

Face to Face
Face to Face • Message 1
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Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- Ask God to help you slow down in this fast-paced world and find quiet moments to truly hear Him.
- Ask God to show you a place to meet with Him regularly.
- Pray that Brookwood will be a light in this world.

Scripture Reading:

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. 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. As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the LORD spoke with Moses. Whenever the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance to the tent, they all stood and worshiped, each at the entrance to their tent. 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.

Exodus 33:7-11 (NIV)

A. Introduction

(Deuteronomy 34:10. C/R: Numbers 12:6-8a)

Three objections I get to groups:

1. I don't have the margin to commit. (Asking for seven weeks, not until Jesus returns.)
2. I don't want to lead (play video) or join Big Group of Small Groups.
3. What if I get in an odd group? (It's only seven weeks.)

Face to face...

As we start today, we live in a culture where we are doing more things electronically...and less things face to face.

So out of curiosity...

How many of you have texted with your spouse or kid while in the same room?

How many of you have ever quit a job by text message or email?

How many of you have asked someone out on a text message? You romantics!

How many of you have broken up with someone by text message or email? May God have mercy on your soul.

Now, some of you older generations, I know, are newer to texting. My dad is a wonderful texter, but it took a while. When he first started texting, he didn't understand all the little lingo. So, for instance, if I was pouring out my heart and saying it was a bad day... he would respond with things like *Lo!*, which he thought meant lots of love... but he's since learned...

But for a lot of people, you grew up talking face to face... because there is something powerful, personal, and bonding about saying something face to face...

I want you to do something... OK... I want you to see something you might not have experienced in a while.... Silence...

- The average attention span is now down to 10 seconds... for Gen Z, it's down to 6.5 seconds.
- 2,617 times a day, a person will touch their phone. (Some of you have done that during my sermon.)

Here's the problem: When you get home... you turn on the TV, you listen to music, you use your phone... and then you try to wake up and sit with God, and wonder why you can't connect...

If I did no training for an Ironman... would you be surprised if I couldn't finish the race?... The point I'm making is... the most important thing you can do is walk with God face to face, to be rooted in the Spirit. But you can't do that unless you start to learn to quiet your mind and heart... here's a challenge... spend five minutes tonight just sitting in a chair... learning to be still and quiet...

Moses learned the principle of quieting his heart and mind so he could walk face to face.

We are going to spend seven weeks looking at Moses's life. He's one of the heroes of the Bible... and here's what made him such a man of God...

Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face,
Deuteronomy 34:10 (NIV)

he said, "Listen to my words: "When there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, reveal myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams. But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD.

Numbers 12:6-8a (NIV)

All the other prophets... he spoke to in visions and dreams.. remember when Ezekiel had this vision of God... and God's like, *What did you see...* and he's like, *I saw a wheel, and a I think it was chair, and the chair had like this face in it, and the face had this other face, and it was the face of ox, I think there was an eagle... and there were some jewels and I think some old dudes that were wearing white.. and definitely smoke..*

But God spoke to Moses clearly. It says... God was like, *Hey Moses, I know it's Tuesday, but I just want you to know I'm going to kill them...* Moses is like, *No...* God's like, *Yep, I'm going to kill them, just wanted to let you know, friend.*

But he went on to reveal and tell Moses things. They had a face to face relationship. In the text we just read, a lot of others have what I've referred to as a secondhand Jesus relationship... where they hear what God is like from others. But the heartbeat of this series is for each of us to speak face to face with God like Moses did... to have a personal and close relationship with God...

This is a painfully simple talk- but it's one of the most important things you can apply...

B. Face to Face

1. **Moses had a secret PLACE.**

(Exodus 33:7-11. C/R: Exodus 34:29; Ezekiel 46:9; Acts 4:13; 1 Corinthians 3:16)

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. 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. As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the LORD spoke with Moses. Whenever the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance to the tent, they all stood and worshiped, each at the entrance to their tent. 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.

Exodus 33:7-11 (NIV)

Notice God spoke to Moses face to face... but notice what Moses first did... He created a place to meet God, a tent. There was nothing special about the tent. Moses had a specific place... and notice something about the specific place.... It says it was outside the camp; it was some distance away...

Meaning it was a place for Him to be with God alone...

Where is your tent? ... Where is the place that you break away from the noise of the world to meet with God?...

It could be a closet, could be a room, could be your car, could be the office before everyone gets there...

There was nothing special about the tent, and there is nothing special about our space...

But ordinary things become extraordinary when God's presence shows up. Natural moments become supernatural moments when we spend time with God!

Listen to this...

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD.

Exodus 34:29 (NIV)

Notice that as he met with God, his face became radiant... Let me say this clearly: You cannot hide a life hidden from God.

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

Acts 4:13 (NIV)

It's funny, I write sermons several months out. Literally, as I was writing this, someone texted me and was just being argumentative and rude. So, before I responded, I spent a few moments praying, and I felt like God just said, *Give them grace*. Right after, I talked to someone else, they said, *Crush 'em.... 😊* ... and I have to admit the other sounded better in the moment. But as you walk with God, you start to respond and look like Him.

How to find the strength to forgive when culture tells you to retaliate.

How to love when culture tends to hate.

How to find peace in a culture filled with fear and anxiety.

How to find purpose that fills your heart to overflowing.

It's in your tent... the place where God takes natural hearts and he fills them with supernatural power.

