

“I Will Meet You”

Exodus 30:1,6 ¹ “Make an altar of acacia wood for burning incense.

⁶ Put the altar in front of the curtain that shields the ark of the covenant law—before the atonement cover that is over the tablets of the covenant law—where I will meet with you.

As we meet with God today, what are your needs? What is your most pressing need today?

We all have them. As a matter of fact, if I were a betting man, I would say it is a safe bet that everyone in this room has at least one need today.

Whatever your need is today, I want you to know there is a place where you can get that need met.

That place is called the “Altar”, and it is at the Altar that your life will be “Altered”.

The New Testament Altar

Hebrews 13:9-10 Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by eating ceremonial foods, which is of no benefit to those who do so.

¹⁰ We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat.

Hebrews 13:1-17 PP35 (A.) The Christian church has its altar. We have an altar, not a material altar, but a personal one, and that is Christ; He is both our altar, and our sacrifice; He sanctifies the gift. The altars under the law were types of Christ; the brazen altar of the sacrifice, the golden altar of his intercession. (from Matthew Henry's Commentary)

“A new covenant Christian's altar is Jesus Christ; for it is through Him that we offer our “spiritual sacrifices” to God. We may set aside places in our church buildings and call them altars, but they are really not altars in the biblical sense...the gifts that we bring to God are acceptable, not because of any earthly altar, but because of a heavenly altar, Jesus Christ.” (Warren Wiersbe BE CONFIDENT)

Christ Jesus is our “Altar”. It is only as we come to Christ that our lives can truly be “Altered”.

Church Altars

If the Old Testament altars are no longer necessary and Christ Jesus is our altar now, how did we come up with the concept of the church altar? Why do we have this thing called an altar in our church? Is it just the end of the stage? Is it a place to kneel, or is it a special place where supernatural power flows?

What is this altar for?

Early in the 19th century when revival meetings were held in the USA, the anxious seat concept was again used but referred to as the “Mourners Bench.” The bench was a place, generally at the front of the assembly, where seekers were brought together for instruction and encouragement. It was also a place to receive prayer.

Later, this concept was incorporated into church buildings. Places were built where people could come and kneel in prayer. This was referred to as an “Altar.”

Very similar to the altars of history, it was a place where (because of the slain Lamb of God) people could worship, praise, seek forgiveness, and generally, be in the presence of their God.

The Altar of Salvation

As a child, I had a life altering experience at one of these church altars.

- The altar was a place where I came and surrendered my life to Jesus.
- Age 7 – Summer Sunday Night - Song “Just As I Am”

Just as I Am, Without One Plea By: Charlotte Elliott

Just as I am, without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

- New life! It felt right! I knew that I had been changed.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

Many of you have experienced the same thing!

Some of you need to come to the altar today and let Christ Jesus alter your existence. That's what this altar is for!

The Altar of Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Luke 11:9-13 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. 11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Many of you have experienced the same thing!

Some of you need to come to the altar today and let Christ Jesus continue to alter your existence by filling you with the Holy Spirit.

- Maybe it's the first time you have ever asked for something like that.
- Maybe it's just time for a refreshing of the Spirit's presence in your life. [That's what this altar is for!](#)

The Altar of Holy Matrimony

Janet and I, before God and the witnesses assembled, stood at the altar and entered into a covenant with one another.

Ephesians 5:31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

Many of you have experienced the same thing!

- Some of you need to set a date to come to this altar and enter into a covenant marriage together. Stop shacking up or living in sin and fornicating prior to marriage.
- Some of you need to come to the altar today and renew your vows. Renew your commitment to one another as Husband and Wife.
- You need to bring your marriage problems to the altar and ask Jesus to heal your marriage.

[That's what this altar is for!](#)

The Altar of Prophecy

- I needed this word of encouragement because I didn't realize that I wouldn't arrive at the place where God wanted me to be until 23 years later.

1 Corinthians 14:3

But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.

Many of you have experienced the same thing!

Some of you need to come to the altar today and hear a word or get a word from the Lord that will strengthen, encourage, and comfort you. [That's what this altar is for!](#)

The Altar of Healing

James 5:14-16 Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Many of you have experienced the same thing!

Some of you need to come to the altar today and have someone agree with you in prayer for your physical body. Some of you need to come and ask God to heal you. [That's what this altar is for!](#)

The Altar of Agreement

Many times in my life, I knew what I needed from the Lord. I had prayed but the answers seemed to be slow in coming. It wasn't until I had people agree with me in prayer that I was able to see measurable results.

I've learned now, if I need something from the Lord or if I need God to move quickly on my behalf, I look for people to pray with me. Because there is such power in agreement.

Matthew 18:19-20 "Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Many of you have experienced the same thing!

Some of you need to come to the altar today and let someone agree with you in prayer.

- You may not like doing this.
- You may ask, "Well, why did God set it up that way?"

- I don't know. All I know is that this is one of the most effective ways of getting your prayers answered.
- So why walk into a room filled with people who can agree with you in prayer and walk out of that room without letting anyone know that you have a need. [That's what this altar is for!](#)

The Altar of Surrender

There were times when I just had to die to myself and my will and surrender my life to Jesus afresh. The Altar provided me a place to come physically and spiritually to die a death to my selfish nature.

- Heart change occurs at the altar.
- Those Holy moments when it's just you and God.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Many of you have experienced the same thing!

Some of you need to come to the altar today and let Christ Jesus alter your direction.

- You aren't doing too good of a job running the show.
- You need to give Jesus back the control of your life [That's what this altar is for!](#)

Don't let pride keep you from coming to the Altar of God and the "Altar, Christ Jesus Himself."

Jesus came to, wants to, and will alter your life.

- Maybe you fear that "People will think I have problems if I go to the altar."
- Maybe your pride is what you need to surrender today.
- Maybe your "I can make it on my own attitude" needs to die.
- Maybe your spiritual arrogance needs to be deflated.

That's what this altar is for! It's a place of death, but it's also a place where new life flows freely.

Physical Death

Speaking of death, there will be another time that I will be brought to the Altar, but this time it will only be my earth tent, my body.

2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

I won't be there because I will be in the presence of the Lord for all of eternity.

I will be with the "Altar" Himself. The One who "Alters" my life.

We will all die and face eternity. How we live in eternity will be determined by our altar experience here on this earth.

Some of you need to come to the altar today and let Christ Jesus alter your existence.

You need to let Christ Jesus alter your eternity. [That's what this altar is for!](#)

Altar Alter

What are your needs? What is your most pressing need today?

We all have them. As a matter of fact, if I were a betting man, I would say it is a safe bet that everyone in this room has at least one need today.

Life App Group and Family Devotional Application

1. God's desire and purpose is for us to meet with Him, and Jesus has promised to always show up (Matthew 18:20). How have your meeting times with Jesus gone this week?
2. Looking at the Seven Altars above, which one or ones, do you need Jesus to meet you at the most today?
3. Why do you think people are reluctant to go to the altar for prayer and agreement?
4. How often have you been to the altar in the last 30 days? Why or why not? Don't you have needs?
5. We've been talking about Jesus' promise to meet with us when two or three gather together, Matthew 18:20, but what does verse 19 bring to light?