

The Never Ending Quest for More

Rich Nathan

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The Making of a Leader Series: Lessons Learned from the Life of Moses

Exodus 33

I have a dear friend, who when he was a child, learned how to dive at swimming lessons. He was so proud of himself that when his mom came to the pool to pick him up, he yelled at her and said, "Mom, look at this!" He immediately executed a racing dive into the kiddie pool and practically knocked himself out.

The picture of my friend diving into the kiddie pool came to my mind as I was preparing this talk on pursuing more from God because I think my friend is a picture of most of the church in America and, indeed, is a picture of most of us here at the Vineyard. First of all, we, who are Christians, forget that there is a deep end in the pool. We think that the pool is the same depth anywhere we dive in. We forget that there is a deep end. And because we forget there is a deep end, we as a church knock ourselves out swimming in the shallows of God's Spirit.

All of us here need to go deeper with God. We need more of God's presence, more of a connection with God's person. No matter where you are, just knowing to think about issues of faith, or someone who has walked devotedly with God for 70 years, the pool goes deeper than your present experience.

Now, the desire for more – to have more of God's Spirit at work in your life and more of God's Spirit at work in your family, more of God's Spirit in the church – the desire for more is a sign of health. We know that a baby is sick when it stops wanting to eat. A hungry baby is generally a healthy baby. And when people in a marriage stop wanting more, when a couple just settle for a business relationship, for a comfortable partnership, most of us would think that's pretty sad. Healthy marriages are always seeking greater levels of intimacy. Married people should want to move to new levels of friendship with our spouses, greater romance, and greater communication. And a person who doesn't want more of God, who is satisfied with swimming in the kiddie pool where we can splash a little water on ourselves, the person who is not hungry for more intimacy with God, more power to witness and to heal, a greater ability to hear God's voice, for more of an experience of God's love – the person who doesn't want more is spiritually sick. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they will be filled."

Now, friends, I am not going to urge on anyone here tonight a particular way of experiencing more of God. I think the ways of God in people's lives are as varied as people are. We are differently wired. We have different temperaments. Some people cry when they see four little goslings following their mother. Some people

look at the same scene and think, “I wonder what Canadian Geese taste like?” We’re differently wired. Some people leap into the deep end of the pool; they have repeated dramatic experiences with God; they run and dive into the deep end of the pool. Other people ease themselves in. They start at the shallow end and paddle out until the water gets deeper and deeper. I don’t think it matters to God, and it should not matter to us, how we approach getting into the deep, so long as we move ourselves into the deep.

I need to pause here and say that this desire for a deeper experience with God is not simply for emotional types; you know those unstable, silly types of people who flit from meeting to meeting and conference to conference looking for the latest buzz. Profound encounters with God have been the experience of some of the most psychologically stable, intellectually brilliant people of all time.

One of the greatest geniuses of the last millennium was a man named Blaise Pascal. He lived in the 17th century. He was a philosopher and mathematician. He invented the first calculating machine. He was responsible, in part, for the invention of calculus. He is one of the great intellectuals in all of Western history. When he died, it was found that he had written something on a piece of paper and had sewn it inside his shirt – a reminder of a remarkable experience he had. Here’s what he wrote:

This day of grace 1654;
from about half past ten at night, to
about half after midnight,
Fire

Here is one of the greatest mathematicians of all time and he writes about his experience with God:

Fire
God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob,
Not of the philosophers and the wise.
Security, security. Feeling, joy, peace...
Greatness of the human soul.
O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee,
But I have known Thee.
Joy, joy, joy, tears of joy.

He was sitting in his room and suddenly, remarkably, he had this awesome experience with the living God that radically changed his life. And what he emphasizes above everything else is joy, joy, joy, tears of joy.

And then there is the great Thomas Aquinas, one of the greatest teachers the Roman Catholic Church has ever had. He was a great thinker, a brilliant philosopher. He is best known for his famous work, *The Summa Theologica*,

which was a summary of theology, a summary of the knowledge of God. It has a number of volumes. Bottom line, Aquinas had a really big brain and was completely intellectual in his faith. He spent most of his life trying to show that human beings have no direct contact with spiritual reality. So he set out these logical proofs for God's existence, five reasons to believe in God. Shortly before his death he had such an overwhelming, direct experience with God that he wrote no more. A friend urged him to complete his great work, *The Summa Theologica*, and he answered,

I can do no more. Such things have been revealed to me that all I have written seems as straw, and now I await the end of my life.

