

Depending upon God's presence (Quality: Average)

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- [0 : 00] of truth which has been upon my mind to bring before you this morning you will find in the 33rd chapter of Exodus from the 14th verse. The 14th verse of the 33rd chapter of the book of Exodus. And he said My presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest.
- The Lord laid upon Moses a great responsibility. He was the one appointed by God to lead the ancient people from the bondage of Egypt to the very border of the promised land.
- My friends, the difficulties of Moses were many and various. The this next attitude of the people being by no means the least of the difficulties which he had to encounter.
- and that this had been so recently brought before him in that while he was in the mount receiving the tables from God these people joined together and with Aaron's help they made a golden calf.
- And as Moses descended from the mount he found these people engaged in revelry ascribing their deliverance from Egyptian bondage to this calf which they had made.
- [2 : 09] Do you remember how Moses' spirit was provoked? We read that anger rose up in the heart of this meek man and he took the calf from them and ground its powder and made them sprinkled it upon the water and made the people drink of that water.
- Well now in view of the past Moses may be somewhat staggered by the present that this people should so soon forget the exercise of the living and almighty God for their deliverance and should so soon fall a prey to that most God provoking practice of idolatry.
- And Moses was obviously under great pressure when we consider the future of prospects that was opening up before him and the people in the wilderness of pilgrimage with all its privations and all its difficulties and also this obvious superficiality of thought and appreciation that was found in the hearts of these Israelites over whom he was appointed as leader.
- And my friends Moses being a man of like passions with us we can appreciate just a little of the sinking condition of spirit he must have felt when these things were presented before him and how he found consolation from one prospect only and that prospect was that the Lord would be with him or with them and my friends in reference to that desire for the Lord's presence we have the prayer associated with the text this morning if thy presence go not with me carry us not up him
- Moses could see ruin on every side apart from the presence of the Lord and my friends in that presence Moses found his comfort and his consolation as he considered the future with its great responsibilities and the exposures associated with a wilderness pilgrimage that was yet to be accomplished in their experience and under his guidance now with those more general remarks as it concerns the setting of the text I want to come particularly to the word of the text Moses was anxious for the divine presence he realized that without this the case and cause was lost those things opposed to him were so powerful that but for the presence of God it was impossible to see the way through to anticipate the final victory and my friends here was

[6 : 59] God provoked by the people sin and in consequence of this Moses feared that the divine presence would be taken from and in consequence of which all would be lost therefore this promise meant so much to Moses in the prevailing circumstance my friends God brings his people into circumstances wherein they realize the suitability and sweetness of his promise now what a wonderful thing it is to be so conscious of our insufficiency and our danger to realize a need of the divine presence my friends could you could I face the future with quietness and composure if we had no anticipation of the presence of the Lord being with us it is a great mercy to realize our need of the divine presence and to pray for it with all our hearts and those circumstances that reveal this essential to us are not indeed adverse spiritually considered but most profitable for the nearer you and I come to personal insufficiency the nearer we are to an actual understanding of our faith and our needs and he said my presence shall go with this day my friends

Moses was praying to the Lord when the Lord communicated or spoke this word to his heart and I would commend the exercise of prayer to you as one sealed of God with his approbation in that while his servant Moses was engaged in this exercise the Lord condescended to speak a word in season a word suitable to quell his fears and to assure him as to the future what a terrible thought it is that many stumble on into an unknown future without any appreciation of their need of the divine presence my friends to go on without prayer is a most foolish thing to do because there is no possibility of success ultimate success or prosperity if the

Lord withholds his presence from God real prosperity lasting prosperity depends entirely upon the blessing of God now Moses said the Lord said then to Moses while Moses was in the exercise of prayer my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest you may say well Moses had been a very successful man he had known prosperity in a most remarkable way he had been raised up of God and prepared and sent forth into the presence of

Pharaoh and God had used means to confirm Moses as the leader of his national people he had confirmed Moses word and he had used miracles to bring forth his people from that bondage and Moses had been accepted by the people they had followed him through the Red Sea and out into the wilderness and here they were situated in Mount at the foot of Mount Horez but my friends Moses prosperity in no wise blinded Moses eyes to his need of the divine presence and the need of praying his way through you know prosperity can so intoxicate the spirit of man as to deceive man in self sufficiency oh I'm prospering and therefore

I am adequate to meet my need my friends that is unsanctified prosperity which deceives the spirit of man sanctified prosperity will make man appreciate that his prosperity is indeed the blessing of God resting upon him and he will need feel to need the continued blessing that his prosperity also may continue and it is our mercy if we feel that it is of the Lord's mercy that we have prospered hitherto and that the divine presence the blessing of God is essential to a continuance of such prosperity now Moses despite the prosperity that

