

# RED | SEA

## M O M E N T S

*the life of Moses*



Touching Lives  
with James Merritt

# RED SEA MOMENTS

*Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt*

## ***Series Summary***

We are beginning a study on the life of Moses that we are calling, “Red Sea Moments.” What you are going to see in this series is that in so many ways the life of Moses is your life and my life. Moses is no longer on this earth, but the God of Moses is. The story of Moses is not just what God did for him; it is what God wants to do for you. It is not just about what God did in him, but what He wants to do in you. It is not just about what God did through him; it is what God wants to do through you. The story of Moses is not just “a” story, and it is not just “his” story. God wants it to be your story, too.

# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

## Miracle In The Mirror

Red Sea Moments | Week 1 | Exodus 1:8-2:10

### INTRODUCTION

When Moses was born, Israel had become slaves in the land of Egypt, but that wasn't always the case. Because of a great man named Joseph, the Egyptian pharaoh had basically adopted them into the nation, giving them favored status and the full rights of citizenship. Four hundred years had passed and now Israel had two big problems. There was a pharaoh that had forgotten who Joseph was, but even more importantly, the nation of Israel had forgotten who God was. It was in that situation that a baby was born that changed everything. Israel needed a miracle, and that miracle came in the form of a baby, a baby named Moses. And as we read his story, we will see that three things were true of Moses that are true of you.

### KEY POINTS

#### 1. We Are Born In The Providence Of God

When you study the life of Moses you are going to find out that many miracles take place in Moses' story. In fact, there are more miracles found in Moses' lifetime than any other person in the Bible except Jesus. It is noteworthy that no miracles take place at the very beginning of the story, but as his story continues, what the world would call coincidence we know is God's providence.

You are going to see that the providence of God that brought Moses out of the womb into the world is the same providence of God that guided Moses through this world. The providence of God guided Moses' mother to put him in a basket in a river that at the same time guided Pharaoh's daughter down to that river to bathe. At the same time, God moved that baby to cry, moved that princess to hear that cry, and moved her to want to save that baby and take that baby into her own family. The providence of God never stopped in Moses' life, and it never stops working in your life either.

You may think that you never see any miracles in your life when the truth is, every day you live is a miracle. The fact that you were born is a miracle. There is a miracle in your mirror every day. It all started with being born in the providence of God.

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**Miracle In The Mirror**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 1 | Exodus 1:8-2:10*

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. What are a couple of examples of the providence of God that you can point to in your life?
2. When was a time God protected you from something that you didn't know you needed protecting from? What did you learn from that experience?
3. How are you living out your purpose to accomplish God's greater plan? If you're having trouble answering this question, what is one practical step you can take this week to begin living out the purpose God has for you?

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**Don't Beat Around The Bush**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 2 | Exodus 2:23-3:22*

**INTRODUCTION**

You may be asking, "What does a burning bush or a Red Sea or a man named Moses have to do with me?" You will learn the answer to this question throughout this series as we discover that we all have Red Sea moments. We all come face-to-face at times with burning bushes. Moses is a lot like all of us and the God of Moses is still alive today and wants to move in your life the same way He moved in his. You are going to learn three lessons today that will teach you don't ever beat around a bush that calls your name. If you feel like you are living on the backside of the desert and nobody knows about your life or cares about it, and you even feel like God has forgotten you, take these three lessons to heart.

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**KEY POINTS**

**1. Remember God Confirms His Promise**

God had not gone to sleep at the wheel. God had not turned His back on His people. God had not forgotten His promise. When you make a promise or I make a promise, we may forget that promise or we may fail to keep that promise, but God doesn't forget, and God doesn't fail.

Though Moses didn't know it when he was born, and though his parents didn't know it when they conceived him, and the Israelites didn't know it when they saw him, this man named Moses was sent to remind us that God confirms His promise. God always does what God says He will do.

**2. Realize God Calls His People**

You can't be everything that you want to be, but you can be everything that God calls you to be. God handpicked you and God handmade you to fulfill a certain calling in your life.

