

**EXODUS 35-40: SERVE**  
**SERMON-ALIGNMENT CURRICULUM**  
by Kevin McGill

The book of Exodus closes with a powerful transformation. The people of Israel—once helpless slaves—have become a nation learning to serve God with willing hearts. From fear to faith, from bondage to belonging, they have journeyed with a God who delivers, disciplines, and dwells among them. These final chapters of Exodus (35–40) show us what happens when God’s love takes root in a community: His people serve Him joyfully, His Spirit fills their work, and His glory fills their midst.

**Group Discussion Questions**

**What are two or three things God and others have affirmed in you and said you’re good at?**

**I. From Fear to Faithful Service**

At the beginning of Exodus, Israel was powerless and afraid. They cried out from slavery (Exodus 2:23–25), unsure if God would even hear. God answered by raising up Moses, parting the Red Sea, and defeating Pharaoh. But even after such deliverance, the people doubted Him. In the wilderness, they grumbled about food and water (Exodus 16:2–3). Yet over time, through divine patience, they learned that this God could be trusted. By the end of the book, the same people who once complained now joyfully offer their best to build His dwelling place. Love has replaced fear, and obedience flows from gratitude.

This is the arc of spiritual growth: from fear to trust, from complaint to worship, from receiving grace to giving it away. True service begins when our hearts rediscover love for God. Just as in a marriage restored by renewed affection, love overflows into humble acts of service.

**Group Discussion Questions:**

- **What are your typical motivations for service—love, duty, or reciprocity? Why do you think that is? (1 Corinthians 13:1–3, Galatians 5:13–14; Philippians 2:3–4)**
- **Imagine giving your time and talent out of love for God and others, rather than for any other reason. What do you believe you would experience, and why—freedom, joy, peace? (John 15:9–11; Colossians 3:23–24)**

**Spirit-Filled Service (Exodus 35:30–35)**

When God calls Bezalel to construct the tabernacle, Scripture says, 'He has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship' (Exodus 35:31). This is

the first mention of anyone being filled with the Spirit in the Bible—not a prophet or king, but an artisan. The Spirit empowers him to design, to build, and to create beauty for the glory of God.

This shows that God values ordinary work done in extraordinary faith. The Spirit does not only fill people for preaching or miracles; He fills them for daily tasks—teaching, serving, building, repairing, leading, and creating. When our work is done for the Lord, it becomes worship. (Colossians 3:23–24).

A Spirit-filled church is not defined by giftedness but by willingness. God calls spirit-filled greeters, teachers, sound techs, artists, and caregivers—people who bring His presence into every act of service. The difference between ordinary and Spirit-filled work is the posture of the heart. When we serve out of love, joy, and dependence on God, even simple tasks become sacred.

#### **Group Discussion Questions:**

- **According to Exodus 35, as disciples, we are told that our talents are Spirit-given. Do you truly believe this? If not, why? (Exodus 35:30–35; 1 Corinthians 12:4–7; Romans 12:6–8)**
- **Where might God be inviting you to embrace your Spirit-filled gifts and to serve His kingdom work? (Ephesians 2:10; 1 Peter 4:10–11)**

#### **Keeping God's Pattern (Exodus 39–40)**

The phrase 'as the LORD commanded Moses' appears eighteen times in Exodus 39–40. The repetition is intentional. God wanted His tabernacle built exactly according to His design. Moses and the people followed every detail—the colors, the fabrics, the furnishings—because God's presence would dwell only where His pattern was honored.

This teaches us that God's work must be done in God's way. In the New Testament, Jesus gave His church a clear mission: 'Go and make disciples of all nations' (Matthew 28:18–20). The early believers devoted themselves to teaching, prayer, fellowship, and worship (Acts 2:42–47). When the church aligns itself with this pattern, it flourishes. When it drifts from it, it loses power and purpose.

Healthy ministry is not defined by innovation but by faithfulness. Just as the tabernacle was built according to divine blueprints, the church must be built according to Scripture. God blesses what He designs.

#### **Group Discussion Questions:**

- **What does it mean for your plans to follow God's design rather than your own? (John 15:4–5)**
- **Where might you need to realign your plans or commitments to God's design?**

#### **IV. When the Work Is Finished (Exodus 40:33–35)**

When Moses completed the work, 'the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle' (Exodus 40:34). God's glory visibly descended, confirming that His presence would dwell among His people. This is one of the most breathtaking moments in Scripture. The God who thundered from Sinai now rests in their midst.

This moment teaches us that God's glory follows faithful completion. When God's people serve together, follow His commands, and offer their best, His presence fills what they have built. He blesses love-driven obedience.

The same is true for us today. When we faithfully serve in our homes, workplaces, and churches, God's glory becomes visible—not in clouds or fire, but in transformed hearts and restored relationships. Our faithfulness prepares a place for His presence.

#### **Group Discussion Questions:**

- **How have you seen God's presence show up in your life or community when His people serve faithfully? (2 Corinthians 6:16)**
- **What unfinished work might God be waiting on so that He can be made known through you?**

#### **V. Our Mission: Making God Known**

Exodus closes with the tabernacle filled with glory, and the people moving forward under the guidance of God's presence (Exodus 40:36–38). This points us to Jesus, who 'became flesh and dwelt among us' (John 1:14). It also points to the church, the living temple of God's Spirit (Ephesians 2:21–22).

When God's people serve with love, filled by the Spirit and aligned to His Word, the world around them encounters God's presence. Service is not merely about volunteering; it is about revealing God's heart. Every act of service becomes a testimony: 'God is here.' (Matthew 5:14–16).

Our mission, then, is not to impress but to make God known—to build spaces in our homes, churches, and cities where His glory can dwell. As we love our neighbors, care for the hurting, and proclaim the gospel, we continue the work begun in Exodus: preparing a place for God's glory to fill.

**Take a moment to share any closing thoughts and then pray.**