree of life. Sin does not make God unaware of them; it changes their relationship with Him. Genesis 3; Romans 5; 8.

Promise within judgment

God promises that the woman's offspring will crush the serpent. Scripture develops this hope: God will defeat evil, reconcile sinners, overcome death, and restore life with Him. Genesis 3:15; Romans 16:20; Hebrews 2:14–18; 1 John 3:8.

Memory anchor: Humanity was made for life with God. Sin brings hiding, exile, and death, but God promises a Deliverer.

Part Three · God With the Patriarchs

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

God calls Abraham and promises land, offspring, kings, protection, and blessing for all families. Altars mark revelation and worship but do not contain God. During famine God tells Isaac He is with him. Jacob dreams of heaven opened and hears God promise to keep him wherever he goes. Genesis 12; 15; 17; 22; 26; 28; 35.

God is with Joseph

Joseph is betrayed, sold, falsely accused, and imprisoned. Genesis repeatedly says the LORD is with him. God's presence does not prevent suffering; it sustains Joseph and works through circumstances others intend for evil. Genesis 37; 39; 45; 50.

IMPORTANT

"God is with you" does not mean life will be painless or immediately successful. Joseph experiences years of injustice while God is with him.

Memory anchor: God's presence does not always remove hardship; it assures His people that He remains faithful and active within it.

Part Four · Exodus: God Comes to Rescue

God hears and remembers

God hears Israel's groaning, remembers His covenant, sees suffering, and knows their pain. "Remembers" means He acts faithfully, not that He had forgotten. Exodus 2:23–25.

Burning bush and promise

God appears to Moses in a flame within a bush. The ground is holy because God makes His presence known there, not because the soil has magical energy. God reveals His name and answers Moses' inadequacy with "I will surely be with you." Exodus 3; 6.

Cloud, fire, and Sinai

God leads Israel by cloud and fire, places Himself between them and Egypt, and opens the sea. At Sinai, fire, smoke, thunder, trumpet sound, and boundaries reveal holiness. God rescues Israel before giving the Law; obedience responds to grace. Exodus 13–20; Hebrews 12:18–29.

Memory anchor: The God who comes near is the holy God who rescues, speaks, leads, and calls His people to faithful obedience.

Part Five · Tabernacle and Temple

A sanctuary among the people

God commands a movable sanctuary so He may dwell among Israel. Courtyard, altar, basin, Holy Place, lampstand, bread, incense, curtain, Most Holy Place, ark, and atonement cover communicate holiness, sacrifice, cleansing, worship, provision, prayer, and mediation. Exodus 25–40.

Priests, sacrifices, and glory

Priests serve as covenant mediators, and sacrifices address sin, impurity, guilt, thanksgiving, and fellowship. The Day of Atonement shows the need for cleansing and an appointed mediator. When the tabernacle is complete, glory fills it and God leads His people. Leviticus 1–7; 16; Exodus 40; Hebrews 8–10.

Moses values God Himself

After the golden calf, Moses pleads for God to continue with Israel. The promised land without God's presence is not enough. Exodus 32–34.

Ark, Jerusalem, and temple

The ark represents covenant presence but is not a good-luck charm; unrepentant Israel cannot manipulate God. David brings it to Jerusalem. Solomon builds the temple, glory fills it, and Solomon confesses that even the highest heavens cannot contain God. 1 Samuel 4–7; 2 Samuel 6; 1 Kings 6–8.

God places His name

God's name represents revealed identity, authority, reputation, ownership, and covenant commitment. The sanctuary is His appointed place of worship without containing Him. Deuteronomy 12; 1 Kings 8–9.

Memory anchor: Tabernacle and temple reveal covenant presence, but even the heavens cannot contain God.

Part Six · Sin, Exile, and Promised Return

Presence does not cancel holiness

Israel turns to idols, exploits vulnerable people, sheds blood, and trusts rituals while rejecting God. The prophets warn that the temple cannot protect unrepentant covenant breakers. Isaiah 1; Jeremiah 7; Micah 3; Amos 5.