Søren Kierkegaard said, "At each man's birth there comes into being an eternal vocation for him, expressly for him. To be true to himself in relation to this eternal vocation is the highest thing a man can practice." One of the biggest lies of the devil is that God only calls ministers or church workers. But that's just not the case. God calls all of His people; therefore we need to be listening and ready to hear His call.

**Don't Beat Around The Bush**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 2 | Exodus 2:23-3:22*

**3. Rejoice That God Completes His Plan**

God had a plan. He puts Moses through forty years in a desert so He can turn right around and have him lead the children of Israel for forty more years through the desert. Think about this. God didn't need Moses. God could have delivered the people Himself with a snap of His fingers. He could have given the task to angels who He knows would have carried the job out perfectly. He probably certainly could have found someone more willing to do it, but He chooses an eighty-year-old man who thought he was washed up and used a six-hundred-year-old promise.

Now, He doesn't tell Moses how He was going to pull it all off. Isn't that the way it always goes? God rarely tells us what He's going to do. He just tells us what He wants us to do. It is His job to show us how to do it. His job is to come up with a plan. Our job is to do our part in the plan.

You are a piece in God's puzzle. You have a place in God's plan, but God never expects you to carry out that plan for Him. He is going to carry out that plan through you.

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# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

## **Don't Beat Around The Bush**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 2 | Exodus 2:23-3:22*

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. How has God come through on one of His promises in your life?
2. What do you feel like God has called you to do specifically?
3. Are you still waiting on God to complete part of His plan in your life? If so, what are you waiting for?

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# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

## When Your Back Is Against The Wall

*Red Sea Moments | Week 3 | Exodus 14*

### **INTRODUCTION**

As we look today in the book of Exodus in chapter 14, we are going to read about the most celebrated event in Jewish history. Two movies have been made concerning this event and two words are all you need to know – The Exodus. If you had been standing where Moses was standing, you would have said, “This is the end of the line. We need to get our affairs in order. It’s over.” Normally, I wouldn’t spoil the ending by telling you what happens, but most of you already know it. God parts the Red Sea. The children of Israel pass through. He then closes the waters back on the Egyptian army, drowns them, and saves the day. The same God that came through for Moses and the nation of Israel is alive and well and wants to come through for you. In this message, we are going to learn what we need to do when our back is against the wall, just like Moses’ was.

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### **KEY POINTS**

#### **1. Trust God Wherever He Leads**

When God leads us to a dead-end, it is to teach us to trust Him for the way out. There is a school that God enrolls you in that you never graduate from, and it is called, “The school of faith.” God wanted the nation of Israel to put a bumper sticker on every wagon and every chariot that they owned that read “In God we trust.” It is not the good times that teach you to trust God; it is the bad times. You don’t learn to trust God when the wind is at your back. You learn to trust God when the wind is in your face. When you have no other option but to trust God, that is when you come closest to God. That is when you come to know God the best and that is when you come to trust God the most.

There are times that God leads us to detours and dead ends. Just because you may have your back against the wall does not mean you are out of the will of God. It can very well mean you are absolutely in the will of God. Keep this one principle in mind. God cannot lead you to cross the Red Sea until He leads you to come to the Red Sea. For in that Red Sea moment, He is asking you, “Do you trust me or not?” When your back is against the wall, trust God wherever He leads.

**When Your Back Is Against The Wall**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 3 | Exodus 14*

**2. Obey God Whenever He Speaks**

If you are willing to do what you can do, God will do what you can't do. It is in those moments you can't panic. You've got to trust in the presence of God. You've got to listen to the voice of God. He will speak to you. He will talk to you. He will show you what to do, but once you've done all you know to do, then you simply wait and watch and see what God will do.

Time and time again in Scripture, we see God speak clearly to His people, letting them know which path they should take, and which course of action they should pursue. Because we can see that element of God's character in His Word, we can trust that He can do the same thing with us today. God doesn't have to speak audibly for you to hear Him. The still small voice of the Holy Spirit can speak to your heart. He can speak to you through His Word. He can even speak to you through someone else. But if God is trying to tell you to do something, it's important that you listen up so that you can move forward in obedience.