Such an extraordinary experience with God that Thomas Aquinas, with his huge brain, said, "Everything I've written seems like straw."

My concern for us in the Vineyard, and as Vineyard leaders, is that we can content ourselves with a very shallow experience of God. We're swimming around in the kiddie pool and after a while, we rationalize it and say, "Well, that's all there is. That's all God intended." But the Bible continually encourages us to ask for more.

I've been doing a series on leadership taken from the life of Moses, a series I've called "The Making of a Leader." And today, what we're going to see in Moses and what we need to see in every Christian leader is what I'm calling a "Never Ending Quest for More." If you are a Christian leader, you should never be satisfied with the present level of your experience with God. Be grateful for what you've gotten, but never be satisfied, never simply rest and say, "This is it. I've now had as much of God as I ever will have." I've called today's talk, "A Never-Ending Quest for More." Let's pray.

We see this never ending quest for more in the Apostle Paul. Listen to the apostle Paul where he writes this in Philippians 3:10-14:

Philippians 3:10-14

I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Paul knew Christ. If anyone ever knew Christ, it was the apostle Paul. But Paul says, "I want to know him better in my experience. I don't think I've attained

everything yet.” Paul is pressing in; he is straining to attain the high call of God. He wants more. After 25 years as an apostle, he says, “I am not finished yet. There is so much more of Christ that I haven’t yet explored.” He is on a never ending quest for more.

Jesus tells us to ask for more in Luke 11:9-13

Luke 11:9-13

So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; those who seek find; and to those who knock, the door will be opened. 11 Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

Jesus is not talking to non-Christians. He is talking to people who have God as their Father, who are in a relationship of being children of God. And yet, he says, “How much more will God give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.” Yes, you have the Spirit when you are converted as a follower of Christ. But Jesus wants us to ask and to seek and to knock for more of the Holy Spirit, go after more of God’s presence.

Now, let’s look back at the life of Moses. The setting for Exodus 33 is that the nation of Israel, who are God’s people, have sinned against the Lord by their worship of a Golden Calf. They committed the great sin of idolatry which is forbidden in two of the Ten Commandments. Commandment 1 is that we should not have any gods other than the Lord. And commandment 2 is that we should not try to make any idols or images of God.

Well, how do we pursue this journey of our never ending quest for more of God, for more of his presence? I’m going to break this quest down into five steps.

Step #1 – Realize that you are living without the presence of God

Exodus 33:1-3

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.”

Here is what God is saying to the children of Israel. I've seen your worship of the Golden Calf and so what you, my people, are communicating to me is that you don't want relationship with me. If that is your desire, that you not have relationship with me, then OK. I'm going to keep my end of the bargain. I've promised you the land and I'm going to give the land to you. And I'm going to protect you from your enemies. I will give you blessings in your life, but the one thing you won't have is me. You are not going to experience me any more. You are going to live without my presence.

Now, it is absolutely commonplace for lots of us here in Central Ohio to live for years, for decades even, without any sense of the presence of God in our lives. Some of you may have had an experience with God as a child, or as a teenager, or young adult, but you walked away from your relationship with God and you may have spent decades apart from any real personal relationship or experience with God. To put this in a biblical framework, we can very much be like the children of Israel experiencing blessings from God. Life can go pretty well for us and yet we can be completely apart from a present experience of God in our lives.

Churches can go for years without the reality of God's presence. We can experience God's blessings – bigger buildings, better finances, more people; we can have great popularity, wonderful social events, classes and studies and activities – and yet be completely separated from the presence of God.

On an individual level, I'm talking about a quest for more of God; I'm not asking the questions:

- Is your doctrine correct?
- Are you reading your Bible?
- Are you attending church?
- Are you a moral person?
- Are you keeping your pants zipped up?

The question the Bible is asking is how real is your present experience of God? How personally connected are you?

You can do all of that and have absolutely no present experience of God in your life. What is step 1? Step #1 is the recognition, the acknowledgement: I am apart from God. I may be following the rules. I may be enjoying blessings from God. I may have enjoyed great success. But I no longer have God.

And you know when we generally arrive at this shocking recognition that we no longer have God? It's when our lives stop working. It is interesting, so long as our life is working we human beings can, as I said before, go decades without experiencing the presence of God. So long as the road in front of us is straight, we can cruise for years and leave Jesus somewhere behind at the curb. But

when your life hits a curve, when your steering no longer works, you realize how awful it is to only have the absence of God in your life.