[14 : 43] God had given to him was humbled before God in realisation of the favours God had given hitherto and he felt his need of its continuance and my friends when God said my presence shall go with thee Moses had a realisation that the God that had been with him in the past would also continue with him in the future and this was to his comfort as he anticipated the future way my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest now the rest obviously of the text refers finally to the entry of the people into the land flowing with milk and honey that

God had set before them by his word ere they left the land of Egypt and according to his promise unto the fathers Abraham Isaac and Israel that between the entering into the rest and their present position was a journey my friends it was concerning that intervening period that was fraught with difficulty and with danger that the Lord gave his promise unto Moses of his presence for now what does the presence of the

Lord mean to us what has it been made to miss two conditions are set before us my friends if we have a spiritual appreciation of the blessing of the divine presence we shall indeed fear the absence of the law when David had sinned in the matter of Bathsheba and was brought into the exercise of penitence as before God one of the things which he prayed most earnestly before was the preservation of God's presence he feared that

God would deal with him according to his sins and would cast him out of his sight he says in the 11th verse of the 51st Psalm cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me now the thought of God casting him away from his presence and taking his Holy Spirit from him was to David dreadful dreadful and my friends let us look into our own hearts what does the divine presence mean to us and the prospect of God's presence being taken from us does it fill our hearts with fear and dread for now the Lord says to

Moses my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest and assurance of his presence and then my friends the presence of the Lord is essential to spiritual prosperity in the absence of the Lord there is death in the presence of the Lord is life and Moses realized that there were difficulties and dangers in front of them as a people that if the

[19 : 51] Lord withdrew his presence from them the enemies may well gain advantage and their experience would be absolutely fearful and dreadful but if the Lord's presence was with them their spiritual need and safety was assured in the 16th Psalm David touches upon a spring which is very beautiful thou wilt show me the path of life in thy presence is fullness of joy at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore just notice that in thy presence is fullness of joy if we look into the meaning of that expression fullness of joy we shall see satiation absolute perfect satisfaction the supply of every need in thy presence is fullness of joy and oh my friends what a mercy if the

Lord promises us his presence my presence shall go with you the presence of the Lord in the presence of the Lord is life spiritual life spiritual preservation spiritual sustenance spiritual protection Christ is the keeper of his saints he guards them by his power subdues their numerous complaints in every gloomy hour the presence of the Lord is with us there is satisfaction spiritually considered whatsoever may arise in our experiences whether they be prosperity or adversity therefore my friends we would covet earnestly the blessing of the promise my presence shall go with this but then in circumstantial matters this has been an exercise with me for several reasons in the last few days personally we need again and again the assurance of the divine presence my friends we can't go on without the

Lord can we perhaps in my position I realise this more than most that I just can't go on without the divine presence there is such a need in the ministry for which the resources of man are totally insufficient there can be a dead exposition of the letter of the word that my friends upon that faith cannot see living souls cannot find satisfaction in just a mere reiteration of the doctrine of the word living souls need living provision and that living provision must come from a living

God and I often think of that word in the New Testament regarding the distribution of the bread given by Christ to his disciples and he gave to the disciples to give to the multitude and my friends that is the recurring need of the ministry to receive from a living Christ a living word to distribute to a living people well then so the text has its significance in one's own experience but also my friend collectively as a people we need the continuing presence of the Lord we need the

Lord to deliver us from our difficulties we need the Lord to sanctify the course of life the changes which must occur in any community things do not remain static even in a congregation for many weeks or months together we find that there are changes many but my friends if the Lord is with us if this divine presence is indeed continued among us though the changes may occur and will occur of necessity and consistent with the pattern of life and nothing will be wanting in thy presence fullness of joy and at thy right hand the pleasures forevermore the Lord can continue to bless us and to keep us together and to provide for us in every way needful

[26 : 37] I see the whole secret of our continuance dependent upon the fulfilment of the text and should this text be fulfilled it will be well my presence shall go with thee and then I have also thought of the young people and the changes that are associated with them to which I have referred in prayer this morning my friends it seems the pattern of modern living that at a certain age our young people shall leave the fold at least for a time and go into more distant places to further their education and to prepare for life we appreciate ambition and we do from our heart wish them well and would seek their prosperity in the unfolding of these ways but our exercise as their spiritual guide and under shepherd is that they may be watched over and cared for by the

Lord as they go forth into the difficulties and the dangers to which they must have necessarily be exposed in their new environment and my friends this consideration and exercise that has been upon me especially of recent days in view of the unfolding of the immediate future has brought my mind to the text and I do pray that this word may be applied to the hearts of our young friends and that they may be caused to realise the blessing of the divine presence and their security and safety as that presence shall be maintained unto them in their future ways so the text has in these respects had a very powerful and useful exercise and application in one's mind and spirit my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest but I realise that these things to which I have referred by no means exhaust the exercises associated with the