Glory departs

Ezekiel sees temple idolatry and God's glory moving away from Jerusalem. Babylon destroys the temple in 586 BC. This does not mean Babylon's gods defeated the LORD; God brings covenant judgment. Ezekiel 8–11; 2 Kings 24–25.

God in exile

Exile removes people from Jerusalem but not from God's reach. Ezekiel receives visions in Babylon, Daniel prays under foreign empires, and Esther shows preserving care even without directly naming God. Jeremiah 29; Ezekiel 1; Daniel 1–6; Esther.

When God seems absent

Biblical believers cry out when God appears distant. Lament brings grief, fear, and unanswered questions to Him. Feeling abandoned is not the same as being abandoned. Psalms 13; 22; 42–43; 88; Lamentations 3; Habakkuk.

Promise of return

God promises to gather, cleanse, give new hearts, put His Spirit within His people, establish peace, dwell among them, bless nations, and renew creation. Isaiah 40; Jeremiah 31; Ezekiel 36–37; Joel 2; Zechariah 2.

Return remains incomplete

Exiles return and rebuild the temple, but the full prophetic restoration has not arrived. Foreign empires rule, sin remains, and glory is not described filling the second temple as before. The people wait for King, Spirit, forgiveness, glory, and renewal. Ezra 1–6; Haggai; Zechariah; Malachi.

Memory anchor: Sacred places cannot protect rebellion, but exile cannot place God's people beyond His reach or cancel His promise.

Part Seven · Jesus: God With Us

Word made flesh

The eternal Word was with God and was God, then became flesh and “dwelt”—tabernacled—among humanity. The disciples behold His glory. John 1:1–18.

Immanuel and revelation

Jesus is the eternal Son who becomes truly human without ceasing to be divine. He perfectly makes the unseen Father known. The Father and Son are distinct Persons who share the divine nature. Isaiah 7; Matthew 1; John 1; 14; Colossians 1; Hebrews 1.

True temple

When Jesus says, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it,” John explains that He speaks of His body. Jesus is the decisive meeting place between God and humanity. John 2:13–22; Matthew 12:6; Colossians 2:9.

Living water and transfiguration

Jesus invites the thirsty to drink and John connects the promise to the Spirit. At the transfiguration, radiance and cloud echo Sinai while the Father commands disciples to listen to His Son. Isaiah 44; Ezekiel 47; John 4; 7; Matthew 17.

Memory anchor: Jesus does not merely lead people toward God’s presence. He is Immanuel, the true temple, and the Son who makes the Father known.

Part Eight · Cross, Resurrection, and Ascension

Sin is the barrier

Humanity's deepest problem is not locating God but sin: guilt, corruption, hostility, slavery, judgment, and spiritual death. Moral effort and religious performance cannot reconcile us. Isaiah 59; Romans 1–3; Ephesians 2.

Jesus bears sin

The sinless Jesus gives His life, bears judgment, provides forgiveness, reconciles enemies, and establishes the new covenant through His blood. Isaiah 53; Mark 10:45; Luke 22; Romans 3; 2 Corinthians 5; 1 Peter 2.

Forsaken cry

Jesus quotes Psalm 22 from the cross. He truly bears sin and profound suffering, yet Father and Son do not cease sharing the one divine nature; Father, Son, and Spirit act together in salvation. Psalm 22; Matthew 27; Galatians 3; Hebrews 9.

Curtain and access

The temple curtain tears from top to bottom. Jesus' death opens access without making holiness unimportant: believers approach through His completed sacrifice and priestly mediation. Matthew 27; Hebrews 6; 9–10.

Resurrection and ascension

Jesus rises bodily, defeating death and beginning new creation. He ascends, reigns, intercedes, and pours out the Spirit. His glorified human body is in heaven while He remains with His people through the Spirit. Luke 24; John 20; Acts 1–2; Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 15.

