

Introduction:

- Exodus 3:1-11
- Theme: The Presence of God will get you through anything.
- We have been looking at the topic of Overcoming this year. I have been approaching it from the position of: What obstacle must we be equipped to overcome. IE. Mt 24: Don't be afraid, Don't be deceived, Don't be offended and don't let your love grow cold. The solution always comes back to a relationship with Jesus...not just fire insurance but a personal up to date intimate relationship with Him.
- Review of last week:
 - The presence is a person. And the presence of God in your life is directly related to your relationship with God. You are as close to God as you choose to be.
 - Many people see the things that God can offer but not God himself.
 - The presence is the manifestation of God, or God making himself visible.
 - The Presence is the face of God. The Hebrew word for presence is face.
 - ***The presence of God is two things: My experience of Him and His expression of Himself to me.
 - For the believer, God is always present.
 - But what do I do when "I feel" he is absent? 1. Check your heart that you have not sinned and grieved Him. This causes distance. 2. He intentionally distances Himself from us so that we seek him. IE. Hide and seek with children.

I. Called To Bring The Presence The presence is not just for us.

- A. The called receive their calling from the Presence of God. God has to be present to call you.
 - 1. And the purpose of the calling is to take the presence of God to others. This is why we have missions. This is why we do outreach. We are taking the presence to others.
 - 2. The call actually comes from the face of God. With His mouth he calls us. This is God approaching us. He is drawing near to us. We cannot take that for granted.
 - 3. To be called is to be summoned to God, then to be commissioned by God.
 - 4. To be commissioned is to be empowered with authority to go and fulfill the calling.
- B. The first call is God calling us to Himself in salvation. We have to answer that call. It is either 'yes' or 'no.'
 - 1. When we are drawn to God that is the initial invitation by God to come to Him to be saved, born again, made the righteousness of God.
 - 2. This invitation by God is one that offers us life and an opportunity to enter into a relationship with Him. God is a relational God.

3. In this calling, God begins to reveal Himself to us. We may start thinking about eternity. We may start feeling empty inside. We may start to feel bad about decisions or choices we make. Why? Because God is drawing near to us. The presence of God is coming close so we experience conviction of sin, emptiness of life, living without purpose. God is full of purpose. God is full of life. God is purity itself. God is the Bread of heaven and Living Water...He satisfies.

C. Called to Ministry

1. We are all called...to make disciples! This is what the great commission is all about. *"Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."* (Matthew 28:18-19, NLT)
2. God calls by asking for volunteers: *"Then I heard the Lord asking, "Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?" I said, "Here I am. Send me.""* (Isaiah 6:8, NLT)
 - a) In this context, God does not appoint anyone. He asks! He asks for volunteers!
 - b) Notice the experience that Isaiah has because God is expressing/manifesting Him to him.
3. God calls by appointing. In Jeremiah, 1:5, Acts 26:16 He appoints.
 - a) He appoints from before birth.
 - b) Which is more important? The disciple? The volunteer? Or, the appointed? NONE!
 - c) The mission is what is important. The mission is what counts! Therefore it is not the one who signs up but the one who finishes that counts! John 4:34 *"Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."* (John 4:34, NKJV)

D. We are called to take His presence to the world so that people can experience God.

1. We don't want to be seeker friendly we want to be presence driven!
2. The reason we pray is to be in the presence of God so that we become carriers God...not just with wise and persuasive words.
3. Again the Presence must be understood as God expressing Himself and me experiencing God through His expression.

II. Closing The Gap With God

- A. As believers it is a given that God will never leave us or forsake us. It is promised. And He has given us His Spirit to re-affirm and establish that. Mt 28:18-20, and Acts 2.
- B. Understanding distance. We must understand distance. Distance is the space between two objects, people etc.

1. We distance our selves by the choices we make. **IE. Samson** It is hard to experience God and live in sin at the same time. It is also hard to experience intimacy with God and choose not to spend time with Him.
 2. God distances himself from us when He wants us to make discoveries about Him.
 3. God wants to close the gap between us and Him to be. And as far as I can see in scripture, it is up to us to close the gap/the distance between us and God.
- C. Our presence with Him is as important as His presence with us. Most believers do not understand that people must actively enter the Presence of God. Jame said it very clearly: "*Come close to God, and God will come close to you.*" (James 4:8 NLT). We too have expression that God experiences! Still the principal of presence.
1. "*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" (Matthew 11:28, NKJV) God opens the door but we have to moved toward Him.
 2. "*Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."*" (John 6:35, ESV)
 3. "*the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.*" (John 6:37, NKJV) God promises to not cast out those who come to Him.
 4. "*Come to the wedding feast.*" (Mt 22:4 NKJV) There is no reason to miss this feast other than we choose not to attend. We must RSVP, get dressed for the occasion, and show up.
 5. Jesus makes it happen when we do our part. REMEMBER ME!!! "*And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."*" (Luke 23:43, ESV)
- D. Jesus gives expression so that we can experience His presence. Expression and experience go together. I draw near to Him He draws near to me.
- E. The extent of God:
1. "*And He took it and ate in their presence.*" (Luke 24:43, NKJV)
 2. "*And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;*" (John 20:30, NKJV)
 3. "*Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;*" (Luke 22:15, NKJV)
 4. "*And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.*" (Luke 5:17 NKJV).

III. Called Closing In And Carrying

Let's look at Moses life a man called to bring the Presence to the captives. God wants people to experience His presence, His power, His kindness and His love. Exodus 3:1-11

- A. Exodus 3:1 Moses is unknowingly led into the backside of the desert. To "the Mountain of God." Catch that phrase. He was being set up to encounter God. God is positioning Moses.

1. Moses sees a bush burning but not consumed. God gets Moses attention. God does many different things in our lives to get our attention.
 2. The angel of the Lord appears in the midst of the bush. Moses is amazed.
 3. Moses moves toward the burning bush.
 4. God sees Moses coming to take a closer look. His face/presence is towards him.
 5. God speaks and calls Moses by name.
 6. Moses responds - Hinneh- Here I am! Behold Me!
 7. God speaks - come no closer you are on holy ground.
 8. Note that expression and experience are at work in the 'presence.'
- B. Distance is closed.
1. Moses is far away from the bush. There is little presence and the ground is not holy.
 2. Moses closes the gap. Moses had to:
 - a) see - God has his attention
 - b) act - He had to move to get closer to God.
 - c) hear - Again, God has his attention
 - d) and, Moses is told to stop where he is because the ground is holy.
 3. The closer you get to God the holier the ground becomes.
 - a) The close you get to God the more holier you will become.
 - b) To carry the presence requires a relationship with God and intimacy with God.
- C. To be sent of God is to be a carry of the Presence of God.
1. I will be with you.
 2. I Am has sent you.

Conclusion:

- Invitation to be saved.