**3. Glorify God Whatever He Does**

If you don't learn something about God early on in your relationship with Him, you are going to be frustrated, angry, bitter, and disappointed. God's way is always the right way. It is always the best way, but it is not always the easy way. God was not going to make this easy for the Israelites, otherwise, they would think they did it on their own. If they had escaped, if they had somehow beaten back the attack, they would get the glory. They would pat themselves on the back. Once again, God would be left out in the cold, but God always has a method to His madness.

If God leads you to a wall, it is His job to bring the wall down. If God leads you to a door, it is His job to open it. If God leads you to a sea, it is His job to part it. However, there is another side to the coin. Everything that God does for us is not just for His glory; it is by His grace. At the end of the day when the Hebrews walked along the seashore and saw it littered with dead Egyptian bodies, one thing was obvious. They hadn't raised a finger to do anything. They hadn't killed a single man, fought a single battle, or used a single sword. They had followed where God led them to go. They had done what God told them to do and they believed what God said He would do. So when God comes through like this, we need to give Him glory, because it was by Him and Him alone that we were taken care of.

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**When Your Back Is Against The Wall**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 3 | Exodus 14*

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. Do you feel like God is leading you to do something right now, but you're having trouble trusting His plan? If so, what is keeping you from fully trusting Him?
2. When was the last time God spoke to you? How did you respond?
3. When was a time in your life when God came through for you and you did absolutely nothing to help or prompt Him to do so? What did you learn from that experience?

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# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

## Living Hand To Mouth

*Red Sea Moments | Week 4 | Exodus 16*

### INTRODUCTION

One of the things that you will see throughout the books of Exodus and Numbers is how much complaining and griping the Israelites did. At different times in Exodus and Numbers, Moses and the Lord had to listen to their complaints. Every one of them had to do with food, drink, and living conditions. You have to wonder why God let his people get thirsty and then in this chapter he lets them get hungry. Why does God let us go through times of need, hardship, and difficulty? Because God is trying to teach us what He is trying to teach them and that is every single day of your life you live from His hand to your mouth. In this message, we are going to learn five things about God and about our daily life that I pray will lead us to be people not of griping, but gratitude, not of complaining, but celebrating.

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### KEY POINTS

#### 1. God Is Our Source

One of the biggest dangers we face as God’s children and one of the biggest sins we commit is we get so used to what God gives us on a daily basis just to stay alive that we take His blessings for granted. We start thinking they are ours and that they came from our hands rather than coming from His hand. But the truth of the matter is that God is the source of everything we have. We would have nothing if it were up to us. May we remember that as we live our lives every single day so that we do not grow greedy or take the Lord for granted.

#### 2. God Is Our Supply

When God sent down manna from heaven, He gave His people just enough to sustain them for the day. They couldn’t hoard. They couldn’t store up. They had just enough. He knew just what they needed, and He took care of that need. Every day that you live, God is going to give you what you need and whatever you need He is going to supply. The same God that took care of you yesterday is the same God that will take care of you today. Remember, He is the God who supplies.

Living Hand To Mouth

Red Sea Moments | Week 4 | Exodus 16

3. God Is Our Security

There is nothing more insulting to God than to put your security in anything other than Him. If you put your security in the stock market, it can crash. You can put your security in a business, and it can go bankrupt. You can try to find your security in a human being, but they leave you or die. We learned several years ago you can put your security in real estate and lose your shirt. Even Social Security is not secure. We just found out it is expected to be completely insolvent by the year 2033.

God is better than Social Security. He is better than financial security. God gives eternal security. He doesn't need 401Ks, stock markets, real estate, or cash on hand to meet your needs and to give you security, but we do need God to give us security. He is the only one that can.

4. God Is Our Strength

The most important strength we need to face every day is not physical strength; it is spiritual strength. That is why we need every day to feed on God's Word. That is why if they tried to hoard the bread and keep it overnight, it would spoil. They needed to eat new manna every day just like you and I need to hear from God in a new way every day.

If you are going to be a healthy, hearty, holy Christian you've got to eat the bread of God's word every single day. This gives new meaning to the Lord's Prayer. When you pray, "Lord, give us this day our daily bread," you are not just to be praying for God to meet your strength physically. What you are saying is, "Lord, I open your Word today and feed on your manna today. Give me the daily spiritual bread that I need to be what you want me to be and to do what you want me to do." We need to be reminded every day that God is our strength.

