

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: How to Enjoy the Presence of God

SERMON REFERENCE: Exodus 33:1-3

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1974

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Worship is enjoying the presence of God.
- b) The highest good and the most wonderful fulfillment is to know God intimately and to enjoy Him personally.
 - i) Do you know God personally?
 - (1) This is not the same as knowing about Him.
 - ii) Is He today, this moment, in your heart and life, a bright, living reality in your life?
 - iii) If so, then you know the deepest pleasure and have fulfilled the deepest need.
 - (1) You have attained that for which you were created: to know God personally.
 - (2) You need nothing more; you should settle for nothing less.
- c) There are many Christians today who do not have the conscious presence of God in their lives.
 - i) They go to church and sing songs, but there is a deadness, a dryness and a void in their lives.
- d) Exodus 33:1-3
 - i) “I’m not going with you” are frightening words.
 - ii) The Jewish people were out in the wilderness.
 - iii) God had given them a covenant and a promise.
 - iv) They were headed toward the Promised Land, and in the middle of that journey, they sinned terribly against God.
 - v) God said that He would keep His promise and give them the Promised Land, but that He would not go with them.
- e) It is frightening to have success, possessions and protection, but not have the presence of the Lord.
 - i) Don’t settle for success without the Lord.
- f) Moses had gone up on Mount Sinai to get the Ten Commandments and instructions for the tabernacle.
 - i) While Moses was gone, his brother Aaron led the people in a revolt against Almighty God.
 - ii) Exodus 32:4-10
- g) When Moses came down from the mountain, he was so grieved by the people’s behavior that he threw the Ten Commandments to the ground and broke those tablets of stone.
 - i) He then took the golden calf, had it ground up into powder, mixed that powder with water, and made the people drink it.
 - (1) Their greatest delight had become their greatest displeasure.
 - ii) Three thousand of the chief rebels were put to death.
- h) Moses knew this was a crisis.
 - i) Moses prayed, interceded, and put himself in the place of these people.
 - ii) Exodus 32:30-32

- (1) After this intercession, God said that He would not destroy the people and that He would fulfill His promise, but that He would not go with them into the land.
 - (a) Exodus 33:1-3
 - i) Do not settle for protection, provision and a Promised Land without the presence of God.
 - i) When you have the presence of God, you need nothing more, but you should settle for nothing less.
 - j) There are many Christians today who have salvation and eternal security, but they're not walking in joy or victory.
 - i) God is not real to them.
 - ii) They do not have the manifest presence of God in their lives.
 - iii) They have God's protection, His provision, His promise, but they do not have His presence.
 - (1) Don't think that because you have His provision and protection that you're right with God.
 - (2) You may be on your way to Heaven, but you're traveling second class.
 - (3) Even a non-believer has certain provisions:
 - (a) Food
 - (b) Air
 - (c) Clothes
 - (d) Housing
 - (4) We can become so preoccupied with getting that provision, protection and claiming that promise that we fail to have His presence.
 - k) Exodus 33:4
 - i) It is an evil thing to have gifts without the Giver, to have blessings without the Blesser, and to have the promise without the Provider and the manifest presence of God.
 - l) Is God real to you?
 - m) What made Israel different from other nations?
 - i) The manifested presence of God in the midst of them.
 - n) The message today will share four things that caused God to withdraw His manifested presence from His people.
 - i) These are the same four things that will rob us of the manifested presence of God in our lives.
- 2) DIRECT DISOBEDIENCE (EXODUS 32:7-8)
- a) They disobeyed God.
 - i) Because they disobeyed God, the manifested presence of God was withdrawn from them.
 - b) The problem with many Christians today is that they have confessed the Lord Jesus, but they don't have the presence of God.
 - i) They don't even have the assurance of their salvation.

- ii) It is the Holy Spirit of God who gives us the assurance that we belong to Him.
 - (1) 1 John 4:13
 - (2) Romans 8:16
- c) When we knowingly, willingly and with eyes wide open disobey God, we grieve the Holy Spirit.
 - i) Ephesians 4:27
 - ii) Ephesians 4:30
 - iii) We can only grieve someone who loves us.
 - (1) “Grieve” is a love word.
 - (2) The Holy Spirit loves us, but we can so grieve Him when we disobey God that He closes up.
 - iv) 1 Thessalonians 5:19
 - (1) The word “quench” means “to pour cold water on a fire.”
 - v) Ephesians 5:18
- d) The Holy Spirit of God is to us in this age what the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire were to the children of Israel in that day.
 - i) He is the Shekinah glory of God.
 - ii) He is the manifested presence of God in our lives.
- e) When we willfully, knowingly, and deliberately disobey God, we quench the Spirit and God ceases to be real to us.
 - i) We can even wonder if we’re saved or not.
- f) John 14:21
 - i) When people truly love God, you don’t see it just when they stand in the congregation and sing hymns, but they obey Him.
 - ii) The Bible links the manifest presence of God with keeping the commandments of God.
- g) The Holy Spirit is in us to make God real to us.
 - i) Many Christians are settling for eternal security rather than the manifest presence of God.
 - (1) Some Christians are disobedient in their tithing.
 - (a) Malachi 3:8, 10
 - (2) When we choose not to tithe we are stealing from God.
 - (a) We are saying to God that we don’t trust Him to take care of our needs.
 - (b) We are disobedient.
 - (3) When we are disobedient in tithing, why would we think that God would bless us with even more financial resources?
- h) Aaron encouraged the people to disobey God.
 - i) Aaron was a priest, a religious leader.
 - ii) There will always be plenty of people, including some religious leaders, who will give us an excuse to disobey God.
- i) If God is not real to you, then ask yourself if you have rejected a direct command of God.

