



God IS with You

Joshua 1:1-9; Joshua 5:13-15

January 24, 2021

During the Christmas season, we increase our focus on the name of Jesus—Emmanuel, “God with us.” But the truth is, God has been and always will be “with us.” In Christ ... in Jesus ... God was with us in a unique and powerful new way. However, God’s presence is seen throughout the stories of faith.

Take for example the story of Joshua in chapter 5:13-15. Joshua is about to lay siege to the city of Jericho. The warriors in this city are large. They have size, strength, and a fortified city. In the moments before the siege, a warrior walks into the Israelite camp and stands near Joshua. Joshua wants to know if the warrior is friend or foe; ally or enemy. His response? “I am the commander of the army of the Lord. I have come.”

The presence of God was right there with Joshua in the camp. Joshua thought he was commanding the army and the army of Israel would fight the battle. In the end, God’s unseen army would win the battle commanded by a captain not seen before or since.

I wonder how often God, God’s angels, God’s army is right beside us and we don’t even know it? I believe this is why the Bible shares this story. We are never alone (God’s word to Joshua and to us). God IS with us.

This is the reason we have the confidence and audacity to choose strength and courage. This is the reason we discard fear and discouragement and move forward by faith. We live and walk and breathe in the very presence of our God.

Moving from fear to faith requires looking to see the presence and power of God when most miss it.

Sermon Notes:

- The use of the name *Emmanuel* for Jesus provides _____ in the story of the Christ. “God with us” is stated in the _____ and restated before Jesus’ _____. One of the final statements of Jesus is, “I am with you to the very end of the age.”

- Personal _____ makes a difference when we are...

- God’s presence is often felt or given through God’s _____. Being an _____ means being present in this world as a representative of God.
- When we are “_____” someone, do we allow _____ to _____ through or do we tend to make it all about _____?

Personal Reflections:

1. Complete this statement: I have felt the presence of God when _____

a. Who else was there (if anyone)?

b. What made this a special moment?

c. How can you put yourself in that position more often?

2. One person I know who exudes the presence of God is _____. What about that person causes you to sense the presence of God? Is it when they are doing something or being a specific way?
3. Now finish this statement: A time I felt God’s presence with others through me was _____.
a. How can you put yourself in that position with others again?

b. Who might need God’s presence flowing through you right now?

c. Does anyone bring/encourage this God-flowing tendency out of you?

Personal Readings: Psalm 139, John 14:16, Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 17:24-28