Lord's people and I don't doubt that I have here represented in this congregation not a few exercises with regard to the future the problems attendant of the life and if I could see into your hearts as God sees them you'll find the very spirit of the text to be so desirable and so suitable to your present needs now my presence shall go with thee we need the Lord to go with us in preparation for the future sometimes we have to make far reaching decisions decisions which may affect us for the remainder of our days and my friends we seem to be at a crossroads of experience and that we want to know the right word we want that infallible guidance of him that knows the end from the beginning

I can't do more than commend to you the exercise of godly Moses if you are placed at such a juncture of experience as this my friends there's no safer place in making a decision as to your future than on your knees before god and I am persuaded of this and I believe I can say from personal experience I have proven that if by the enabling of god's grace you can simply and humbly put your hands as a child into the hand of a heavenly father and pray the prayer of our second hymn this morning guide me oh thou great Jehovah the lord will not suffer you to take a wrong step the lord will not suffer you to blunder my friends my friends

I firmly believe in the faithfulness and condescension of god the care of him who ruleth over all the old scotch covenant as used to say and I reiterated this in your hearing before if you talk to god as a father he will talk to you as a child as my friends if you act to god as a child he will act toward you as a father I say in simplicity and yet in faith look to the lord and wait for him and he will not leave you destitute of his love and his care in your time of decision my presence shall go with it my presence shall go with it then sometimes we have situations in which to enter wherein we may feel our insufficiency and the prospect rises before us as a great mountain but my friends the lord is always sufficient and the hearts of all men are in his hands you know

[34 : 24] Moses he had a multitude of stiff-knit people and the one who he may well have looked to as a faithful companion Aaron he was involved in the transgression he was among the people in the forming the making of a golden cup you know Moses was very much alone wasn't he very much alone and my friends sometimes you and I have got to go alone and we've got to have dealings with others who may seem to be a contrary disposition Moses Moses was out of harmony with the spirit of the people over whom

God had made him leader and yet by God's appointing he got to live with them by God's appointing he got to continue among them and my friends how could this be so well the solution of the problem is in the promise my presence shall go with it and I will give thee rest my friends the contrary attitudes of men are subject to the will and purpose of God the Lord binds the floods from over snow you and I sometimes are guilty of unbelieving compromise as if we've got to go half way to meet the world in that we may live with them that we may walk with them my friends no we haven't got to go a half way to meet the world there's no necessity for compromise what is the secret of the need my presence shall go with this and my friends if we stand to our principles and enjoying the divine presence we shall walk safely through without any difficulty because the

Lord is able to subdue the spirit of man the Lord is able to reconcile the hearts of men toward us so that it may be sometimes in an individual way you're frightened or nervous to go in to a certain interview or to be involved in a certain circumstance because your fear of the reaction of him or her with whom you have to do my friends if the text is yours you have nothing to fear my presence shall go with this my presence shall go with this if it's a fear of standing isolated in a community I say if the Lord is with you you've got nothing to fear my presence shall go with this and

I will give the rest and you may have a decision to make with independent of personalities you may feel that some change is obvious some development has occurred which has placed your future in the melting pot and of necessity changes must be made and circumstantially you feel you don't know which way to take nor what to do well my friends at such a juncture of experience circumstantially

I would support the text in its fulfilment in its import with another scripture commit thy way unto the Lord trust also in him and he shall bring it to part you know the Lord of hosts is his name my friends the Lord can and does make his way plain before his people he can indeed so close doors as to leave one open which is his will and his way for you or he can so promote circumstances that your mind is settled upon which way to take though there may be several alternatives presenting themselves before you but the

[40 : 49] Lord can settle your mind by some one advantage that will enable you to make your decisions and to step out into the future in the fear and the way of the Lord I would warn you of a danger and I don't know why I am preaching thus this morning but I would warn you of a danger if you are at the threshold of decision as to your future wise beware of the flesh prevailing over the spirit beware of natural inclination predominating over spiritual consideration my friends when the flesh is uppermost we're on a slippery place when the spirit is uppermost we're in a safe place now the

Lord says and I must come to the amen my presence shall go with it I may have someone here this morning and I'm preaching subjectively I may have someone here this morning that has come into the house of God burdened with decision you may have realized the necessity of taking a step of making a move you may feel very much cut off from creatures and you may feel an inability to lean on the opinions of fellow men you want it from the Lord well my friends should the Lord bless you and apply this text to your heart in answer to your many cries and cries and groans before him the Lord have the glory my presence shall go with this and I will give thee rest you may prove in the unfolding of the future a trial of your faith you may fear from time to time that the decision initially was wrong that my friends this word being applied to you at such a time as this whatever the trials that may exist and be brought to bear upon the decision you will prove ever prove the decision to be right my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest the Lord bless his own word amen