

Lesson #16
Hebrews 9:1-10
Feb. 11, 2015

** Before class today, print out a picture of the Tabernacle from the Internet. Show your class the picture and point out the different parts of the Tabernacle: The outer courtyard, bronze altar or altar of burnt offering, laver [for washing], ark of the covenant, mercy seat, Holy Place, Holy of Holies, Veil, Table of Showbread, golden lampstand, and Altar of Incense.*

In the Old Testament, God's people worshipped Him in a special place called the Tabernacle. Notice how different the Tabernacle was from our church building! In fact, the Tabernacle wasn't really a building at all. It wasn't like the buildings where we come to worship God today. The Tabernacle was a *tent* that God's people could set up when they made camp for the night. You see, God's people traveled through the desert for many years. They needed a place where they could worship and that they could carry with them wherever they went and then pack up when they left. God gave Moses special instructions about how to build the Tabernacle. Moses followed God's plans and encouraged everyone who could to help build the Tabernacle. Everyone worked together to build the place where they could worship God.

The Tabernacle was always set up in the center of the camp with all the other tents around it. Why do you think they put the Tabernacle in the center? With the Tabernacle in the middle of the camp everyone could see it everyday, no matter where they were working. When they saw the tent, they remembered that God was with them. Many years later, God's people finally stopped wandering in the desert. They built a new place to worship God that they didn't have to set up and carry around with them. This time they built a permanent building out of stones where they could worship God. It was called the Temple.

In the New Testament, God sent His son Jesus to die on the cross for all of our sins. If we follow Jesus, He lives in our hearts. We don't have to be in a church building or the Tabernacle or the Temple to worship God or be in his presence. We can worship God wherever we are!

Did you know that whenever a group of people who believe in Jesus meet together, God is there with them? When I was a child I learned a rhyme that went like this: "Here is the church. Here is the steeple. Open the doors and you see all the people." As I grew up, I learned that the Church is not just a building. The Church is actually the people! You and I are part of God's Church when Jesus lives in our hearts. I'm so glad we are together in God's Church!

Pray: "Dear God, thank you for giving your people a special place to worship you. Thank you for sending Jesus to live in our hearts so that we can be part of your Church. Remind us to worship you wherever we go. Amen."

Bible Verse: "And because you belong to him, you too are being built together. You are being made into a house where God lives through his Spirit." Ephesians 2:22

Grow At Home #16
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Today the children learned these God facts:

- I am a part of God's church.
- I can worship God wherever I am, because Jesus lives in me.

(The Tabernacle and the Temple were special places where God's people worshipped Him in Bible times. The structures were reminders for God's people to have faith; God was among them. Worship isn't limited to a place and includes believers of all ages—even children. When Jesus lives in us, we can worship anytime, anywhere!)

Live It Out: Your child has a special class at church and loving teachers waiting with open arms. Make it a habit of talking with your child about church as being a happy and safe place. Take time to introduce your child to Sunday school teachers, pastors and other church leaders. Teach your child to look for the helpers in your church. Wave, smile, or say hello to them. At home, explore with your child these questions: Whom did you see helping at church today? What were they doing?

Commit to worshipping God at home, too. Set aside a special time and place (like the kitchen table) to be together. Whether morning or evening, take a few minutes each day to read scripture together and pray. Allow your child to participate by saying part of a daily Bible verse or praying out loud. A special role or speaking part will help your child know he or she is a vital part of worship in the community of faith.

Prayer: "Lord, we are thankful to be part of Your church. We are also thankful that we can worship You, not only at church on Sundays, but anytime and anywhere!"

Bible Verse: "Worship the Lord with gladness. Come to Him with songs of joy."
Psalms 100:2