

Maple Springs Baptist Church

Series: When God Isn't There

Week 1: The Absence of Presence

God is absent in the way we most desire but present in the way we most require.

WHY DOES GOD FEEL SO ABSENT? The more profound the presence, the more painful the absence.

WHY DOES GOD HAVE TO BE ABSENT? God is absent in the way we most desire, but present in the way we most require. We most desire God's actual presence. **Psalm 16:11. 2 Corinthians 6:16.**

Actual presence is presence desired.

God is present with us in 3 ways: generally, relationally, & visually.

Whether you believe in God or not, your strongest desire is to see God as He actually is in Christ. **John 1:14.**

1 John 3:2.

GENESIS 3:8. Adam & Eve preferred absence to presence. Instinctively, they knew the presence of their evil could not be in the presence of God's holiness.

Complete separation from God was what their sin had earned them. Divine Absence entered the world.

Feeling like God isn't there is not a delusion but a reality. Because of sin, we ended up with a God who isn't there.

What Absence Says About God: Our sin separates us from God. **Romans 3:23.**

2 common false pictures of God:

1) God as a bully.

2) Sin as Kryptonite. We believe God flees from the power of sin, creating separation. So absence is seen as the product of a powerful God repelled by a powerful force.

We must relate to God in ways consistent with His character or the results will be detrimental. The flesh of sinful man cannot survive an encounter with the power and glory of God. **Isaiah 59:2.**

God separates the electricity of His holiness from the flesh of our sin. It is for our protection. God's absence is grace. **Romans 3:25-26.**

Separation is a punishment & we don't want to experience it forever, but it is also part of God's plan for presence. Separation is not a reaction to protect God; it is a chosen response to protect us. **Isaiah 59:1-2.**

Without God's holiness there is no sin; without God's grace there is no absence. God is absent from us because of His grace & our guilt. Absence is our fault.

God's general presence provides us with a faint memory of what no longer exists. Sin has caused our worst wound in separating us from God's actual presence.

This is the great pain that all mankind lives with: the absence of God.

Genesis 3:21-24. GOD punished them as His holiness required but showed grace to them as His love desired.

Galatians 3:27-29.

1 Corinthians 15:50. But a day is coming when we will put on the new clothes of Christ and stand before God's presence like we so long to do.