5. God Is Our Salvation

God gave the manna only to Israel, but He has given Jesus to the whole world. The manna only gave physical life, but God's Son gives eternal life. Just as the Jews had to go to that bread, and get that bread, and eat that bread, we have to go to Jesus. We have to take the bread of His salvation. We have to taste and see that the Lord is good and when we do, we won't just have physical life for today; we have eternal life forever. You see, the Jews ate that manna, but they eventually died, but when you eat the bread of life, you live forever.

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# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

## **Living Hand To Mouth**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 4 | Exodus 16*

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. What other things or people are you tempted to gain security from outside of God?
2. Do you spend time every day taking in new manna, or do you let yourself starve throughout the week only to binge on Sunday morning?
3. How would you rate your spiritual strength today, on a scale of 1-10? If your spiritual strength is on the lower side, what is one step you can take this week to increase it?

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# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

## When Push Comes To Shove

*Red Sea Moments | Week 5 | Exodus 18:13-27*

### INTRODUCTION

We have been studying a man by the name of Moses in a series we are calling, “Red Sea Moments.” This great man of God was facing a Red Sea moment when he came to his own level of stress. He is leading two million of his people through wilderness and desert and they are burning up at times at the way he is doing it, and he is burning out trying. In the 18th chapter of Exodus, Moses had a moment and a meeting that didn’t just change his life, but it literally saved his life and helped him complete his tasks. It is not only very practical, but it is very spiritual. If you feel overworked and overwhelmed, now’s the time to admit it, because you will never be the father, the mother, the husband, the wife, the employee, or even the Christian that you should be as long as you stay there. Moses took three simple steps that kept him from burning out that you can take as well.

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### KEY POINTS

#### **1. Honestly Evaluate What You Need To Do**

I don’t care how much of a Superman or Supergirl you think you are. We all have limits. Have you ever noticed when you get behind a huge tractor-trailer that is carrying a lot of cargo or freight there will be a sign that tells the load limit that truck can carry? If a tractor-trailer with a massive engine and unbelievable horsepower has limits to loads, we do too. So take the time to be honest with yourself about what you can handle and what you can’t. It will make the biggest difference as you attempt to avoid burnout.

#### **2. Humbly Delegate What Others Can Do**

I have other pastors ask me sometimes to tell them the greatest leadership lesson I have ever learned and it is this. Delegate to others what others can do so you can concentrate on the things that only you can do. Nobody is indispensable but everybody is important. Any time you are stressed out because you think you have a job that is bigger than you can do alone, it may very well be too much, which is God’s way of telling you to not try to do it alone.

# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

## When Push Comes To Shove

*Red Sea Moments | Week 5 | Exodus 18:13-27*

Every job has two parts to it. There is the essential part that you and you alone can do, and then there is the supplemental part that somebody else can do. It is when we start taking up more and more of that supplemental part that our ship begins to sink because the load is too heavy. This is why delegating is absolutely vital.

### **3. Happily Appreciate All That God Will Do**

When you are doing what you believe God wants you to do, you will trust God to get the other things done you can't do. Do you know why a lot of people don't want to give up anything? Don't want to delegate anything? Want to do everything themselves? Why they are control freaks? Because of unbelief. They do not trust that God has provided other people with the gifts necessary to get done the things that He wants somebody else to get done besides you.

You only have three tools in your arsenal to get things done: time, energy, and priorities. Now God will give you all the time and all the energy to do what He wants you to do. Your job is to make sure you are prioritizing what you believe He wants you to do. I've learned a great lesson through the years. There are many things in life I can't handle, but there is nothing that God and I together can't handle. You need to make sure you are handling only those things that God wants you to handle. If you try to tell me you've got more to do at the end of every day than you can get done, I can tell you one thing that is true. You are trying to get more done than God wants you to do. When you let God set your schedule and you let God determine your priorities, you will appreciate all that He will do.