I am with you always

Jesus promises to be with disciples as they make disciples among all nations. The promise is especially connected to mission under His authority. Matthew 28:18–20.

Memory anchor: Jesus cleanses sinners, opens the way to the Father, rises, reigns, and remains with His mission through the Spirit.

Part Nine · Holy Spirit and Church

The divine Person

The Spirit is not an impersonal force. He gives life, speaks, reveals Christ, convicts, teaches, guides, distributes gifts, produces holiness, and dwells in God's people. Genesis 1:2; Ezekiel 36; John 14–16; Acts 5; 1 Corinthians 2; 12.

Pentecost

Wind-like sound and fire-like appearances recall signs of God's presence. Languages understood by many peoples show the gospel moving to the nations. The risen Jesus pours out the promised Spirit. Joel 2; Acts 1–2.

Within believers

Everyone who belongs to Christ has the Spirit, who gives new birth, unites to Christ, assures adoption, helps prayer, produces fruit, gives gifts, strengthens holiness, and guarantees inheritance. John 3; Romans 8; Galatians 5; Ephesians 1.

Church as temple

The church is primarily a people, not a building. Collectively believers are God's temple; Jewish and Gentile believers are reconciled through the cross and built into God's dwelling. Individual bodies also belong to Christ and must honor God. 1 Corinthians 3; 6; Ephesians 2; 1 Peter 2.

Not becoming divine

Indwelling does not turn human beings into gods or parts of God. Believers remain created people who receive grace, fellowship, life, and transformation. Romans 8; 2 Corinthians 3; 2 Peter 1.

UNITY AND HOLINESS

God's dwelling people pursue truth, love, reconciliation, holiness, accountability, protection of vulnerable people, faithful teaching, prayer, worship, and mission. Unity never requires hiding abuse or excusing false teaching.

Memory anchor: God dwells by His Spirit within believers and among the people who belong to Jesus.

Part Ten · Experiencing God's Presence

Feelings change

Christians may feel peace, joy, conviction, awe, dryness, grief, depression, trauma, confusion, or numbness. Feelings matter but are not the final measure of God's faithfulness. Psalm 42–43; Romans 8; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 13.

Prayer and Scripture

Prayer brings worship, confession, thanksgiving, petition, intercession, and lament to the Father through the Son by the Spirit. Scripture is God's Word, and the Spirit helps readers receive and apply it. A feeling must not override clear biblical teaching. Matthew 6; Romans 8; Ephesians 2; 2 Timothy 3; 2 Peter 1.

Gathered worship

The church gathers for teaching, fellowship, prayer, singing, the Supper, giving, discipline, and care. No style, atmosphere, building, leader, volume, music, or production can manufacture God. Quiet and expressive forms may honor Him when worship is truthful, Christ-centered, Spirit-shaped, loving, orderly, understandable, and directed toward God. Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 11–14; Ephesians 5; Colossians 3.

Lord's Supper and baptism

The Supper remembers and proclaims Jesus' death, expresses participation and unity, and anticipates His return; traditions differ about how Christ is present. Baptism is Jesus' commanded sign of initiation connected to discipleship, union, cleansing, community, and new life; traditions differ about subjects, mode, and relationship to regeneration. Matthew 26; 28; Romans 6; 1 Corinthians 10–11.

Suffering and guidance

God may rescue immediately, sustain through long hardship, work through others, transform character, or carry a believer through death. Guidance comes through Scripture, wisdom, prayer, the Spirit, mature counsel, providence, and responsible judgment. Not every impression, dream, coincidence, or open door is a message from God. Test claims by Scripture, Jesus' character, truth, love, holiness, community, humility, and prayer. Romans 8; 12; 2 Corinthians 4; 1 Thessalonians 5; James 1.

Ordinary life

God is not limited to church gatherings. Believers live before Him while working, resting, eating, studying, creating, suffering, serving, and caring for others. Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3.

