

WATER•FIRE•STONE

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MOSES

Session 14 – His Presence, Part Three | Exodus 33

Moses could not imagine going forward without the Lord’s presence. How could he lead the people if God Himself wasn’t there to show him the way? How could they be known as God’s people if the Lord wasn’t present among them? Please Lord, go *with* us. *With* is a little word that makes a big difference.

This session in our four-part series, *His Presence*, explores lessons in the power of prayer, second chances, and God’s merciful desire to continue *with* His people.

Icebreaker

Name three absolute “must haves” (items and/or people) for you to take on a road trip.

Goals for this Session

- Discover the vital connection between interceding prayer and the promises of God.
- Consider what we miss when we keep God at a distance in our life.
- Pray honest prayers that mourn sin, embrace grace, and settle for nothing less than God’s daily presence.

2 Some people in this scene aren't mentioned by name but we know they would have been there. Moses' brother Aaron with his sons, Nadab and Abihu. The seventy elders of Israel. These men had the privilege of being drawn closer to God (Exodus 24:9–11).

They shared a meal together; they worshipped in God's presence. But when they returned to the camp, the old ways set in. They went along with the crowd in spite of what they personally saw and knew about the Lord.

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- a. *Drawing close, pulling away.* How does it happen? Discuss some of the reasons given below.

Matthew 6:19–21, 24

Matthew 7:26–27

James 1:22–24

We are at this moment as close to God as we really choose to be. True, there are times when we would like to know a deeper intimacy, but when it comes to the point, we are not prepared to pay the price involved. So we settle for a less demanding level of Christian living.

J. Oswald Sanders
Enjoying Intimacy with God

- b. What is the remedy for a strained or distant relationship with the Lord? Discuss what you find in the verses below.

Isaiah 55:7

Joel 2:12–13

Jeremiah 29:12–14

James 4:8–10

3 We see Moses enter the tent and the Lord's presence descends. Whether on the mountain or in the tent of meeting, God always spoke to Moses as a man speaks to his friend. Our study of Moses' life is giving us access to some of those amazing, intimate conversations.

Someone else was listening, watching, and waiting in God's presence. See him there, near the tent of meeting? Every time we see Joshua, he's in the right place—ready, vigilant, obedient.

At this point, he is still Moses' faithful young assistant, but his actions speak loud and clear. In what ways do you find Joshua to be an inspiring example?

Memory Verse

The Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.
Exodus 33:11 NKJV

Which part of this verse resonates most with you today? How or in what way?

4 Moses was troubled because God said He would not be going with them. While the people waited, Moses went in to meet with the Lord. What follows in the rest of this chapter is the conversation between God and His servant friend Moses.

Read Exodus 33:12–23. | What is happening? Highlight what stands out to you and why.

5 God offered to send the Israelites on their way with the protection of an angel. Essentially, the Lord was saying they could still have the land of milk and honey, protection from their enemies, wealth and success in all their endeavors—the only thing missing would be a personal relationship with Him. Moses wasn't satisfied with that. . . . Would *we* be?

Moses prayed three specific requests and God answered each one. What do you think enabled him to ask these things of God with such bold persistency? Discuss what motivated Moses' prayer and what God promised to do.

a. *Show me Your ways* (verses 12–14).

God's Answer ⇨

b. *I don't want to go without You* (verses 15–17).

God's Answer ⇨

c. *Show me Your glory* (verses 18–23).

God's Answer ⇨

6 Moses prayed, please Lord, we need Your presence with us—*nothing and no one else will do but You*. Can you recall a time (perhaps even now) when you have prayed a similar prayer? Describe what the Lord's active and unhindered presence in daily life means for you.

Action Steps ►► As you think through this part of Moses' story, what is the most important takeaway point for you personally? How will you put what you've learned into action?

Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

Adoration – Giving praise and honor to God for who He is and what He does.

Confession – Honestly deal with sin; acknowledge to God the ways (and whys) you fall short.

Thanksgiving – Verbalize your gratitude; express your praise and a thankful heart.

Supplication – Pray specifically for the needs of others, ourselves, our church, our nation.



Close your discussion time by praying together. Use the A·C·T·S pattern as a group focus and keep it simple. No need to be lengthy or profound—just authentic.
