

We Can Be Assured of God's Presence

(Hebrews 13:5-6)

Introduction:

1. We learn from 2 Peter 1:4 that God has given "*exceeding great and precious promises*" to His people.
2. One of these promises is revealed in Hebrews 13:5 -- the Lord will always be with His followers.
3. This morning we studied the conditions that relate to this promise -- by complying with these conditions "we can be assured of God's presence."
4. We can also gain this assurance by examining Bible characters.
5. In our lesson we are taking a look at 9 Bible characters who illustrate how "we can be assured of God's presence."

Discussion:

I. ISAAC

- A. God promised to be with Isaac (Genesis 26:3).
- B. Even though God gave this promise, Isaac faced problems from the Philistines (vs.19-21).
- C. Lesson: 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, 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. Notice what Jacob said about the Lord's presence shortly before he died (Genesis 48:15-16).

III. JOSEPH

- A. Joseph suffered severe hardship because of the actions of his brothers.
- B. We 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. However, God's presence did not prevent Moses from striking the rock (Numbers 20:7-11).
- D. Lesson: 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. According to Judges 6:1, who was responsible for Israel's oppression from Midian?
 - 2. The Lord's presence does not mean that we will escape 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).
- 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. When God said that He will always be with His followers He gave an exceeding great and precious promise.
- 2. Let us follow the conditions that relate to the Lord's presence that we studied this morning.
- 3. Let us also examine Bible characters such as those we covered this evening so "we can be assured of God's presence."