

**November 2, 2014**

**Ezekiel 43:1-12 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> Then the man brought me to the gate facing east,

<sup>2</sup> and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory.

<sup>3</sup> The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when he came to destroy the city and like the visions I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown.

<sup>4</sup> The glory of the LORD entered the temple through the gate facing east.

<sup>5</sup> Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

<sup>6</sup> While the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speaking to me from inside the temple.

<sup>7</sup> He said: "Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites forever. The people of Israel will never again defile my holy name—neither they nor their kings—by their prostitution and the funeral offerings for their kings at their death.

<sup>8</sup> When they placed their threshold next to my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them, they defiled my holy name by their detestable practices. So I destroyed them in my anger.

<sup>9</sup> Now let them put away from me their prostitution and the funeral offerings for their kings, and I will live among them forever.

<sup>10</sup> "Son of man, describe the temple to the people of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their sins. Let them consider its perfection,

<sup>11</sup> and if they are ashamed of all they have done, make known to them the design of the temple—its arrangement, its exits and entrances—its whole design and all its regulations and laws. Write these down before them so that they may be faithful to its design and follow all its regulations.

<sup>12</sup> "This is the law of the temple: All the surrounding area on top of the mountain will be most holy. Such is the law of the temple.

Good Morning, my sisters and brothers in Christ. We have made it to another first Sunday – another Sunday in which we will take the Lord's Supper and remember the new covenant that He established for us before He went to Calvary. The modern day psalmist said:

*When I Think about the Lord,  
How He saved me, how He raised me,  
How He filled me, with the Holy Ghost.  
How He healed me, to the uttermost.*

*When I Think about the Lord,  
How He picked me up and turned me around,  
How He placed my feet on solid ground*

#### *Chorus*

*It makes me wanna shout,  
Hallelujah,  
Thank you JESUS,  
LORD, your worthy, of all the glory, and all the honor,  
And all the praise... <sup>1</sup>*

I don't know about you but I am glad to be able to stand here this morning and think about my God. I am glad to lift my arms, both my arms and shout Hallelujah. I am glad that with each new day comes the opportunity to say Thank You Jesus. I am glad that I know that the Lord is worthy of all the glory, all the honor and all the praise.

This morning we begin to study the writings of the prophet Ezekiel. Ezekiel was a contemporary of Jeremiah. As Jeremiah was preaching in Jerusalem that that city would soon be taken over by the Babylonians, Ezekiel was in Babylon with the group of captives that had already been taken there preaching the same message. Our passage for consideration this morning is after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple. Chapter 40:1 tells us that the vision given to Ezekiel occurred during the 25<sup>th</sup> year of the exile. Chapters 40-42 describe for us in detail the temple that will be rebuilt after the exile is over and chapter 43 describes when the glory of the Lord fills the temple.

Now it would be easy for us to spend our time together analyzing who the man was that was leading Ezekiel around during the vision. We could

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.lyricsmode.com/lyrics/h/hillsong\\_united/when\\_i\\_think\\_about\\_the\\_lord.html](http://www.lyricsmode.com/lyrics/h/hillsong_united/when_i_think_about_the_lord.html)

even work with the phrase "Son of Man". However, I believe that the best application of this lesson will come if we focus on the concept of "temple."

<sup>4</sup> The glory of the LORD entered the temple...

<sup>5</sup> ... and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

<sup>8</sup> I heard someone speaking to me from inside the temple.

Over the years I have asked you to think about your life as being soil where the Word of God could grow. I have asked you "what kind of soil is in your pot?" I have challenged you to think of your life as being a tent and worried you about some of the stuff that was buried in your tent that might need to be dug up and burned. I have even asked you to consider your life as a sheep and inquired as to what kind of sheep are you. So today it should come as no surprise that I am asking you about your temple. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth and taught them that their bodies were temples.

*<sup>17</sup> But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit*

*<sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.<sup>2</sup>*

This body, this earthly vessel that came from dust and to dust will return is where the Spirit of the Most High God has chosen to dwell. If you believe that would you pray with me and for me as I raise this question?

**WHAT DO YOU NEED TO MOVE OUT SO GOD CAN MOVE IN?**

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6&version=NIV&interface=print>

## **SHALL WE PRAY!**

**God of Heaven and earth we your people come this morning desiring to hear a Word from heaven. We thank you for allowing us to be here; we thank you for the changing of the seasons for it reminds us that you are in charge and we are not; we thank you for what you have provided since the last time we gathered. But now Father we ask that you send a Word. A Word to teach us, train us and transform us. Abba, let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to you. AMEN and AMEN.**

### **WHAT DO YOU NEED TO MOVE OUT SO GOD CAN MOVE IN?**

I have a dilemma in my life. I want to always be available to the members of this congregation. I want each of you to feel free to call, text, drop in and share with me the issues that trouble you. One way I have described this is to say I am a stop, drop and roll pastor. Others have said that I have been able to develop relationships within the congregation that makes me more like a member of the family or a close friend. I am proud and humbled by those comments but they are also at the heart of my dilemma. In order to be a "stop, drop and roll" pastor I have had to teach myself to deal with surprises; not worry about the condition of my home; and not be self-conscious if someone arrives while I am in my pajamas and bathrobe.