- j) God loves us too much to manifest Himself to us in glory and joy and, yet, have us to live in disobedience.
- 3) DIVIDED DEVOTION (EXODUS 32:4)
- a) The children of Israel had divided devotion.
 - i) They claimed to be Israel, yet they made a golden calf.
 - (1) The word “Israel” means “the people of God.”
 - ii) They made for themselves a god that was no bigger than their imagination.
 - iii) Rather than trusting Almighty God, they began to trust the work of their hands.
 - (1) This is idolatry.
 - b) When people make an idol, they become like the idol.
 - i) First, the man molds the idol, and then the idol molds the man.
 - c) An idol is a magnified sinner.
 - i) A man takes his own ideas and puts them into the work of his hands, and then he begins to worship it.
 - (1) What he is really worshipping ultimately is himself.
 - d) Anything that you love more, fear more, serve more and trust more than God is an idol.
 - i) G.K. Chesterton: “When we cease to worship the true God, it is not that we worship nothing, but it is that we’ll worship anything.”
 - e) If God is not real to you, then ask yourself if there is anyone or anything that takes precedence over God in your life.
 - i) God doesn’t want a place in your life.
 - ii) God despises prominence in your life.
 - iii) God demands preeminence in your life.
 - f) God’s throne is not a duplex.
 - i) Is there a relationship that means more to you than God?
 - ii) Is there anything that gets more of your attention than God?
 - (1) If so, then that is a golden calf in your life, and God will say, “I’m not going with you.”
 - (2) There are certain relationships in our lives that are wonderful relationships, but none can take the place of an undivided relationship to Almighty God.
 - g) Idolatry is the sin of all other sins.
- 4) DISPLACED DEPENDENCE (EXODUS 32:7-8)
- a) The people began to put their dependence in the work of their hands.
 - i) No longer was their dependence upon Almighty God, who brought them through the Red Sea.
 - b) When God gives us a victory and we give the glory to something or someone else and then depend upon that rather than the God who gave the victory, then we will lose the presence of God.

- c) When we begin to depend upon our ingenuity, our wit, and our wisdom, we will lose the presence of God.
 - i) The children of Israel took the earrings off their own ears.
 - ii) They took the bracelets off their own wrists.
 - iii) With a graving tool, they made a god of a golden calf.
 - d) Isaiah 42:8
 - e) It is no wonder that we don't have God's presence in our lives when we have displaced dependence and begin to give credit where credit is not due.
 - i) We fail to give God the glory for bringing us through a storm and for giving us blessings.
- 5) DETERMINED DEFIANCE (EXODUS 32:9)
- a) "Stiffnecked" is the opposite of being meek and pliable.
 - i) God wanted to lead them, but they were like a horse with a stiff neck, who rears up and will not yield.
 - b) If you want God to be real to you, then you must not be stiffnecked.
 - c) If God gives you a specific revelation, if He speaks to you about what He wants you to do, then obey Him.
 - i) Has God told you that there's someone He wants you to witness to?
 - ii) Has God put it on your heart to serve in the church?
 - iii) Has God laid on your heart something He wants you to give?
 - iv) Has God laid on your heart someone you need to apologize to?
 - v) Have you told the Lord, "No"?
 - (1) If so, then you have a stiff neck.
 - d) Thankfully, Moses refused to go forward without God's presence.
 - e) Worship is enjoying the presence of God.
- 6) CONCLUSION
- a) Is God real to you?
 - i) He wants to be.
 - b) John 14:21
 - c) The children of Israel found grace long ago, and so may you today.
 - d) If you are already saved, then ask the Lord's forgiveness for any direct disobedience, any divided devotion, displaced dependence, and any determined defiance.
 - e) If you do not know the Lord Jesus as your personal Savior and Lord, then surrender to Him today.
 - f) You can pray to Him now, and ask Him to come into your life.
 - g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31

v) John 3:16