What do I mean by your life hitting a curve? I mean when you experience some life-shattering event that you don't have control over like cancer, or a divorce, or an addiction, or depression, or the loss of a job, or a terrible breakup with your boyfriend or girlfriend, or an unplanned, unwanted pregnancy – something happens in your life that causes life to stop working – it is only then that we wake up and say, “You know, I just can't keep doing life the way I've been doing it. I need something else. I need something more.”

Step #1 on the quest for more of God is just the recognition that you can't keep doing life the way you're doing it independent of God; it's not working. Your spouse comes to you and says, “I'm leaving.” The doctor comes in and says, “The tests are positive.” Your salary is no longer terribly relevant; neither is your job title. Neither is your commitment to follow moral rules. Step #1 is simply becoming aware that your present experience is not the presence of God, but the absence of God.

Step #2 – Radical surgery

Exodus 33:4-6

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.

There is a mourning, grief, that takes place when you recognize the reality of your spiritual condition – how far you've gotten from God. In an orthodox Jewish family when a loved one dies, people tear their clothes as a sign of mourning.

Now, the interesting thing in this story is that the people not only tear their clothes, they remove all of their ornaments, their jewelry – why? Well, it was their jewelry that was used to make the Golden Calf in Exodus 32:

Exodus 32:2-4

Aaron answered them, “Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me.” 3 So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. 4 He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, “These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.”

So when the children of Israel stripped themselves of their jewelry, what they are doing is they are getting rid of everything that was associated with their past sin. There is radical surgery going on here. There is a recognition, first of all, that they're far from God. But secondly, they are cutting deeply and they are saying, "We want to get rid of everything in our lives associated with our past idolatry."

To update this a little bit, maybe in your life there has been an unhealthy romance, or an illicit relationship. You've come to recognize that this relationship with a man or woman has caused you to lose relationship with God - maybe there has been unfaithfulness to your spouse. And so now you are performing radical surgery. Like the children of Israel, then, you must of course cut off the relationship completely. You say, "I can't see this person any more." But you need to go further. You must say: I've got to get rid of everything associated with the relationship – all the ornaments. You throw out all the gifts that they gave you, all the letters, all the mementoes of your relationship.

Marlene and I were shocked to discover some years ago some married friends of ours who kept letters and gifts and cards from old boyfriends and girlfriends. When Marlene and I married, nobody had to tell us, we just knew that our relationship was going to be one of radical exclusivity. We didn't want the old mementoes, the old gifts, the old photos hanging around. We got rid of all of them.

Radical surgery means changing your phone number, cutting the cable on your TV, getting rid of all the alcohol in your house, dumping out the pills.

Listen to the counsel of Jesus in Matthew 5:27-30:

Matthew 5:27-30

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

If you are apart from God and you want God's presence back in your life, you say, "How radical must surgery be?" The model of the children of Israel and the counsel of Jesus is that you've got to cut all of the cancer out, every cell.

There is a difference, friends, between asking God for forgiveness, which we do all of the time, there is a difference between asking God for forgiveness for some transgression, getting a little balm for your conscience and move on, and repentance. And repentance doesn't happen, deep radical repentance, radical surgery of a sin area in your life – it doesn't happen until you and I look long

enough and hard enough at ourselves to see what we look like in the sight of God. Because we can live for years with rationalization and excuses regarding why we are the way we are and why we made the decisions we did and how we are forced, after all, to get that abortion or divorce, or say that cruel thing we said.

But when you push the pause button of life, or more likely when life hits a curve, it stops working. And even more than that, when you recognize that a large part of the unhappiness in your life is of your own making, when you can choose to not simply cast a sideward's glance at yourself, but you can choose to really see yourself, see what your sin has done to people who you were supposed to love, what your control has done, or your indifference to your wife, or your husband, you see the impact of your selfishness or your anger, when you look at yourself long enough to say, "My selfishness really hurt my parents," or "I really hurt my kids," "I hurt my friends," or "I hurt the person I swore to love, my spouse" but even worse when I look at myself long enough to recognize that I hurt my God by my sin; that what I've been doing has been causing God grief.

And there are many, many Bible passages that tell us that we can cause God grief. Radical surgery doesn't happen until you see the impact of your sin on those you love and particularly see the impact of your sin on God whose been caused great grief. You never see a deep movement of God in someone's life, or in the life of a church, without real repentance.

And then there is step #3 in this quest for more of God:

Step #3 – It begins with a few people

Exodus 33:7-11

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 at the entrances to their tents. 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.