**In other words, I have had to move some of my preferences out of the way so that God might have His way.**

### **WHAT DO YOU NEED TO MOVE OUT SO GOD CAN MOVE IN?**

I have two male clergy colleagues that I am very fond of and also have a great respect for. Over the years I have heard them each tell their stories in very different environments, but the stories were the same. Stories of having to wrestle with the negative impacts of alcohol in their lives; stories of deciding one day to give up something so that God could move into their lives and have His way. One of these men is older than I am and he avoids alcohol whenever possible. The other, about 20 years younger, still hangs out in clubs, bars and plays with a band frequently in places that serve

alcohol. He uses the fact that he now abstains as part of his personal testimony about the goodness of God.

### **WHAT DO YOU NEED TO MOVE OUT SO GOD CAN MOVE IN?**

Rarely does a week go by that someone does not ask me about being a female pastor. (It is as if I used to be a male pastor and I am now a female pastor.) Some folks just want to **know** the stages of the journey. Others want to **challenge** the journey and sometimes there are those who want to help me see **the error** of my journey. I use to spend time trying to explain, trying to answer honestly the questions put in front of me, trying to find a way to help them to understand that God does not fit into the box they have built. God is bigger than you and I. **But to get to that place I had to move any doubt that I had out of my temple so that God could do what He had planned to do from the foundation of the earth.**

A young man from the neighborhood attended FBC-Chicago. We learned that he was a foster child and he along with his siblings had been removed from an abusive situation. Week after week and month after month he came to church. He rarely smiled, rarely participated in activities, and even more rarely did he initiate conversation but he continued to come. Eventually his sisters accepted Christ and were baptized but he did not. Finally, I asked him what needed to happen to allow God to move into his life. It took a few minutes to get an answer and finally he turned toward me and said "Hate, I got to move out the **hate** so God can have some room."

### **WHAT DO YOU NEED TO MOVE OUT SO GOD CAN MOVE IN?**

The Children of Israel had been given land that they did not purchase; houses to live in that they did not build, crops to harvest that they had not planted and silver and gold they had not earned to purchase whatever else that they may need. God had answered their cry when they were in Egypt and brought them to the Promised Land. You would think that they would remember, that the stories of the elders would have been passed on, that the Festivals of Remembrance would have helped them to understand that God was a jealous God who demanded obedience. Forty years in the wilderness had not taught them anything! Once in the Promised Land they begin a cycle of rebellion, repentance, restoration, and rejoicing and back to rebellion. And now their rebellion lead to captivity – captivity that will last 70 years.

God through Ezekiel outlines for them what they must do in order for the glory of God to be restored to the temple. They must give up prostitution, and idol worship.

*<sup>9</sup> Now let them put away from me their prostitution  
and the funeral offerings for their kings,  
and I will live among them forever*

### **WHAT DO YOU NEED TO MOVE OUT SO GOD CAN MOVE IN?**

I can hear someone saying this lesson does not apply to me. I have no idols, and I am not a prostitute. Okay, maybe in the most common definition these terms do not apply to you. But allow me to enlarge the definitions just a bit. The most common definition of idol is something that is worshipped and so we think of golden calves, graven images, and false gods. All of which are OT references.

But we do have idols here in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

movie stars,  
athletes,  
tv personalities,  
the rich and famous,  
American idol

and we do have our own golden calves –

wardrobe,  
shoes,  
homes,  
landscaping,  
cars

Want a reality check?

On an "average day" in 2003, persons in the U.S. age 15 and over slept about 8.6 hours, spent 5.1 hours doing leisure and sports activities, worked for 3.7 hours, and spent 1.8 hours doing household activities. During the remaining 4.8 hours, Americans ate, drank, went to school and shopped. So, say the results of the [first American Time Use Survey \(ATUS\)](#) conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).<sup>3</sup>

In 2011 when the survey was last completed on an average we spent about 20 minutes of every day on "organizational, civic and religious activities." We

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<sup>3</sup> <http://usgovinfo.about.com/od/censusandstatistics/a/averageday.htm>

gave more time to gardening, personal grooming and acquiring goods and services then we gave to God.

### **WHAT DO YOU NEED TO MOVE OUT SO GOD CAN MOVE IN?**

As for prostitution when applied to sex we are talking about engaging in sex for some form of payment

he or she pays for dinner and you reimburse with sex

But prostitution is more than sex it is:

"unworthy or corrupt use of one's talents for the sake of personal or financial gain"<sup>4</sup>

you do someone else's homework, take their test, buy liquor for someone underage, plagiarism

### **WHAT DO YOU NEED TO MOVE OUT SO GOD CAN MOVE IN?**

<sup>4</sup> The glory of the LORD **entered the temple...**

<sup>5</sup> ... and the glory of the LORD **filled the temple.**

<sup>8</sup> I heard someone **speaking to me from inside the temple.**

God is willing to do that for you if you will move something out so that God can move in.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prostitution>