

“However, the Most High doesn’t live in temples made by human hands. As the prophet says, ‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Could you build me a temple as good as that?’ asks the Lord. ‘Could you build me such a resting place? Didn’t my hands make both heaven and earth?’” Acts 7:48-50 NLT

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Stephen speaks up to the council. A very disturbing, disruptive speech that gets him killed, but it was worth it. Here Stephen brings ANOTHER course correction to the council (and all who would follow). The true tale of the tabernacle. Maybe we call it tabernacleology or templeology? The study of our need for God to live where we tell him to live! There were basically TWO raw nerves within the system that set the religious leaders off: 1. The Sabbath, 2. The temple. ⚠️ Don’t mess with either! ⚠️ Stephen walks them through their own history, then closes with everyone’s favorite dead prophet Isaiah. God does not live in boxes - not even holy ones! Quit making holy boxes and acting like God lives there, it’s just ridiculous. Isaiah paints a humbling picture, when God puts his feet up on a stool - it’s the ENTIRE EARTH. Our fascination with building a place for God and expecting him to stay there is silly. As Andy Stanley says, “God’s a mobile God,” He goes where he wants, when he wants and if you want to be in a relationship with him, you’ll follow him - not get Him to meet you in a box!

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Dad,
As chaotic as my life and decisions seem, you know I have a fondness for control and organization. You can’t look around my house and see it, but in my heart I’m looking for boxes to store tools, useful (or not), and memories. But, I cannot live my life trying to box you up! I can’t live my life where I visit you in a holy box, or try to get others to visit you in a holy box because that’s just not who you are and it’s not what you want from me. You meet with me in a garden, or a beach, or a hospital or a taco-truck street. When we (the church) gather it’s for our sake not yours. It’s when we come together to sing and declare your goodness as one. It’s when we come together to grieve, laugh, serve and tell stories of your intervention in our lives. When we do gather, you don’t live in that box, you live in us. And, when we leave the box, you live through us to touch the hard places of life for others. Please help us understand this Covid-19 disruption as a blessing of change and not go back to trying to stuff you in our holy boxes again.

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rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root