Memory anchor: God's presence is grounded in His promise and Christ's work, not our ability to produce an emotion.

Common Questions and Misunderstandings

WHY DOES GOD “COME DOWN”?

This accommodated language describes God making activity or presence known, not traveling through space like a creature. Genesis 11; Exodus 3.

WHAT DOES “HIDE HIS FACE” MEAN?

It may describe judgment, discipline, delayed help, or painful unanswered prayer—not loss of awareness. Deuteronomy 31; Psalm 13.

DID GOD “SHOW UP” AFTER BEING ABSENT?

Usually the phrase means His activity became especially evident. Clearer: “God made His help especially evident” or “We became deeply aware of His work.”

IS EVERY POWERFUL FEELING FROM GOD?

No. Emotion, music, memory, group influence, fear, or physical factors may contribute. Test experiences rather than automatically accepting or dismissing them. 1 Corinthians 14; 1 Thessalonians 5; 1 John 4.

DOES GOD LEAVE WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS?

Believers can grieve the Spirit and damage fellowship, yet security rests in Christ, not flawless performance. Grace never permits deliberate sin; it trains holiness. John 10; Romans 8; Ephesians 4; Titus 2.

WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED?

Matthew 18:20 concerns confrontation, witnesses, church discipline, and delegated authority. Jesus also hears one believer praying alone. Matthew 6; 18.

NEVER LEAVE MEANS WEALTH?

No. Hebrews 13 applies God's presence to contentment and freedom from love of money.

IS A BUILDING GOD'S HOUSE?

A building supports ministry, but the New Testament primarily identifies God's people as temple and household. 1 Corinthians 3; Ephesians 2; 1 Peter 2.

DOES GOD INDWELL EVERYONE IDENTICALLY?

God creates and sustains everyone; new-covenant indwelling is given to those who belong to Christ. Acts 17; Romans 8.

WHAT ABOUT ABUSE?

God sees and condemns oppression. His presence must never pressure someone to remain in danger. Seeking safety, reporting crimes, emergency help, medical care, and trustworthy pastoral or professional help may be necessary. Psalm 10; 82; Proverbs 24; Romans 13.

Part Eleven · Already and Not Yet

Already

- Jesus has come as Immanuel, died, and risen.
- The way to the Father is open through Christ.
- The Spirit lives within believers.
- The church is God's temple.
- Believers have access to the Father.
- Jesus remains with His mission.
- New creation has begun in Christ.

Not yet

- Believers still struggle with sin.
- God's presence is not universally recognized.
- Creation suffers and death remains.
- The church remains imperfect.
- Jesus has not returned visibly.
- Bodily resurrection and new creation remain future.

Intermediate state

Believers who die are with Christ while awaiting bodily resurrection. Hope does not end with souls in heaven: Jesus returns, raises the dead, judges evil, and renews creation. Luke 23; Philippians 1; 2 Corinthians 5; 1 Thessalonians 4; 1 Corinthians 15.

Memory anchor: God lives within and among His people now, but believers await His open, complete new-creation presence.

Part Twelve · New Creation

The holy city comes down

New Jerusalem descends from heaven, and a voice announces that God's dwelling is with humanity. God permanently joins His dwelling with redeemed humanity. Revelation 21:1–5.

No temple building

The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the city's temple. The entire city is filled with presence; no restricted sanctuary is needed because nothing unclean remains. Revelation 21:9–27.

Eden restored and surpassed

River and tree of life, fruit, healing, no curse, God's throne, and seeing His face return. Scripture moves from garden to garden-city filled with redeemed people from every nation. Genesis 2–3; Revelation 22.

They see His face

Direct fellowship does not mean believers become divine. They remain redeemed, resurrected human beings who enjoy God forever. Matthew 5:8; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 John 3:1–3; Revelation 22.

FINAL BEGINNER MEMORY ANCHOR

God made humanity for life with Him. Sin brought exile. Jesus came as Immanuel, opened the way, and gave the Spirit. Jesus will return, and God will dwell with His people forever.

