

The Watchman #5
The Day God's Glory Left

Word

Scripture Reference

Ezekiel 8—11

Discussion Questions

1. There are times when someone we love pushes us to threaten to leave the relationship. What are circumstances that make you want to leave someone you love? Share and discuss.
2. You may have thought that God wouldn't leave His people and even quote verses from scriptures that would back up what you believe. But there IS a passage in the scripture that says that God did leave His people because they wouldn't change and wouldn't stop in their sinful ways. It only happened once, but it was a very sad account in the scripture when God's glory left. The presence of God resided in Jerusalem, specifically inside the Temple in the Holy of Holies where the Ark of Covenant was located. Read Ezekiel 8-11. God took Ezekiel from Babylon to the temple in Jerusalem to show him the great wickedness being practiced there. The people and their leaders, even the priests, were exhaustively corrupt. People took God's presence for granted and sinned horribly. Discuss why many Christians are not growing in their faith, as if God's presence is not in their lives.
3. In these passages, we see the truth of **the ugly progression of sin**. Ezekiel saw how far the people's sins have gone (ch. 8:1-18). It was the reason God's presence was leaving them.
 - a. *Sin in plain sight—unchecked and accepted* (v. 8:4-6). What was the first thing that God showed Ezekiel? Why was God rightfully jealous? God will not fight for your attention. Sin will drive Him away. Is there anything in your life that would make God rightfully jealous? Discuss examples of possible

unchecked sins that have become accepted, which could happen in a Christian's life.

- b. *Sin in the hidden corners of life, unseen by many except God* (v. 7-13). What was the next thing that God showed Ezekiel? Who were involved in doing those detestable things in the sight of God? Discuss why Christians sin in the "dark," hiding them in the corners of their lives? Don't they know that God can see them even if the closest person in their lives doesn't? What makes sin that is hidden in your heart more dangerous than sin done in the open?
 - c. *An emotional connection to sin* (v. 14-15). What was the third abominable act of sin in the vision that God showed Ezekiel? Emotional connection to sin is when you love something more than God, just like these women who were weeping for a Babylonian god whom they thought was dead. Emotional connection to sin is also when you don't get embarrassed even if others are aware of the sin you have committed. Discuss how Christians "fall in-love" with sin then find it difficult to give that sin up. How can that emotional tie with sin be broken?
 - d. *Sin causing others to sin* (v.16-18). What was the last act of sin that God showed to Ezekiel? How did this sin affect others? Discuss how sin affects not only you, but your loved ones as well. Describe how sin, just like some illnesses, can contaminate others.
4. The second truth we see in these passages is that **God punishes those who sin (ch. 9:1-11)**. God's judgment was detailed in this chapter. After Ezekiel had seen how corrupt Jerusalem had become, God called one man to spare those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things done. Then He called the angels of death to kill the wicked people in the city. In the Christian life, how does God judge sin? Could you escape the consequences of sin? Why should God's judgment keep you from sinning?
 5. The third truth in our passage is that **God leaves when there is sin, but reluctantly, because of His love (ch. 10:1-11:25)**. God's glory departed from the temple because of the people's sin. His

perfect holiness demands judgment for sin. How can you commit yourself, your loved ones, your church, and even your nation to follow God faithfully so that you never have to experience God leaving you?

Walk

God's holiness required that He leave the temple because they had so defiled it. For 400 years since God left, His glory was not seen until the announcement of Jesus' birth to the shepherds (Luke 2). By sending His Son Jesus Christ to earth to be the propitiation of our sins, God assured us that He will never leave His people again. Have you placed your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? Ponder on this:

*Search me, O God, and know my heart today;
try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray.
See if there be some wicked way in me;
cleanse me from every sin and set me free.*

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, You have made us aware one more time the dangers of living in sin. We implore You Lord that by Your grace we will not allow sin to progress in our lives. That sin will not go unchecked, and will not nourish in the hidden corners of our hearts. We pray that You will break up any emotional connection we have with it. And You will not allow us to cause others to sin. We pray that when You search our hearts and convict us of the wrong things we may have done, that we will right away ask You to forgive us and cleanse us. Thank you that although You hate sin, being the Holy and Righteous God, You love us and wouldn't want to depart from us. Help us to always choose to be faithful to You. In Jesus' Name. Amen.