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# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

## **When Push Comes To Shove**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 5 | Exodus 18:13-27*

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. On a scale of 1-10, how burned out and overwhelmed do you feel right now?
2. Do you find it easy to delegate tasks to other people, or do you struggle to hand over control because you want to do everything yourself?
3. What is something you can hand over to God today that you've been hoarding and keeping from Him?

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**Mountain Top Meetings**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 6 | Exodus 19*

**INTRODUCTION**

In this message, we are going to study the story of when God had a word for His people and wanted to meet with them. But before the people met with God, God wanted to meet with Moses. Every meeting was a mountaintop meeting and though you might get the idea from the movies that Moses only went up the mountain one time, he actually went up seven times. God wanted to show both Moses and the people that there is no bigger deal in life than meeting with God. What's also great about this story is that we learn that the same God who met with Moses wants to meet with you. The same God that spoke to Moses wants to speak to you. We can learn from this mountaintop meeting how we can meet with the God of this universe every day, and not only do we not have to make an appointment or wait in line, but when we meet with Him, He will give us His undivided attention.

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**KEY POINTS**

**1. We Must Prioritize Meeting With God**

If you are too busy to meet with the Lord, you are too busy. Your number one priority every day of your life should be to make time for the Lord and take time with the Lord. You cannot go where you need to go in life if you do not go with God and you cannot go with God if you don't meet with God. We must prioritize meeting with God.

**2. We Must Prepare For Meeting With God**

We can draw near to God because we are near to God, but it should always be in the fear of God. When you go into the presence of God with the reverential fear that you should, you will not be the same. You cannot be the same. In fact, Moses would say if your belief in God doesn't affect the way you live, you've believed in the wrong god. I would also say if you meet with a god that does not drive you to your knees and remind you of how sinful you are and how holy He is, you've not met with the real God. We must come prepared with a humble and submissive heart any time we meet with God.

**Mountain Top Meetings**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 6 | Exodus 19*

**3. We Must Practice Meeting With God**

You only need two things to meet with God. First of all, you need a place. Exodus 19 makes it clear that the people came to a place where they met God and that place was a mountain. Here is my question for you. Where is your mountain? Your mountain may be in a closet. It may be in your recliner in your living room. It may be lying in your bed when you wake up. My mountain is in my study. The first thing you need is a place. God is not picky about the place, and He is not even overly concerned about the amount of time you spend, because what He wants is you.

Then, you need a plan. You need to have a systematic approach to going to God's Word, opening God's Word, and listening to God's Word. In your meeting, let God do the talking. If you put this into practice every day, I promise you will see major growth in your relationship with the Lord, and you will come to know Him in a deep, amazing way.

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# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

## Mountain Top Meetings

*Red Sea Moments | Week 6 | Exodus 19*

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How high is meeting with God on your priority list, if you're being completely honest?
2. Where is your place, or your mountaintop, where you meet with God?
3. Do you have a plan for when you meet with God? If not, what would you like to include in a plan that you can start implementing today?

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**Idol Hands - Devil's Worship**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 7 | Exodus 32*

**INTRODUCTION**

The people of Israel had been treating God like a heavenly bellhop expecting Him to be at their every beck and call and give them everything they wanted when they wanted it. When Moses had lingered on that mountaintop meeting with God, they decide they would just take matters into their own hands. They would make a god more to their liking. The truth is, we all have “idol hands” that tend to either make the God we worship the God we want or make the god that we want the god that we worship. We're going to learn today that if you are for God, you won't put anything before God. You may not think that you have an idolatry problem. You may not even understand why we even have to discuss this issue, but when we see how we do choose false idols and what happens when we do, my prayer is it will cause all of us to give our total loyalty, complete love, and full life to the only true God there is.

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**KEY POINTS**

**1. Idolatry Moves Us To Deny The True God**

In today's key passage of Scripture, the Israelites committed the sin of idolatry by denying the true God for what they wanted or liked better in the moment. Think about who committed this sin. The nation of Israel, the chosen people of God, the people He had delivered from the bondage that was destroying them. Think about when and where this sin was committed – at Mt. Sinai where they were about to receive God's law, to meet with God and see God's glory, but it was also a great sin because of what they had already seen and heard and experienced from this one God.