Seven Days of Beginner Practice

Day 1 • Eden and Exile

Genesis 2:4–25; 3. What is provided, lost, and promised?

Day 2 • Exodus

Exodus 3:1–15; 13:17–22. What does God reveal and promise?

Day 3 • Tabernacle

Exodus 25:1–9; 33:12–17; 40:34–38. Why is it built, and why does Moses value God?

Day 4 • Temple and Exile

1 Kings 8:22–30; Ezekiel 10:1–19. Can the temple contain God, and why does glory depart?

Day 5 • God With Us

Matthew 1:18–23; John 1:1–18; 2:13–22. How is Jesus Immanuel and true temple?

Day 6 • Spirit and Church

Acts 2:1–21; 1 Corinthians 3:9–17; Ephesians 2:11–22. Who is God's temple?

Day 7 • New Creation

Revelation 21:1–5, 22–27; 22:1–5. What Eden images return, and what is removed?

Review and Reflection

- What does God's presence mean?
- How do universal presence and reconciled fellowship differ?
- What is lost through sin and Eden's exile?
- How is God with the patriarchs?
- What do exodus and Sinai reveal?
- What do tabernacle and temple teach?
- Why does glory depart?
- What do the prophets promise?
- Why is Jesus Immanuel and true temple?
- What does the cross accomplish?
- How does the risen Jesus remain with His people?
- Who is the Holy Spirit?
- How are individual believers and church God's temple?
- Why are feelings not the final measure?
- What does Matthew 18:20 mean in context?
- What is already true and not yet complete?
- How does Revelation fulfill and surpass Eden?

A prayer of response

Father, thank You for creating me to know You. Forgive my sin and hiding. Thank You for sending Jesus as Immanuel, opening the way through His death, and raising Him. Fill me with Your Spirit. Make Your church holy, truthful, loving, courageous, and faithful. Keep me near through suffering and seasons when I do not feel Your presence. Teach me to long for the day You dwell openly with Your people forever. Amen.

Part Thirteen · Want to Go Deeper?

OMNIPRESENCE, TRANSCENDENCE, IMMANENCE

God is fully present everywhere; exalted above and independent from creation; and near, active, and sustaining creation. These truths belong together. Psalm 139; Isaiah 40; Acts 17; Colossians 1.

FACE, NAME, AND GLORY

“Face” can express personal presence or favor; “name,” revealed identity and covenant authority; Hebrew kabod and Greek doxa, honor, splendor, radiance, or majesty. Context determines emphasis.

SHEKINAH

Shekinah is a later Jewish term associated with God’s dwelling or manifest presence. It does not occur in the Hebrew or Greek Bible. Later Jewish teaching used it for God’s presence among His people; Christians later adopted it for tabernacle, temple, cloud, and glory. Say “later tradition uses Shekinah,” not “the Bible calls it Shekinah.”

THEOPHANY

An appearance through which God makes Himself known, such as burning bush, Sinai, or Isaiah’s and Ezekiel’s visions.

ANGEL OF THE LORD AND CHRISTOPHANY

Some passages identify the messenger closely with God while distinguishing him. Views include created representative, theophany, preincarnate Son, or passage-specific explanations. Some also identify Joshua 5 or Daniel 3 with Christ, but the texts do not explicitly name Jesus; humility is appropriate.

EDEN AND TABERNACLE PATTERNS

Eden’s presence, east entrance, cherubim, precious materials, river, tree, and work/guard task support temple-like reading, though Genesis does not label it a temple. Creation-tabernacle parallels suggest sanctuary as an ordered miniature anticipating renewed creation.

HOLINESS AND RITUAL CLEANNESS

God’s holiness includes purity, uniqueness, and majesty. Ritual clean/unclean categories are not identical with morally good/evil; some ordinary processes restrict sanctuary access and teach boundaries, mortality, wholeness, and approach. Leviticus 11–16; Hebrews 9.

