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Pastor Stephen Bryant

I Won't Go Without You

His Presence Changes Everything

TEXT Exodus 33:12-23

ASK What good is the Promised Land if the God who made the promise is not with you?



Three people. Three declarations. One priority. The greatest thing God can give you isn't something from His hand. It's His presence in your life.

The Context: The Gift Became the God

God rescued Israel from Egypt, parted the Red Sea, sent manna from heaven and made covenant with them at Sinai. Then, while Moses was on the mountain, they took the gold the Egyptians had handed them on the way out and melted it into a calf. God said they could still have the land, the angel and the victory, but He would not go up among them. And the people mourned.

Exodus 12:35–36, ESV



They had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing. And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians.

Exodus 32:4, ESV



He received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and made a golden calf. And they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!"

Exodus 33:3, ESV



But I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people.



REMEMBER

They took what God had provided and used it to replace the God who provided it. You can have the provision and lose sight of the Provider.

2

Moses: I Won't Go Without You

God, if You're not going, I'm not going. I don't care how promising the opportunity looks or how good the destination sounds. Moses wasn't just interested in the promise; he wanted the Presence. A good opportunity isn't necessarily a God opportunity, and an open door isn't necessarily a divine invitation.

Exodus 33:15,
ESV



If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here.

John 15:5, ESV



Apart from me you can do nothing.

Zechariah 4:6,
ESV



Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.

**REMEMBER**

The greatest danger isn't that we can't do something without God. It's that we might succeed at something God never called us to do. I'd rather stay in the wilderness with God than enter the Promised Land without Him.

3

David: Please Don't Leave Me

God, I know I've sinned. Correct me if You must, discipline me if You need to, but whatever You do, don't take Your presence from me. David didn't ask first for his reputation, his kingdom or his public image. He had watched Saul keep a crown and lose the Spirit's empowering presence.

Psalms 51:11,
ESV



Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

1 Samuel 16:13–
14, ESV



The Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward... Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul.

**REMEMBER**

Losing a throne is nothing compared to losing fellowship with God. It's easy to recognize the Holy Spirit when He enters a room and a life, but we seldom realize when He has left.

Mary: Nothing Is More Important Than You

The house can wait. The preparations can wait. Martha wasn't doing something wrong; she was serving Jesus because Jesus was in her home. But Martha was distracted by what needed to be done, and Mary was devoted to the One who had come.

Luke 10:39–40,
ESV



Mary... sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving.

Luke 10:42,
ESV



Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.



REMEMBER

You can be busy doing things for Jesus and still miss being with Jesus. Don't get so busy working for the Lord that you neglect walking with the Lord.

Only His Presence Makes Dead People Alive

The gospel is not about making bad people better; it's about making dead people alive. Sick people need medicine, but dead people need resurrection. We were dead in our sins, and while we were still dead God moved toward us in mercy. Without the blood of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit, no one can be born again.

Ephesians 2:1,
ESV



And you were dead in the trespasses and sins.

Ephesians 2:4–
5, ESV



But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

2 Corinthians
5:17, ESV



Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

Ephesians 2:8–
10



Saved by grace through faith, not by works, and created in Christ Jesus for good works.



REMEMBER

You can teach a dead man better habits, but you cannot give him life. Only Jesus can do that. Good works are not the root of salvation; they are the fruit of it.

The Response

Three people. Three declarations. One priority: His presence.

- ✓ Like Moses: His presence is greater than the destination. Don't move where He isn't leading.
- ✓ Like David: His presence is greater than our position. Ask Him never to take His Spirit from you.
- ✓ Like Mary: His presence is greater than our performance. Sit at His feet before you serve.
- ✓ If you've been trying to fix yourself, stop turning over a new leaf and receive new life in Jesus Christ.

Don't get so caught up in what God can give you that you forget God Himself is the gift. Church, you can trust Him!

"If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here." — Exodus 33:15, ESV