

Digging Deeper

DEVOTIONAL



Presence of God

Kittiwake Baptist Church

<http://www.kittiwake.org/devotionals/>

(Week 19)

Day 1

Presence of God

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. (Ecc. 3:11)

The Bible says God set eternity in our hearts. We have a God shaped vacuum in our heart. Some people try to fill it with other things:

- high risk activities
 - base jumping, extreme sports, running with the bulls, skywalking (walking on very tall structures)
- money
 - Andrew “Jack” Whittaker won \$315 million dollars in the lottery, but ended up with a broken family and deep in debt after 7 years saying; “I wish I’d torn that ticket up”
- personal accomplishment
 - Tom Brady who said; “Why do I have three Super Bowl rings, and still think there's something greater out there for me?”
- Fame
 - Michael Jackson, Prince, George Michael, etc. who overdosed on drugs trying to escape the world

None of these things can fill the God shaped vacuum inside us.

What are you trying to fill the God shaped vacuum inside of you with? Nothing but God will satisfy!

Day 2

Presence of God

7 Now Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it the "tent of meeting." Anyone inquiring of the Lord would go to the tent of meeting outside the camp. 8 And whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people rose and stood at the entrances to their tents, watching Moses until he entered the tent. 9 As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the Lord spoke with Moses. 10 Whenever the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance to the tent, they all stood and worshiped, each at the entrance to their tent. 11 The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent. (Exodus 33:7-11)

In Exodus 33 we see the Israelites pitching their tents by tribe around the tabernacle, but God's presence wasn't in the tabernacle. Moses would set up a tent outside of the camp where he would meet with God. The presence of God was outside the camp because the Israelites were a "stiff-necked people". But Moses found favor with God and sought the presence of God.

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. (Jer. 29:13)

Do you seek the presence of God? Augustine said; "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." Do you have a restless heart?

Day 3

Presence of God

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Leave this place, you and the people you brought up out of Egypt, and go up to the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.' 2 I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 3 Go up to the land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not go with you, because you are a stiff-necked people and I might destroy you on the way." 4 When the people heard these distressing words, they began to mourn and no one put on any ornaments. 5 For the Lord had said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites, 'You are a stiff-necked people. If I were to go with you even for a moment, I might destroy you. Now take off your ornaments and I will decide what to do with you.'" 6 So the Israelites stripped off their ornaments at Mount Horeb. (Exodus 33:1-6)

God had made a promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and He was going to fulfill that promise, but even though He would fulfill the promise, He wasn't going with the Israelites to the Promised Land because they were such a stiff-necked people.

What if God offered us the same deal? Good health, a place at the lake, the perfect job and home – the perfect life, but God wouldn't be there. Would you take that deal? You say; "Not me!", but are you already living that way? Pursuing those things instead of God? Living like God's presence is only found at church?

Does the way you live your life show the importance of the presence of God or do you focus on the pleasures of this world? Spend time meditating on God's word and ask God to reveal what things you are pursuing.

Presence of God

12 Moses said to the Lord, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' 13 If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people." 14 The Lord replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." 15 Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. 16 How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?" 17 And the Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name." (Exodus 33:12-17)

Notice in verse 15 Moses says "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here." Moses understood that the presence of God meant everything!

But it's not just the presence of God that we need, we need His power working through us and manifest in us. All believers have the presence of God, but not necessarily the power of God.

13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. (Phil. 2:13)

Only when we are in the will of God do we have the power of God working in and through us.

Do you have the presence of God but lack the power of God? Ask God to show you what areas of your life that you need to bring back into His will.

Day 5

Presence of God

10 Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. 11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. (Psalm 84:10-11)

As Christians we have the presence of God everywhere we go, affecting everything around us; things taste better, sunsets are inspiring and life is sweeter because it has meaning. God's presence makes all the difference. Because we know the creator and He is with us, we can better appreciate the creation.

How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?" (Exodus 33:16)

Moses understood that it was God's presence that distinguished the Israelites from the rest of the nations. Similarly, the presence of God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, distinguishes Christians from the world. The day God's presence leaves a church is the day it starts to die.

Do you have the presence of God? Have you hardened your heart to His presence and lost the richness of a relationship with Him? Confess the things that separate you from His presence and enjoy His presence in your life again.

Presence of God

1 As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? (Psalm 42:1-2)

Do we value the presence of God like Moses did? As a church we need to start praying “don’t let us move forward unless your presence is there.” Without God’s presence the church can’t grow and will slowly die.

In your personal life, are you finding yourself saying “is this all there is in life?” or “Just give me Jesus.” Is God’s presence enough for you?

You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. (Psalm 16:11)

Spend time this weekend focusing on the presence of God. Spend time with God in His word, praising Him, and listening for His still quiet voice.

Evaluate your priorities. Are you more focused on the pleasures of this world than the presence of God?