

Maple Springs Baptist Church

Series: When God Isn't There

Week 6: When God Stops Coming to Church

We think God waits for us in our churches.

1 KINGS 6:12-13. God promised to live with Israel, in their temple, as long as Israel kept its promise to live with God the way He commanded.

God was present in the Holy of Holies in a way in which He was absent everywhere else on earth.

Solomon prayed: **1 KINGS 8:27-29.** Understanding the privilege of God's presence produces humility in us.

We are bewildered that God could even possibly be present with us, so we are humbled. But we are certain that He will be present with us because of His promises, so we are confident.

We can have humble confidence in God's presence. **HEBREWS 4:16.** Jesus did not promise His presence in a place, but to a people.

The temple changed from of sign of the grace of God's presence to a cage for the guarantee of God's blessing.

When His promises cease to amaze us, His presence will cease to humble us. Humility brings obedience & gratefulness. Pride brings apathy & demand for privilege.

Instead of God's promises leading them to humility, God's promises led them to entitlement.

JEREMIAH 2:5, 8. This proud entitlement offended God & led to absence.

They were claiming presence, but all they had was absence. They didn't know that God had left the building.

JEREMIAH 7:4. Instead of actually praising God, they were praising their privilege as God's people & their sacred space as God's home. Worship is focused on tying God down & lifting worshippers up. We have confused God's presence with a type of feeling or emotion.

JEREMIAH 7:9-10. Presumptions of presence lead to presumptions of safety.

Jeremiah 7:11. God was accusing His people of living lives of sin while using the temple as their moral hiding place.

Meeting with God on Sunday should not entitle us to live however we want, but should transform us to live however He wants. We are not safe from God's justice just because we go to church. Assuming God's presence at church must not give us a holy excuse to do whatever we want.

MATTHEW 21:12-13. He was saying that people were still assuming God's presence because of their entitlement. They were killing animals for sin, but they were not killing sin in their own lives. They were honoring the assumed presence of God in the temple but ignoring the presence of God in their daily lives.

God is present with us because of the perfect work of Jesus.

ROMANS 6:1,2. Grace, like God's presence, must change us.

The more we long for God's presence, the more we will long to kill sin & to obey His commands. Our desire for God's presence should lead us to a radical desire for holy living.

JEREMIAH 7:5-7.

MATTHEW 12:6. Jesus was now our perfect pathway into God's presence. God does not dwell in places, but in people. **1 CORINTHIANS 6:19**

God is relationally present with every Christ-follower, present in a way that He is absent from non-Christians.

Jesus is our only guarantee of God's presence.

1 John 4:12.

God's presence in us cost the very life of God incarnate.