Just a few people – Moses and Joshua – decided that they weren't going to go along with the low state of relationship with God that was experienced by all the rest of the people. They wanted more of God. They were going to get on a quest for a deeper experience with the Lord. So, they pulled away and went outside the camp, outside the normal operation of life and went after God on their own.

You know, I love this text because genuine experience of God, when God comes and brings his presence, these wonderful times of God visiting a place, they generally don't occur because someone has created a gigantic organization and a campaign with billboards. The pursuit of God's presence generally doesn't begin with big meetings and flashy advertising and massive budgets. We don't have to wait for the church hierarchy to get permission to seek the presence of God. Sometimes, just one person – maybe they aren't a leader; or 2-3 folks say, "We just want more of God" and they go after Him.

It is amazing in the history of Christianity how often a few people, sometimes one person, someone really obscure, decides they are going to go after the Lord – no fanfare, no holier-than-thou judgment of the church. They say, "For my own soul, I need more of God," and so they begin to seek more of God. Maybe a few join and then a few more. Most of the great revivals in the church started with an obscure person who withdrew to seek God.

Right before the Civil War there was a terrible economic crisis in America called "The Panic of 1857." And this terrible economic crisis closed many, many businesses. Tens of thousands of people lost their savings and banks were shut down. And during these economic hard times, one man – a man named Jeremiah Lamphier, announced a prayer meeting in New York City for noon on Sept. 23rd, 1857. Three people gathered. The next week six people gathered. October 17th 20 people got together to pray. The prayer meeting soon became a daily event. It was moved to a church. It outgrew the church and six months later a thousand people met to pray at noon in New York. And pretty soon lots of folks got converted. There were ten thousand people in New York City who came to Christ.

The revival spread to Ohio and down to Texas. And 100,000 people came to Christ. Prayer meetings sprung up all along the Eastern seaboard, in Philadelphia, in Boston, in Pittsburgh. At Oberlin College half the students met every day at noon to pray. And the same thing happened at Yale. Half of Yale's student body met daily to pray.

Just a few folks who said, "We're just going to go after God."

What if a few people chose to do that during the present economic crisis in America? This, by the way, is how the Vineyard movement started. A few people in Southern California – including a woman by the name of Carol Wimber, a couple of her relatives and a few friends felt completely dried out. They were Christians and knew all the rules. But they had gotten utterly separated from God and in desperation they said, "We are just going to go after God." So they began praying. No holier-than-thou attitude; no judgment on their church; no advertising campaign; we're just going to pray. A few more people joined them and pretty soon it grew to 120 folks who began to worship. And God started to visit them.

Water on dry ground. Carol's husband, John, joined that little prayer group. He became the leader and that was the birth of the Vineyard a little over 30 years ago. And now we've got close to 2000 churches around the world. It begins with a few people!

Step #4 – Bold prayer

Exodus 33:12-17

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."

What we find in Moses is an extraordinary boldness in prayer. In Hebrews 4:16 we read this:

Hebrews 4:16

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Some of your translations may say to come boldly. The Greek word is "parresia" which means "outspokenness," "frankness," "plainness of speech."

"Parresia" = "Outspokenness"

Because of what Christ has done in opening up the way to God through his death on the cross, we can go into God's very presence with great boldness, with frankness and outspokenness. We don't have to hide our true feelings or play pretend with God. We don't have to come to God with lots of inauthentic spiritual words. We can come as we are – outspokenly, frankly telling God what's on our hearts without spiritual veneer.

And that's what Moses does. He comes before God and says, "Do not pay your people off so cheaply by giving us the land and sending an angel in front of us. I don't want just your blessing, I want you God."

Why is it not enough to have the blessings of God? Why get on this journey of a continual pursuit of God himself? Why seek more of the presence of God in your life and more of the presence of God in the church? Why?

Let me suggest just two reasons. There are many others. One is because the problems we face are so enormous that they are never going to be solved apart from the intervention of God. Is there anyone here who needs to be convinced that the problems facing America or the problems facing this world are well beyond our human capacity to solve? Just look at America right now. We are a trillion dollars in dept and whole industries are teetering on the edge of bankruptcy. We have less than 5% of the world's population, but we have almost a quarter of the world's prisoners. There are nearly 2.5 million people behind bars in the United States. Last year there were a million and a half violent crimes – murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault. One-third of all children in America live apart from their biological fathers.

What human solutions are going to resolve the problem of the breakdown of the family in America, or violent crime, or our economic problems?

