

January 12, 2020
Experiencing God (2)
God is Pursuing a Relationship with You
Exodus 3:1-6
Rev. Dr. Charles Yoon

Today we are going to take a look at the life of Moses because his life illustrates something that we need to know about the way we are supposed to live. When he was a young adult, he saw an Egyptian person abusing a Hebrew. He stepped in and ended up killing the Egyptian. A little while later he saw two Hebrews in a fight. When Moses tried to intervene, one of the Hebrews said, "Who made you to be an authority over us. Aren't you the guy who killed the Egyptian?" He was rejected at that point and he realized that the news about what he did had spread and that his life was in danger.

So Moses left Egypt and went to a place called Midian. He settled down as an alien in a foreign country and stayed there quite a while. For 40 years Moses shepherded sheep, raised kids, and developed new aches and pains as he got older. One day he woke up expecting another day; just another normal day. In today's text God called Moses to free the Hebrew people from Egypt. Verse 6 says, "*When he heard that this was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.*" Moses was afraid to look at God. This closeness to God, this intimacy, was brand new. It was threatening and frightening to Moses. God was seeking him and met him in the desert.

Likewise, God pursues a love relationship with each one of us. He knows us and He wants us to know Him. In John 17, Jesus prayed for us. "*Now this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God in Jesus Christ whom you have sent.*" (17:3) Jesus wanted His disciples and followers to know God. Paul prayed for the Christians to know God and have a relationship with Him. "*I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious father, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know him better.*" (Ephesians 1:17)

In Isaiah, God said to Israel: "*You are my witnesses and my servant whom I have chosen so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he.*" (43:10) We are witnesses and God's servants so that we may know God and believe God. God wants to restore a relationship between us and Him. God pursues a love relationship with us.

Exodus is an action-packed book. It is filled with a burning bush, hail, plagues and frogs. It is also about a relationship between Moses and God. God used him in all kinds of ways. Late in Moses' life he focused more on meeting with God. Exodus 33:7 says, "*Now Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside of the camp some distance away calling it the tent of meeting.*"

Notice the name of the place, a relational word; the tent of meeting. In the life of Israel over a period of years and years, the tent of meeting was where everyone could go and meet with God. But with Moses something special happened; a sign of a cloud. The pillar of cloud would come over the tent and then Moses would meet with God face to face, as a person meets with his friend.

After God's calling, Moses said to God, "You have been telling me to 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. If you are pleased with me, teach me Your ways so that I may know You and continue to find favor with You. Remember that this nation is Your people." God 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. 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?" 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." Moses wanted God's presence to remain with His people. God's relationship remained intact with His people. What made them unique was not that they had certain rituals and not that they lived in a certain geographical place, but because God was present with them; relationship.

Now God is seeking a relationship with us. If you are brand new in your relationship with God, maybe God is still just an idea that God is the God of your father and mother maybe, but not your own personal God. If that's where you are in life, then there is nothing more important than your response to this invitation to be in a relationship with Him. There is nothing more important than being able to submit and agree that God is God and to agree that your life needs to change and to turn your life over to Him. But if you have already experienced that relationship and are now walking with God and have responded again and again, there still might be that reality in your life that you feel like something still has to change. You still can make it a higher priority. You still need and desire more.

Moses was never satisfied with where he was with God because he was passionate about his relationship with God. In Exodus 33:18 Moses said, "*God, show me your glory.*" This is what God always wanted in Moses. In the midst of all of the things that God was doing in Israel, God was also doing in Moses' life as a servant. What God always wanted in Moses was a heart in love with God; a heart that passionately cries out to God to know Him better. It is the same to us as well. God wants us to have a heart in love with God, to know Him better, and to continually have a loving relationship with Him.