ATONEMENT

God’s appointed means of addressing sin, guilt, impurity, broken relationship, and holy access. Jesus fulfills and surpasses sacrifice through His once-for-all offering and priesthood. Leviticus 16; Romans 3; Hebrews 7–10.

EZEKIEL’S TEMPLE

Views of Ezekiel 40–48 include future physical temple, ideal restored sanctuary, symbolic new creation, fulfillment in Christ/church, or stages. The clear hope: God cleanses and dwells with His people.

TEMPLE AND AD 70

Jesus predicts Jerusalem’s temple destruction, fulfilled under Rome in AD 70. The New Testament centers temple fulfillment in Jesus, His sacrifice, priesthood, people, and new creation. Views of a future temple differ; all should preserve the sufficiency of Jesus’ sacrifice.

UNION WITH CHRIST

Believers are in, with, crucified with, raised with, and seated with Christ; members of His body and branches in the vine. Union connects forgiveness, adoption, transformation, access, indwelling, unity, and resurrection. John 15; Romans 6; Ephesians 1–2.

INDIVIDUAL AND CORPORATE INDWELLING

Romans 8 and 1 Corinthians 6 emphasize individual indwelling; 1 Corinthians 3 and Ephesians 2 emphasize corporate temple. Neither should erase the other.

SPIRIT BAPTISM AND FILLING

Christians agree every believer belongs to Christ through the Spirit but differ whether Spirit baptism is conversion/incorporation or distinct empowerment and whether tongues are expected evidence. Seek power, fruit, holiness, wisdom, love, and gifts while testing experience by Scripture.

WORSHIP STYLES

Quiet reflection, liturgy, spontaneous prayer, hymns, modern songs, instruments, silence, raised hands, or kneeling may serve worship. No style guarantees presence. Test whether worship is God-directed, Christ-exalting, biblical, Spirit-dependent, truthful, loving, orderly, non-manipulative, and fruitful in obedience. John 4; 1 Corinthians 12–14.

CHRIST IN THE LORD'S SUPPER

Catholic teaching uses transubstantiation; Orthodox teaching affirms real mystery; Lutheran teaching affirms sacramental presence; Reformed teaching emphasizes real spiritual participation; Baptist/memorial views emphasize remembrance, proclamation, fellowship, and spiritual presence. All should remember Jesus, proclaim His death, practice unity, examine themselves, care for one another, and await His return.

DIVINE HIDDENNESS AND LAMENT

God's apparent silence may involve human limits, sin, discipline, broken creation, opposition, delay, hidden providence, unmet expectations, health conditions, or mystery. Biblical responses include lament, remembrance, community, obedience, wise care, and hope. Job; Psalms 13; 22; 88; Habakkuk; Romans 8.

JUDGMENT AND PRESENCE

No one escapes God's universal authority. Final judgment excludes people from blessed fellowship while remaining under His judicial presence. Matthew 25; 2 Thessalonians 1; Revelation 20.

BEATIFIC VISION

The final direct enjoyment of God: believers see Him and Christ's glory without becoming infinite, omniscient, or divine. Matthew 5:8; John 17:24; 1 Corinthians 13:12; Revelation 22.

NEW CREATION, NOT ESCAPE

God raises bodies, liberates creation, removes evil and death, and dwells with redeemed humanity. Views differ on continuity details, but Scripture presents resurrection and renewal, not permanent abandonment of embodied life.

A Responsible Presence-Study Process

- Read the full passage and identify audience and covenant setting.
- Ask who is present with whom and whether presence is universal, revealed, covenantal, favorable, guiding, indwelling, liturgical, disciplinary, judicial, or future.
- Notice mediation through prophet, priest, sacrifice, sanctuary, Jesus, Spirit, or church.
- Consider holiness, sin, cleansing, judgment, and reconciliation.
- Trace garden, mountain, cloud, fire, glory, water, priesthood, sacrifice, and temple imagery.
- Connect the passage to Jesus.
- Distinguish already from not yet.
- Test experience by Scripture and compare faithful views when details are debated.
- Return to worship, holiness, community, mission, endurance, and hope.

