

Maple Springs Baptist Church

Series: When God Isn't There

Week 4: The Far-Off Promises of an Elusive God

REVELATION 7:9. God is gathering a people for Himself.

GENESIS 12:1-2. God was calling Abraham out of every sense of identity he had. **Titus 2:11-13.** When God becomes present to a human, everything else becomes absent.

The presence of promise leads to a realization of absence.

GENESIS 12:1-3; 16:1.

DEUTERONOMY 7:7.

God can be present to us even though we are absent to Him. Presence is not something we earn.

The promise was present, but its fulfillment was absent. Presence breeds absence. *Where is God?*

When things go this wrong, we tend to try to solve them using our own methods. **GENESIS 16:1-2.** If God was going to be absent, Sarah would make His promise present.

Abraham's attempt to manufacture the presence & promise of God was unsuccessful.

Misunderstood absence leads to misunderstood presence. Manufactured presence births illegitimate children of absence. Absence is uncomfortable, so we settle for a false presence. God's actual presence must remain our future hope without being manipulated into a current lie.

GENESIS 17:4-8.

Absence was punctuated by presence, not the other way around.

The cycle of God's elusive presence affects us all.

Understanding the elusiveness of God's presence explains a reality we want to be false.

Moments of presence are not defeated by absence. Instead, absence is conquered by short spurts of presence.

The presence of promise had begun but had not yet been completed.

HEBREWS 11:13.

GENESIS 22:12. God provided a substitute sacrifice. **GENESIS 22:8.**

The promise is ours to inherit, though it is not yet ours to hold. The fulfilled promise we most desire is still far off, but God is still present with us in the way we most require.

The presence that has been elusive will show itself as both infinite and definite.