They had already seen God deliver them from Egypt in the Passover. They had seen God part the Red Sea. They had seen God give them food and water. They had seen God lead them day after day with not even a scratch on them.

It is from this story in Scripture we learn that miracles and signs and wonders do not guarantee either faith or faithfulness to God. We have all heard somebody say, “If God wants me to believe in Him, let Him do a miracle. Let Him work a wonder. Let Him show Himself to me.” There has never been a time in the history of the world where anybody had seen more miracles in a greater way, in a shorter period of time than the Israelites did, and they still turned against Him. That is what idolatry does. It moves us to deny the true God.



**Idol Hands - Devil's Worship**

*Red Sea Moments | Week 7 | Exodus 32*

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. What is something you struggle with idolizing?
2. When was a time you chose an idol over God? How did that situation turn out? What did you learn from that experience?
3. Is there something that God has blessed you with that's a good thing that you're realizing right now has turned into an idol? Take the time right now to identify that idol and pray and ask the Lord to help you reprioritize where it's needed.

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Knowing God

Red Sea Moments | Week 8 | Exodus 33

INTRODUCTION

The God we have been talking about throughout this entire series knows you better than anyone or anything. Just like He knew Moses, and He knew the Israelites, He knows you too. But the question of the day is this, “Do you know God?” Now the question is not, “Do you know about God?” The question is not even, “Do you believe in God?” The question I am asking is, “Do you know God personally?” Then I would follow up that question with this one, “How well do you know God?” I can answer that question for all of us. You know God as well as you want to. As we wrap up this series with today’s message, we are going to take a look at how we can come to know God deeply and personally.

NOTES

Series of horizontal lines for taking notes.

KEY POINTS

1. Knowing God Feeds On Intimate Communication

You will never come to know God just by hearing sermons about knowing God or even hearing sermons about God. You will never come to know God just by reading books on how to know God. You can't know anybody unless you spend time with that person, give full attention to that person, and have intimate communication and connection with that person.

Because of three things: the Scripture, the Spirit, and the Son, we can talk to God face-to-face. We can come into His presence through His Son, and we can hear His voice when the Spirit speaks to us through His Word. But you've got to give God a chance to speak to you and you've got to give yourself a chance to hear from Him. That is where knowing God begins. It feeds on intimate communication.

2. Knowing God Breeds Intentional Preoccupation

I would encourage you right now to ask yourself this question, “Am I more in love with what God has given me than I am the God that has given me what I have?” I am content with God’s provision and protection and I’m okay without His presence. I am okay with the blessing even without the blesser. Far too many followers of God are preoccupied with what they have gotten from God instead of God Himself.



**Knowing God**

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Moses didn't care about His provision or His protection. All he cared about was His presence. Moses in effect said, "I will stay right here in the desert and the wilderness and die before I will take another step without you." He knew nothing, not a place, not a possession, not a pleasure can satisfy without God. If anything to you is more important, better, or dearer to you than having the presence of God in your life and knowing the presence of God in your life, you don't know God. I pray every day of my life, "Lord, maximize my desire for you and minimize my desire for anything else."

**3. Knowing God Leads To Intense Revelation**

We will never be able to see God directly until we are put in a condition where we can in eternity. It is possible today to see the manifestation of God's glory. For example, do you realize there is one face you have never directly seen in your life? That is your own. We have all seen our faces in a mirror or in a picture, but we have never seen them directly.

In so many ways, we see glimpses of the glory of God when a baby is born, the sun rises and sets, and greatest of all is when someone comes from darkness to light, from blindness to sight, and goes from a life that is wrong to a life that is right. That is called the glory of God. And while we'll never see the glory of God perfectly on this side of heaven, we can see the revelation He gives us through His Word and through His Spirit in the meantime. But that only comes from knowing Him and seeking Him above all else.

**NOTES**

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# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

## Knowing God

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### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How well would you say you know God?
2. Do you find yourself wanting God's blessings more than you want God Himself? Do you crave His provision more than His presence?
3. What is something you can do this week to begin to know God better?

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