

# Leaving Home

by Dick Brogden

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*Christmas is a call to leave our comfort zones and join God in His mission to the nations, even if it means being uncomfortable and outside of our safe boundaries.*

**Scripture:** Exodus 3:5, Zechariah 10:3, Acts 7:3-9

**Topics:** "Missional Living", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

Dick Brogden preaches about the true essence of Christmas, emphasizing that while it has become a season of comfort and gift-giving, the original Christmas was about God leaving the comfort of heaven to offer salvation to a world that would largely reject Him. He highlights the call for believers to leave their comfort zones and bear God's glory to all nations, just as Abraham and Moses were called to leave their homes for God's purposes. Brogden stresses that God is most keenly experienced outside of our comfort zones, and that resisting the Holy Spirit's movement can lead to rebellion.

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## Transcript

We have made Christmas about coming home and being comfortable. Jesus' approach to Christmas was to leave home and be uncomfortable. Christmas has become safe and cozy, a time to relax and give gifts to one another. The original Christmas involved God leaving the comfort of heaven to give a most precious gift to those who would largely reject it. Zechariah reminds us that God does indeed visit His flock (Zech. 10:3) and comfort them, but with the intention of "sowing them among the nations" (v. 9). Christmas is Christ's invitation to us to join Him in leaving home, to join Him in being homeless for the sake of the nations. "I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in His name" (v. 12). The *missio dei* (mission of God) is inescapable, even at Christmas, especially at Christmas. Christmas was God leaving home to walk the earth in discomfort that men and women might be saved. Not too much about that is "ho, ho, ho".

God continually calls His sons and daughters to leave home in order to bear His glory into all the earth, into all nations. The call is relentless. Abraham was told "Get out of your country" (Acts 7:3)! And "God spoke in this way, that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land" (v. 6). We wrongly suppose that the presence of Jesus is most keen at home-where we are safe and comfortable. Scripture again and again shows the inverse: God is most keenly experienced when we leave home and join Him in His passion to be glorified by every people on earth. It is in the challenge and the trial that God is most real to us. Stephen made this point and it was as unpopular then as it is now: "God was with Joseph in Egypt, and

delivered Him" (v. 9). Moses was born in Egypt and was well pleasing to God (v. 20). God's voice came to Moses in the desert, and it was Midian that is considered holy ground (vv. 29-33). The living oracles of God were given at Sinai, most likely in present day Saudi Arabia (v. 38). It is in the current day Arab World that God's presence was most powerfully revealed, that His commandments were most clearly given. The teeth of Stephen's sermon (v. 54) snapped around the fact that God is working outside of our comfortable boundaries-both of place and perception. We are in danger of being stiff necked and rebellious against the Holy Spirit if we resist the Holy Spirit's movement, if we resist moving with the Holy Spirit.

Paul understood the meaning of Christmas, for Jesus explained it to him upfront. Jesus told Ananias: "[Paul] is a chosen vessel of mine to bear my name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15). Merry Christmas, Paul! You get to traipse all over the Roman world, tell of the God who became flesh, died on a cross and rose from the dead victorious-and get the crud beat out of you for your efforts! Christmas compels us to leave home, that the nations may find it.

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