

The Lord Has Promised to Be with His Followers

(Hebrews 13:5-6)

Introduction:

1. The September issue of Gospel Advocate contains a series of articles entitled, "Where Was God?"
2. These articles deal with whether God is present when we face difficulties.
3. In our lesson we are emphasizing the fact that "the Lord has promised to be with His followers" (Hebrews 13:5-6).
4. We are examining 9 Bible characters to help us better understand and appreciate this promise.

Discussion:

I. ISAAC

- A. God promised to be with Isaac (Genesis 26:3).
- B. In spite of God's promise, Isaac faced problems from the Philistines (vs.19-21).
- C. The Lord's presence does not prevent other people from behaving improperly.

II. JACOB

- A. God promised to be with Jacob (Genesis 28:15).
- B. Jacob prospered greatly, but he also experienced a number of difficulties.
 1. Sometimes he suffered hardship because of the actions of other people.
 2. Sometimes he suffered because of his own actions.
- C. Before he died, Jacob said that the Lord had been with him (Genesis 48:15-16).

III. JOSEPH

- A. Joseph suffered severe hardship because of the actions of his brothers.
- B. Someone might question whether the Lord was with Joseph, but He was.
 1. The Lord was with Joseph when he was sold to Potiphar (Genesis 39:1-2).
 2. The Lord was with Joseph when he was in prison (Genesis 39:20-21).

IV. MOSES

- A. God promised to be with Moses (Exodus 3:11-12).
- B. Because God was with Moses he accomplished many great things.
- C. God's presence did not prevent Moses from striking the rock (Numbers 20:7-11).
- D. The Lord's presence does not excuse disobedience.

V. JOSHUA (Joshua 1:5)

VI. GIDEON

- A. God selected Gideon to deliver Israel from the Midianites.
- B. An angel assured Gideon that the Lord was with him (Judges 6:12).

- C. Gideon questioned the angel about the Lord's presence (Judges 6:13).
- D. To properly understand and appreciate the Lord's presence we must reason properly.
 - 1. Who was responsible for Israel's oppression from Midian (Judges 6:1)?
 - 2. The Lord's presence does not mean that we will not have to face the consequences of our actions.

VII. SAMSON

- A. Samson shows how circumstances might develop that will cause the Lord to depart from His followers (Judges 16:20-21).
- B. However, the Lord did not leave Samson permanently (vs.22, 28-30).

VIII. STEPHEN

- A. Stephen's death is recorded in Acts 7:54-60.
- B. He did not deserve to be treated so harshly (Acts 6:8, 10, 15).
- C. Did the Lord leave Stephen?
 - 1. The Lord stood up for him.
 - 2. Stephen looked to the Lord for strength as he was killed.
- D. No doubt Stephen's faith influenced Saul.

IX. PAUL (2 Timothy 4:6, 16-18)

Conclusion:

- 1. The Lord's followers are assured of His presence.
- 2. Have you become a follower of the Lord?