Globally, more than a billion people live on less than \$1 a day. Over a billion people do not have access to safe drinking water. 16,000 children die every day of hunger-related causes. One child in this world dies every five seconds. Does anyone think that human beings on our own are going to engineer a solution to global poverty?

In our own lives our addictions, the problems in our marriages, the problems with our kids, our mental health issues – are you in touch with the fact that you personally are facing in your own life issues and problems that are too big for you to handle on your own, that no amount of human strategizing or human intelligence are going to resolve these issues? Are you in touch with your limits and therefore your need for God's presence in your life?

We need more of the presence of God because we face problems as a country, as an international community, as individual persons and families that are just too big for us. We need the presence of God because only the presence of God distinguishes God's people from everyone else on earth. What is it that makes the church unique? It is certainly not our social activities. Lots of organizations have social activities. It is not our advertising. There are lots of corporations that have better advertising. It is not our music. It is not even our outreaches on behalf of the poor. What makes the church distinct from every other institution on earth is the presence of God.

We used to have billboards around the city that had this question on them.

Looking for God?

And then we had our name – Vineyard Columbus. When you boil it down, what is the one irreducible element of the church that separates us from every other human institution? It is simply this: Christ is among us. Jesus said that wherever two or more are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them.

Because of the enormity of the problems we face and because our very reason to exist focuses precisely on this point, we need the presence of God. We have no reason – at least no reason not found in other institutions to gather as a church – if we are not having an ever-deepening experience of God.

So Moses boldly prayed for this. Which leads to step #5 in this never-ending quest for God:

Step #5 – Higher up and further in

Exodus 33:18-23

Then Moses said, “Now show me your glory.” 19 And the Lord said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 20 But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.” 21 Then the Lord said, “There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. 22 When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. 23 Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.”

What made Moses a great leader? After all that he experienced, he still wanted more of God. He met God in the Tent of Meetings. God spoke to him. He saw the miracles of God. He dined with God on the top of Mt. Sinai. And he said, “Not enough. Show me your glory.”

And here is what the Lord says:

Exodus 33:19

And the Lord said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

In other words, “Here is what I’m going to show you of myself. I am good.”

We’re often afraid of pursuing God. What if I really go after God, what will I find? Perhaps this pursuit will turn out really bad for me. If I say: God, do what you need to do, but I want more of you, what will happen? What will happen is that you will discover for yourself how good God wishes to be towards you. Jeremiah 32:39-41 says this:

Jeremiah 32:39-41

I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me and that all will then go well for them and for their children after them. 40 I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me. 41 I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul.

God says, “I will never stop doing good to you. It is not like I do good to you sometimes and at other times I choose to do bad to you. I will always do good with all of my heart and with all of my soul.”

To plunge into that, the desire of God to do you good, to swim upstream in that, in fact God is pursuing you to do you good – it is not just your seeking him to discover more of his goodness, God is pursuing you to show you goodness. At the end of that most famous psalm, Psalm 23, the one that begins, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,” we read these words in verse 6:

Psalm 23:6

Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

John Piper, in his book *The Pleasures of God*, points out that the literal translation of Psalm 23:6 is:

Surely goodness and mercy shall pursue me all the days of my life.

He said God is like a highway patrolman who pursues you down the interstate with lights flashing and sirens blaring to get you to stop – not to give you a speeding ticket, but to give you something so good it could not wait until you get home. God chases us down; he pursues us to show us his goodness.

C.S. Lewis, my favorite Christian author, in the last book of the *Narnia Chronicles* called *The Last Battle*, writes about a scene where these folks are swimming into a waterfall. Here is what we read:

“Don’t stop. Further up and further in,” called Farsight. Jewel also cried out, “And don’t stop, further up and further in! Take it in your stride.” His voice could only just be heard above the roar of the water. The next moment everyone saw that he plunged into the Pool. And helter-skelter behind him, with splash after splash, all the others did the same...they all found they were swimming straight for the Waterfall itself.

Further up and further in. Plunging into the deep end of the pool not being content to swim in the kiddie pool, that’s the call of the Christian life. That’s the

call of Christian leaders, right into the Waterfall of the God's presence. Let's pray.

The Never Ending Quest for More

Rich Nathan

August 23-24, 2008

The Making of a Leader Series: Lessons Learned from the Life of Moses

Exodus 33

1. Seeking More (Philippians 3:10-14)

2. A Five-Step Journey

- A. Step #1: Realize that we are living without the presence of God (Exodus 33:1-3)
- B. Step #2: Radical surgery (Exodus 33:4-6)
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