Reusable worksheet

- Passage, writer, audience, historical and covenant setting:
- What kind of presence is emphasized?
- Favor, guidance, glory, discipline, or judgment?
- What symbols, locations, and mediators appear?
- How do holiness and sin affect access?
- What earlier Scripture lies behind this?
- How does Jesus fulfill or clarify it?
- What role does the Spirit have?
- Present, future, or both?
- What misunderstanding should be avoided?
- What is debated?
- How should this shape the church and my life?

Practice • Ephesians 2:11–22

Jewish and Gentile believers are reconciled to God through Jesus' cross, become one new humanity, receive access to the Father by one Spirit, and are built upon Christ the cornerstone into God's dwelling. The church cannot celebrate presence while embracing hostility, ethnic superiority, or needless division.

What to Read Next

- Genesis 1–3 — Eden, sin, and exile.
- Genesis 12; 28; 39 — God with Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph.
- Exodus 3; 13–14; 19–20 — bush, cloud, fire, Sinai.
- Exodus 25–40 — tabernacle and glory.
- Leviticus 16 — atonement and access.
- 1 Kings 8 — temple and uncontainable God.
- Ezekiel 8–11; 36–37; 43 — departing glory and return.
- Psalms 27; 42–43; 84; 139 — longing, lament, sanctuary, omnipresence.
- John 1–2; 4; 7; 14–17 — Jesus, temple, Spirit, fellowship.
- Hebrews 7–10 — sacrifice and High Priest.
- Acts 1–2; Ephesians 2 — Spirit, mission, and dwelling.
- Revelation 21–22 — God with humanity forever.

Final encouragement

You were made to know God. Sin brought hiding, but God called, promised, rescued, dwelt among His people, sent prophets, and came in Jesus. Jesus bore sin, opened the way, rose, and poured out the Spirit. God now lives within and among His people. One day faith becomes sight, the curse is gone, and God's servants see His face.

FINAL MEMORY ANCHOR

From Eden to new creation, God's purpose remains: "I will be their God, they will be My people, and I will dwell among them."

A Call to Salvation

God created you to know, love, and worship Him. Sin separates us from His favorable presence, and good behavior, rituals, church attendance, experiences, or Bible knowledge cannot restore us. Jesus, the eternal Son, became human, lived without sin, died for our sins, and rose bodily. Through Him sinners receive forgiveness, reconciliation, life, adoption, and the Spirit. Salvation is God's gift received by grace through faith. Read John 1:1–18; 3:16–18; Romans 3:21–26; 5:1–11; 6:23; 10:9–13; 1 Corinthians 15:1–4; 2 Corinthians 5:17–21; Ephesians 2:1–10.

A simple prayer

Lord Jesus, I know I have sinned and cannot bring myself into fellowship with God. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Please forgive me, reconcile me to the Father, make me new, give me Your Spirit, and teach me to follow You. Amen.

Prayer is not a magic formula. Jesus saves. If you trust Him, read Scripture, pray honestly, and connect with a faithful local church where the gospel is proclaimed, Scripture is taught in context, vulnerable people are protected, and Christ is honored.

Use, share, and verify

These resources were created with care but may contain mistakes. Please open the Bible and verify every passage in context. Possible errors or needed clarifications may be reported to 3NailResources@gmail.com for careful review and correction.

3Nails exists to help people know God by understanding His Word, recognizing Jesus throughout Scripture, and becoming lifelong disciples who study the Bible with growing confidence.

- Point people to God.
- Reveal the heart of the Father.
- Magnify Jesus.
- Be grounded in Scripture.
- Encourage readers to open their Bibles.
- Build confidence, not dependence.

Rooted in Scripture — Pointing to Jesus