“ When the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed festivals, whoever enters by the north gate to worship is to go out the south gate; and whoever enters by the south gate is to go out the north gate. No one is to return through the gate by which they entered, but each is to go out the opposite gate.”

Ezekiel 46:9 (NIV)

In Hebrew culture, there was this practice: You would walk in one door and notice... go out another... Why? because the temple was where God would dwell... They believed you couldn't go into the presence of God and leave unchanged, so they would go through different doors. As you leave today, I invite you to leave through a different door...

As you find your tent, you start to change... but here's the thing: sometimes, you don't always notice it...

Notice, Moses wasn't aware... but others are aware. When you meet with God, when you go to your tent... things begin to change in you... and sometimes you don't notice it... but mark my words, others do.

So, find a specific place...

But theologically, I want you to understand God is limited to your specific space you meet... Let me show you something really simple but profound.

2 obstacles to hearing from God:

- 1.) You don't have a quiet place.**
- 2.) You don't understand who you are.**

God is not out there... waiting to be found. If you're a believer, he lives in you and guides you... Let me show you.

Tent -----à

- Moses just makes a tent, a place he meets with God...

Tent -----à tabernacle

- Later, God gives Moses instructions to build a tabernacle, which includes a tent but also some other things...

Tent -----à tabernacle-----à temple ---→ us

- This really is like the tabernacle, just a more permanent building....

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NIV)

You are now the temple... which means God doesn't just speak to you in your tent; he will also speak throughout the day. We need to remember and try to invite him into every space. You carry God with you everywhere; never forget that!

2. Moses had a singular PASSION.

(Exodus 33:1-3. C/R: Exodus 33:14-15, 19)

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.' I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 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."

Exodus 33:1-3 (NIV)

The reason God said this is because right before this chapter, the Israelites had made a golden calf and started to worship it... So, God says, *I'm going to bless my people...* but he wasn't going to be close to them...

He was going to give them the promised land, all the possessions, a home, wealth... but I love this... Moses didn't want any of that without God.

See, a question all of us must ask is this....

Do we go to God to get God, or do we go to God to get things?

In 2010, Stevie Johnson, a wide receiver for the Buffalo Bills, dropped a game-winning pass, and he posted this on social media about God...

"I praise you 24/7!!! And this how you do me!!! You expect me to learn from this??? How??? I'll never forget this!! Ever!! Thx Tho."

-Stevie Johnson

Jesus died for you. God will work through you... But it's not all about you...

Sometimes, if we think it's all about us, we can think God should always bless us, heal us, and give us certain miracles.

Some people, after they experience miracles and blessings, can start chasing after them.

Miracles happen...and we should pray for them... every time someone's sick, we should always pray... when you hear someone's sick in the lobby, pray for them... don't just grab them and start laying hands on them, but pray for them..

Miracles are happening here...

One of the most supernatural times in the Bible is in Acts, which spans over 30 years and mentions 32 miracles. There's a reason we call them miracles and not Monday's church...

The point is that we can use God almost as a cosmic vending machine... where we go to God to get things. You have to settle each day that you are going to God to get God...

Moses went to God to get God. All the treasures of the world meant nothing without God... He didn't want the Promised Land without the Promise Keeper. He didn't want the blessings without the Blessor...

And we know this because...

The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.

Exodus 33:14-15 (NIV)

When it says my presence will go with you... It's literally translated as my face will go with you.

Listen, God has called us to live for God... and this church is doing that... but make sure that the work for God isn't causing us to neglect life with God...

Intimacy--→ fruit.

Fruit robs us of intimacy... Don't fall in love with the fruit...

Moses had experience after experience. Miracles. They had crossed the Red Sea, and the waters had parted... Manna (Chick-fil-A) rained from Heaven. He hit a rock with his staff, and water came out and quenched the thirst of a million people. But his priority was one thing: God's presence... He just wanted to be with God.

And I love this... he wants more of God. He has a passion for God..

If you are going to have a passion for God, you are going to have to see the Goodness of God.

Write this down. Here's what he knew: God was good... You will respect someone who is all-powerful, but you can't approach them... see, you can't have a face to face relationship with God unless you understand and believe that God is good.

You know, we grow up hearing this saying, you may know it... God is good... and someone says?... All the time... God is good...

We say it, and maybe you've said it before, but a lot of people don't truly believe it.

Scott McKnight, a professor of New Testament theology in Illinois, gives his students a test every single year. He gives them a personality test and then quizzes them on what they think Jesus is like.

For those who worry.. Jesus is a worrier. For those who are joyful, He's joyful. Introverts think Jesus is introverted, and extroverts think Jesus is extroverted. Isn't that interesting?

In essence, what he found is that instead of us being made in God's image, we tend to make God in our own image!

God is good if we believe it or not... that's in his character and nature...

When Moses asked to see God's glory, listen to this...

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."

Exodus 33:19 (NIV)

So, when Moses saw His glory, he saw that he was good. Think about it: God didn't reveal his justice, his power, or his wrath ... this is what he showed.

Have you noticed how the devil tries to get you to take all the credit when things go good, but as soon as bad things happen, there is this voice in our head that goes *Why would God allow this?* He's attacking God's goodness.

But God is good. He's a good father. He's a good savior. He's a good friend. He's a good listener. He's a good comforter.

Devotion and resources. Moses link.