

INTIMACY “RESTORED” WITH GOD

Text: Exodus 32:1-4, 19, 30 & 34 – Exodus 33:1-18

Subject: The Grieving, Grace and Glory of the Lord

Introduction

- Our text is the stage for one of the most glorious truths in Scripture.
- In Exodus 32:1 we read, “Moses delayed to come down from Mt. Sinai.”
- While Moses delayed, the people became impatient and asked Aaron to “make us new gods.”
- Aaron bowed to the pressure and had all the people break off their earrings of gold.
- The gold was melted down and fashioned into a golden calf.
- In verse 4, the people said, “These be thy gods that brought us out of Egypt.”
- In verse 7, the Lord told Moses, “You better get back on the job for the people have corrupted themselves.”

“They are bowing down to worship an idol.” “All this after I delivered them from Egypt.”
(Which is a type of sin and the world.)

I. Discover the Grieving of the Lord

Read – (33:1-4) (v. 4) “And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned.”

Ask: What evil things? The news of the Lord in verse 3.

“For I will not go up in the midst of thee.”

Instead: Verse 2, “I will send an angel in my place.”

God said: “I’m changing the way I deal with you.” “No longer will I go, instead, I’ll send an angel.” (v. 4) “And the people mourned.” (Why?)

- Because they suddenly lost the visible presence of God from their midst!
- They had grieved the Lord with impatience, an idol (a golden calf), compromise and conformity to the heathen around them.
- The Bible says Moses waxed hot (angry).
- Aaron became ashamed.
- The Lord became grieved!
- And all the people mourned. (Why?)
- Because even angels cannot take the place of the Presence of God in your life!

Application

- Israel has backslidden.
- Some thought it was not big deal.
- But now God couldn’t trust them with Himself.
- So instead He just sends an angel.
 - In Exodus 13:21, the Lord had gone before the people in pillar of cloud and pillar of fire.
 - In Exodus 15: 25, the Lord counseled when it was needed.
 - In Exodus 17, the Lord aided in battle.
 - In Exodus 13: 22, the Lord’s presence was real and close.

- But now one day, God is grieved by sin in His people.
- And His presence was withdrawn.
- And there is an emptiness experienced as the believers in Israel have grieved the Holy Spirit. (Heaven isn't open as before.)

Application

Ask: Is it costly to grieve the Lord?

- Here we learn that a quick and easy restoration of God's presence is not taught in the Bible!
- We learn here that we always lose something when we backslide.
- We learn here that repentance is not a simple "I'm sorry".
- We learn here that willful sinning today, with the hope of easy forgiveness tomorrow, disregards God's Holy Nature and assumes cheap grace.
- We learn here why Israel (and multitudes today) have settled for a song, a dance, a comedian, a story teller, a show, an entertainer, a sign or wonder or testimony and even an angel or two.
- Because there is only one way to have the presence of God in your life, and that is to maintain the sense of **awe** and **respect** and **reverence** for God's Holy Presence in our midst!! (Repeat)
- The evidence of blessing in your life is not this or that (not even an angel or two).
- But the Presence of God in your midst.
- Thank God for angels – but we need the God of the angels!
- Can I recover God's presence if I have forfeited Him?
- Is it possible to return to that special intimacy with Jesus?
- Can God restore what I know He wants me to possess in my life?

Oh God, make us desperate once again!!!

#1. The Grieving

II. Discover the Grace of the Lord

In verse 7, Moses took the tabernacle he had met the Lord in and erected it "afar off from the camp."

(Why?)

- Because God was now not dwelling among the people.
- His presence outside the camp was a reminder He was grieved. (Afar off)
- Now the people must go outside the camp to see the Lord.
- They must leave the normal routine and get serious with God.
- So a prayer tent is erected by Moses.
 - (v. 8) The people were watching Moses go into tabernacle.
 - (v. 9) The cloudy pillar returned and the Lord talked with Moses.
 - (v. 10) "And all the people rose up and worshipped."

Ask: How can I live under an open heaven?

- How can I maintain the glow of God upon my life?
- How can I recover what has slipped away?
 - (v. 13) "Now therefore I pray thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now the way, that I might know Thee, that I may find grace in thy sight."

(v. 14) And the Lord said, "My presence shall go with thee."

(v. 17) "Thou hast found **grace** in My sight."

(v. 18) I will be **gracious** and show **mercy**."

(Here is God's part to recovery.)

- **Grace and Mercy!!!**
- Without it we face judgment quickly.
- But God gives opportunity to return and be restored.

Ask: How do we respond to God's grace to know His presence and glory?

(Two ways)

1. Separate Unto God (v. 11)

"Moses went under the tent, talked with God, then left the tent and went back to his camp."

"But Joshua departed not out of the tabernacle."

(What a testimony!)

- The pastor has met the Lord and now it's time to go home!
- But Joshua is willing to be unusual.
- Joshua is willing to stay behind.
- Joshua is willing to stay alone.
- Joshua wants the presence of God more than the routine and mundane of the normal. (So he tarries behind)
- Joshua has separated himself unto God.

2. Separation from the world. (v. 16) "So shall we be separated from."

Ask: What is it that the Spirit is asking you to separate from?

Ask: What is it the Lord is asking you to forsake?

Ask: What is it that grieves His presence in your life?

Ask: What are you holding unto that keeps you distant from Jesus?

#1. The Grieving of the Lord #2. The Grace of the Lord

III. Discover the Glory of the Lord

Ask: What is the glory of the Lord?

Exodus 15:11 "Who is like unto thee O Lord, among the gods, glorious in holiness."

Ask: What is the glory of God?

- It is a transformed life that is glorious in holiness (or)
- It is the life where God displays His power in breaking the power of sin in your life.
- It's more than a song and dance!
- It's a transformed life by the power of God!!! (And you can have it)
- The glory of God is not a goose-bump, not a feeling, not falling down and not external things.
- It's your life and mine changed into the likeness and character of God.

In verse 18 – Moses prayed "Show me Thy glory."

Ask: How do I receive his glory in my life?

1. It's found in a place.

(v. 21) “There is a place by me upon a rock. That place is Jesus – where millions have come, where I can come again today, where you can come again today.”

2. It's found in a **person**

(v. 22) “I will put thee in a cleft of the rock.”

- Jesus is the Rock, as Moses smote the rock and water came out.
- Jesus has been smitten, and blood-life flows out to you!

3. It is found in a **presence**

(v. 22) “I'll cover thee with My hand while I pass by.” And after He passes by, you will see the afterglow of God. Jesus clothes us with himself and in Himself is power to live for the glory of God!!!

Ask: Do you need to be restored, to His place, His person and His presence?

Amen
Bill Kirk