For Small Group Discussion

 -Discuss the history surrounding today’s text (ie tabernacle as dwelling place of God). Make sure you understand the scenario.

 -Process Jay’s thought about ***crescendo.*** Why is it important for us to realize that the essential moment in today’s story is the entrance of God’s presence? How might we prioritize everything other than God’s presence in our lives? How might we become more involved in praising God’s presence in our lives, in our church?

 -Reread Solomon’s benediction (1 Kings 8:56-61) and identify how God 1. Remains with us always (verses 56,57) 2. Causes our faithfulness (verse (58), 3. Perpetuates our cause for His glory (59,60).

 -Look at John 1:14. How does 1 Kings 8 connect with Christ.

 -Pray that we might be people who praise God’s presence (and not just his blessings).

 -Have a great week. We love you.

Jay and Mona

“Praising the Presence of God” Pastor Jay Cave

 Texts: 1 Kings 8: 1-15; 56-61

 Sermon Notes:

For Your Consideration.

 To understand today’s text, we must go back to the time of Moses. During the wilderness wandering, God’s dwelling place was a tent known as the ***tabernacle*** (Exodus 25,26). The Lord would remain in the holiest part of the tent where sacrifices were made (Exodus 40:34-38). Fast forward 500 years. When David finally became king, he wanted to build a permanent dwelling place for God, but God said “No.” David was told that his son, Solomon would be given power for the project. However, before his death, David gave Solomon the blueprints for the temple, enlisted the community workers and even had a large fundraising drive! David made sure that this great work would not go unfinished (see 1 Chronicles 17, 22, 28, 29).

 When Solomon took the throne, he immediately set out to build a “house” for God. (1 Kings 5,6). Lumber was imported from Lebanon, tens of thousands of laborers were conscripted from Israel. Stonecutters got busy. Craftsmen began sculpting works of bronze silver and gold. Based on the model of the tabernacle, Solomon’s temple was a lavish, splendid housing for the dwelling place of God.

 As our text begins today (1 Kings 8), the temple has been completed. The entire community has gathered together, and Solomon has the priests bring in the ark of the covenant. God’s glory (presence) then fills the temple and the “cloud” is so thick that priests cannot conduct their duties. Solomon then offers extended praise for God’s presence among them.

**Observation:** In the world of music, there is a term called *crescendo.* It is the building of tension towards a peak moment when all the sounds come together. In our story today, everything was a crescendo that led to the entrance of God’s presence. The planning, the gathering, the building, the sculpting…all these are crescendo moments. Each moment is beautiful and important, but the most important moment is the entrance of God’s presence. Notice that David doesn’t give praise for the crescendo moments along the way. He give praise for God’s presence among them. David doesn’t praise the workers, he doesn’t praise the givers, he doesn’t praise the craftsmen. He simply praises the presence of God, who, 1. Remains with his people (verses 56, 57), 2. Causes obedience (verse 58), 3. Perpetuates His own cause for His own glory (verse 59, 60).

 **Application:** Our task is to create a culture for the thickness of God’s presence by praising Him constantly. Often we get sidetracked by crescendo moments. But let’s praise the Lord. He will never leave us. He causes our faithfulness, and He is even now perpetuating our cause for his glory.

**Christ connection:** The entrance of God’s *glory* into the temple points towards the entrance of Jesus into the world. John 1:14 tells us *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling (or tabernacle) among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.* All of history is a crescendo to the coming of Christ. All of your life is a crescendo leading up to the moment you acknowledge him as Lord and Savior.