

CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS: Don't Go Without God!

Scripture used: [Exodus 33:14-18 \(NIV\)](#); [John 1:14 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Only three months after God delivered the Israelites from centuries of slavery, they abandoned Him to worship a golden calf. Despite their betrayal, God reminded the Israelites of His promises to lead them to the Promised Land—but without accompanying them personally. As described in [Exodus 33:1–3 \(NIV\)](#), they could receive what they wanted while losing what they needed most: God's presence. Moses understood the danger and refused to move forward without Him. Pastor Hurmon reminded us that we face the same choice today. We can go to church on Sundays, achieve our dreams, fill our calendars, and enjoy God's blessings while neglecting a genuine relationship with Him. God's presence is not merely His existence everywhere; it is His personal, loving engagement with each of us. A church without walls begins when we carry that relationship into every part of our daily lives.

KEY POINTS

1. **Don't confuse God's gifts with God's presence.** We can experience God's goodness and still be distant from Him. Some people keep God at arm's length, while others attend church without investing in a personal relationship or participating in His work beyond the church walls. Success, security, and answered prayers cannot replace intimacy with the God who loves us.
2. **Prioritize His presence.** Moses had known privilege, opportunity, and ambition, but he learned to hold his dreams loosely because God was preparing him for a greater purpose. Although deeply flawed, he made room for God and spoke with Him as a friend. We must likewise examine whether busyness, fear, misplaced priorities, or wounds from church experiences are keeping us from the relationship we need most.
3. **Practice His presence.** Practicing God's presence means intentionally becoming aware of Him throughout ordinary life. We can encounter Him through prayer, Scripture, quiet reflection, and simple moments during our work, relationships, and routines. [John 1:14 \(NIV\)](#) reminds us that Jesus entered our world to dwell among us, making God's personal presence tangible and accessible.
4. **Persist in His presence.** A close relationship with God is not built through occasional church attendance or a single spiritual experience. It grows as we consistently seek Him, trust Him, and invite Him into every area of our lives. The closer we draw to God, the more we become like Jesus—and the more we become like Jesus, the more deeply we desire God, as reflected in [1 Corinthians 13:12 \(NIV\)](#).

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - God's blessings can never substitute for a personal relationship with Him. Like Moses, we must refuse to pursue any destination, dream, or opportunity without God's presence. Are you confusing God's goodness with genuine closeness to Him? What keeps you from prioritizing His presence, and where do you regularly go to meet with Him?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - If God offered to give Israel the Promised Land but said His presence would not go with them, why do you think Moses considered God's presence more important than the blessing? What does this teach us about what it means to truly follow God today?

- 3) **DO** - Set aside intentional time each day this week to pray, read Scripture, and invite God into your ordinary activities. Before making decisions or pursuing your plans, pray: “God, if Your presence does not go with me, I do not want to go.”