

To the Teacher

The information below is to help you in teaching the lesson. DO NOT read this page to the students. Instead, teach the information in your own words. Be sure to finish the student's lesson as well. The Scripture references in parentheses are for additional study, to round out the information given in the lesson. Become familiar with these passages as well, to provide additional Scriptures to your students.

Lesson 15 – A Two-Way Relationship (Teacher's Lesson)

Opening: Answer the opening question. Childhood friends often grow apart – we do not continue the relationship. Explain that God never “distances Himself,” but sometimes we distance ourselves from Him.

Study Notes:

Exodus 33:10

What did the people do when the cloud descended around Moses' tent? They bowed and adored.

The people recognized the presence of God, but did not enter in a personal relationship with God. They wanted Moses to be the mediator (read Exodus 20:18-21).

Exodus 33:11

What was the nature of the communication between Moses and God? How close were they? God spoke with Moses face to face. His relationship was personal.

The phrase “face to face” is obviously metaphorical, because earlier in the chapter we see that Moses could not see the face of God, only his (read Exodus 33:22-23). “Face to Face” refers to the intimacy of the relationship and the depth of the communication that Moses had with God.

Exodus 33:13

Why did Moses ask God to teach him His ways? To know Him better.

Moses understood that close communion with God was important, not only for himself personally, but because He had the responsibility of leading a whole nation. As leaders, we should have the same close relationship. It has been said that the most important thing that a congregation needs from its pastor is to know that he or she has been with God.

Exodus 33:14-15

What did God promise Moses as long as he obeyed Him? His presence.

Note that God did not promise an easy or short journey, but that His presence would be with them, and this would bring them rest. The presence of God in our lives brings peace.

Summary: God had a relationship with Moses that was real, practical and personal and He desires the same for us.

The following points are from “Experiencing God” by Henry Blackaby*. For a more in-depth treatment of these topics (and of the topics in the following lessons), read that book.

Exodus 3:1-4

When God spoke, He spoke exceptionally to that person. (Blackaby 70)

What did God use to get Moses’ attention in this story? A burning bush.

How many other times had God used this same method? None.

The point here is that God speaks in different ways with different people. However, this does not mean that “anything goes.” There are some guidelines we can follow which we will study in the following lessons. Always test what you think God says against Scripture.

Acts 9:10

When God spoke with people in the Bible, they knew that it was God speaking. (Blackaby 62)

What title did Paul use when he responded to Jesus? Lord

What did this title mean for him? That the one he spoke to was God Himself

Paul did not compare Jesus with God – he believed that Jesus was just another man. That is why he asked who was speaking. But look, he knew that the one who displayed His power so effectively was, in fact, God.

Genesis 6:13-22

When God spoke with people in the Bible, they knew what God had told them. (Blackaby 62)

Would you describe the instructions given here as general or specific? Very specific

Without God having told him, would Noah have known how large to build the ark? No

Did the ark work? Yes

It was possible that Noah was a carpenter, and even a ship builder, but it was not possible that he knew the dimensions needed for such a boat. Only God knew exactly how many animals should fit on the ark, so only He could give the dimensions. God does not always speak with such specificity, but the important point is that Noah knew exactly what God had told him and the facts show that he did it correctly. All of the animals fit and the ark functioned as God had planned.

Application:

Sometimes God speaks to us and we do not know it. He the students discover what God is telling them right now. Remember that it is helpful to check what they think God is telling them against the truth of Scripture.

*Blackaby, Henry T. Experiencing God. Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.

Lesson 15 – A Two-Way Relationship

Best Friends

When you were a child, who was your best friend? How is your relationship with him or her now?

The majority of people have the idea that serving God is being obedient to a system of rules or principles. Serving God is more than this. It is a relationship. *God desires a relationship with you that is real and personal.* This relationship, like any other relationship, is a two-way street. We find an example of this type of relationship in Exodus 33:7-17. Read these verses and answer the following:

Verse 10 – What did the people do when the cloud descended around Moses' tent?

Verse 11 - What was the nature of the communication between Moses and God? How close were they?

Verse 13 - Why did Moses ask God to teach him His ways?

Verse 14-15 -What did God promise Moses as long as he obeyed Him?

As you can see, the relationship that Moses had with God was real and personal. They spoke face to face. This was a two-way relationship. Today God desires the same with all people. We communicate with God through prayer, and He also communicates with us. In future lessons, we will study more deeply the different ways in which God communicates with us, but first it is important to observe some important principles about our relationship with God. We will illustrate these with some Biblical examples.

When God spoke, He spoke exceptionally to that person. (Blackaby 70)

-Exodus 3:1-4

What did God use to get Moses' attention in this story?

How many other times had God used this same method?

When God spoke with the people in the Bible, they knew that it was God who was speaking. (Blackaby 62)

-Acts 9:10

What title did Paul use when he responded to Jesus?

What did this title mean for him?

When God spoke with the people in the Bible, they knew what God had told them. (Blackaby 62)

-Genesis 6:13-22

Would you describe the instructions given here as general or specific?

Without God having told him, would Noah have known how large to build the ark?

Did the ark work?

Your next question might be, "Does God still speak to His people today?" Yes, He speaks, and we will study more about this in future lessons. One thing to ask yourself right now is, if God spoke to you right now, what do you think He would be saying? What is His desire for your life right now? Write your answer in the space below and discuss it with your group and with the Bible Study leader.

Scripture to memorize:

"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.'"

Matthew 22:37-38