

Manifest Presence of God - Part 4

by Walter Beuttler

The presence of God should be the distinguishing mark between His people and other nations, and we can know God personally by seeking Him and having an intimate relationship with Him.

Scripture: Exodus 33:11-12, Numbers 12:8, Deuteronomy 34:10, Jeremiah 24:7, Hosea 6:6, John 17:3

Topics: "Intimacy With God", "Knowing God"

Description

Walter Beuttler preaches on the importance of seeking to know God personally, just like Moses did in the Bible. He emphasizes that the distinguishing mark of God's people should be the presence of God in their lives, separating them from others. Beuttler highlights the need to understand God's ways and character through personal experiences and encounters with Him, rather than just intellectual knowledge. He encourages a deeper, intimate relationship with God, similar to how Moses communed with the Lord face to face, seeking to know Him even more.

Transcript

"And Moses said to the Lord... Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found grace in Your sight, Show me now Your way, that I may know You, that I may find grace in Your sight: and consider that this nation is Your people. And He said, My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest. And he said to Him, If Your presence go not with me, carry us not up from here. For wherein shall it be known here that I and Your people have found grace in Your sight? is it not in that You go with us? so shall we be separated, I and Your people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." Exodus 33:12-16

In this passage, Moses said, "so shall we be separated." The idea being that the "distinguishing mark" between the Lord's people and other nations was to be the "presence of God." So also today, the presence of God should distinguish His people from all others.

Moses knew this people and was reluctant to lead them into the Promised Land, as they were a stubborn and rebellious nation. Therefore he asked, "Show me now Your way that I may know You." We can learn to know God through His ways - what He does and how He accomplishes it. Moses understood that, as we watch God at work, we learn something about His character and His nature.

The Lord's ways differ from ours. Some time ago, Hattie Hammond told me something that I will never forget. She had been in a large convention. A young man spoke and she said she had never heard anything worse than the way he harangued the people. Yet when he finished, the power of God fell and

the people stood and worshipped as the Lord poured His Spirit out upon them. She was surprised and questioned the Lord, "How can You bless a harangue like we just heard?"

Then the Lord explained that He was not blessing one word of what the man had said, but He was pouring the "Spirit of rejoicing" upon His people to help them "forget" what had been said.

I thought, the next time I rejoice for the Lord's blessing after I speak, I will consider that maybe He is just using His eraser. A word such as this teaches us something about God.

There is such a thing as "the personal knowledge of a personal God." We can come to know Him, and begin to understand His ways through the "manifestation of His presence" as He makes Himself known to us. Moses asked that he might come to personally know the Lord. He was not speaking about an intellectual knowledge of God. We do need to know more, and be informed, but Moses sought to have a personal acquaintance with a personal God, through a personal experience.

My daughter had many books about Queen Elizabeth and sought to learn all she could about her. One year, I was able to take her with me to France. We stopped in London on our way to Paris. Because she was so fond of the Queen, I took her to Buckingham Palace to see the royal guard.

She said, "Daddy, do you think we will see the Queen?" She was very disappointed when I told her it was not possible. The Queen was there, but because of a lack of relationship, we were unable to personally meet her. Although my daughter could share all kinds of things about the Queen, she still did not know her.

But the Lord is available, and He desires us to "experientially" know Him.

"And the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend...." Exodus 33:11

Moses had a personal relationship with the Lord, and the Lord was available to him. Here is a man so intimate with God that we are told that God spoke with him "face to face." This means directly, not in a round about way through a vision, dream, or a prophet. Yet though Moses knew the Lord personally, he still prayed, "show me now Your way, that I may know You." In other words, Moses desired to know the Lord even better.

In a morning Chapel service, I spoke about seeking God. Afterwards, I was challenged by someone who said, "Why do you exhort these students to seek God when they have already found Him?" This person did not understand the personal knowledge of God. My answer to him was that the students "need" to know the Lord even "more." There is no limit to the disclosure of God to our hearts.

There were three areas in which Moses had a special knowledge of the Lord. First, he had an intimate relationship with the Lord.

"And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like to Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." Deuteronomy 34:10

Second, he experienced intimate communion with the Lord.

"And the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend...." Exodus 33:11

Third, he had an intimate privilege.

"With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?" Numbers 12:8

Notice that the Lord is very concerned about how we talk about those who are His personal friends. Concerning this privilege, the Lord said, "and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold." In my study, I use different translations to gain understanding, as they throw different rays of light on a particular subject.

The jewels of the kings and queens of England are kept in the tower of London. Among them is a huge diamond that I have carefully looked at. From one view, it appears to have a yellow sparkle. From a different angle, it is green. From another, it is red or blue. There are different colors, but it is the same diamond. These translations are to me as this diamond.

In the King James Version the term, "the similitude of the Lord" is used. In another version, "the form of the Lord shall he behold." A different translation reads, "the shape of the Lord shall he behold." Even though God is a Spirit and does not have a material body, He has a localized appearance. The Lord gave Moses the privilege to behold this similitude, likeness, shape, and form of God.

Jesus prayed:

"And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent." John 17:3

He desired His disciples to know God.

"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Hosea 6:6

In the days of Israel, the Lord was more interested in their "knowing" Him, than in all their "sacrifices" and "gifts." In Jeremiah 24:7, we have a pertinent statement: "And I will give them a heart to know Me."

In the final analysis, the true knowledge of God is a "matter of the heart." This involves an inner "capacity" and "capability" to enter into a personal relationship with God. This is my prayer for all of us:

"Lord, give us a heart, the capacity and the capability, to know You in personal experience."

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