



Scotts Hill Baptist Church

GOD'S EXIT PLAN THREE G'S OF DISTINCTIVENESS EXODUS 33:1-6 / 34:5-9 / 35:4-10

5/18/2025

MAIN POINT

God delights in His people recognizing His glory and grace while living our lives in a generous way that marks us as distinctively different than the world around us.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What's a surprising thing you've learned about a culture different from your own?

What's one thing you've learned from someone who has a different background or experience than you?

How can differences and distinctiveness be attractive to others?

God desires His people to live in the world distinctively. He doesn't want His people to be completely removed from the world but to live in a way that displays His glory, that displays His grace, and that overflows with generosity because He has been so generous to us. These differences in our lives compared to those around us should be attractive and a pleasing aroma that brings others to seek God themselves.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 33:1-6.

Why would God choose to still bless Israel even though they were worshipping a golden calf?

Israel mourned when God said he wasn't going with them. Why was His presence so important to them? They were still going to get the land even if He wasn't going.

How do you recognize the glory of God in these verses? How do you see the glory of God in your life today?

How would you feel if you knew you could have all your heart's desire but without God?

How do we tangibly recognize the presence of God in a way we would never want to be without it?

As Pastor Phil said it is his prayer for Scotts Hill is that what we hunger most for is the presence of God's glory among us and it is THAT which makes us distinctively different from all people. The glory of God in our lives is what sets God's mark on us that we are distinctively different from everyone in the world. And any thought that God is not with us daily is a disastrous thought.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 34:5-9.

What terms are used to describe God in verses 6-7? Which of them do you find the most compelling? How do these character traits relate to God's willingness to forgive us?

How would you explain to a young child what God's amazing grace is?

Why did God say He was willing to forgive the people even though they had sinned greatly? What characteristics of God can we count on when we falter?

How do we comprehend deeply that God views sin very seriously, even though He is gracious, merciful, and forgiving?

God sees sin as sin, but His nature is to completely forgive any sin and sinner who turns to Him. We can be thankful that the Lord is compassionate and gracious, loving us through faltering faith and forgiving us when we repent. God invites us to come to Him when we fall into sin. Knowing His compassionate and gracious nature, we believe we will find forgiveness when we confess our sins not because they are easy to wipe away but because Jesus has taken the penalty for them.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 35:4-10.

What does it mean to give a "freewill offering," and why does God appreciate such offerings?

How does this concept of freewill offerings relate to our modern understanding of giving and generosity?

Why is the motivation important if the end result of getting the materials they need the same? What are wrong motivations for giving?

How can we cultivate a spirit of generosity and a willingness to give in our lives, both financially and in other ways?

Why did Israel readily offer resources for the Tabernacle? What did they want to experience by participating in this work?

What New Testament verses mention this same principle?

The truth is God doesn't need our gifts. He owns everything anyway. He could have the angels descend from heaven to build the tabernacle with materials made from heaven. But He didn't do that. Why? Because giving is not a chore. It is a blessing. God gave the opportunity to give. This was something that people could joy and pleasure in. They could be excited that they had this opportunity to serve God and help out in some small way.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Do you seek the glorious presence of God over the things of the world?

Are you constantly amazed at the endless grace and mercy you have in Jesus?

Is your life marked by a life of generosity towards the Lord and others?

PRAYER

Offer a few moments of silent prayer for group members to praise God for His glory, His grace, and His opportunity He presents for us to join generously in His work. Pray that we would be faithful to seek God's glory in our lives, and that we would live boldly to live distinctively set apart from the world.

COMMENTARY

| EXODUS 33:1-6

33:1-3. After the sin of the golden calf, God did not deny the children of Israel the Promised Land. He said they could continue on to possess what He had promised to them and to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I will not go up in your midst: God did say He would deny Israel His presence, or at least the near sense of His presence. We might say that God said, "I won't stay so close to you, because I might judge you along the way – but go on and take the Promised Land."

This was a challenge to Moses and the nation as a whole. God told them they could have the Promised Land, but He would not remain with them in a close, personal way. If they were satisfied with that arrangement, it would prove they only loved God's blessings and not God Himself. If they challenged God – pleading with Him for His presence, not only His blessings – it would show a genuine heart for God Himself. This was the first step towards spiritual restoration and revival in Israel.

33:4-6. This was a good response on behalf of Israel. To them it was bad news. They mourned the potential loss of God's close presence. They cared about their relationship with the LORD, not only what He could give them.

"You are a stiff-necked people": This phrase is repeated again. The idea isn't only that they were stubborn, but that they stubbornly resisted God. The picture is of an ox or donkey resisting the farmer and making its neck stiff.

So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb: The people displayed their repentance and mourning by not wearing their ornaments. They knew this was not the time for decorating the external, but it was time to bring the heart right with God. This was the second step towards spiritual restoration and revival in Israel.

| EXODUS 34:5-9

34:6. As God began to speak, He twice proclaimed His name "Yahweh" [YAH weh], the name He had earlier revealed to Moses. God had introduced Himself to Moses as "I AM WHO I AM." This was the same God who had been with the Israelites' forefathers, who was with them now, and who would be with them always (see 3:14-15). Although the people might fail to keep the covenant, God never would.

God described His essential nature, listing five of His characteristics. First, He is compassionate. God consistently loves and tenderly cares for His people even when they sin against Him. Second, He is gracious. Despite our unworthiness, God acts to bless and provide for us. Third, God is slow to anger. While God will judge sin and those who consistently reject and disobey Him, He provides opportunity after opportunity for people to return to Him. Fourth, God is rich in faithful love, maintaining loyalty to His people even when their sins strain the covenant to the breaking point. Finally, God is rich in truth. We can depend on what God says because He is completely reliable. We can confidently place our lives and eternal destiny in His hands.

34:7. Though God's people may strain their relationship with Him through sin, God remains faithful in His commitment to guiding, caring for, and nurturing His people. "Wrongdoing" generally refers to acting based on a bending or distorting of God's commands. "Rebellion" refers to knowing God's commands but intentionally disobeying them. Sin refers to missing the mark. Combined, the three terms refer to any and all sins. No matter what God's people do, they can find forgiveness through repentance (see 1 John 1:9).

God's willingness to forgive does not mean that He doesn't take sin seriously. He judges those who persist in rebellion to the third and fourth generation, not to make children and grandchildren suffer unjustly but because sin's consequences persist so strongly, passing from one generation to the next. By contrast, He displays His forgiving love to a thousand generations on those who seek to follow Him. God delights in saving, not destroying.

34: 8. In response to God's gracious words, Moses responded appropriately. He prostrated himself and worshiped God. Bowing down indicated his realization of his unworthiness and his submission to God. Moses' pleas for his people paled in comparison to God's graciousness and faithful commitment to His people.

34:9. Moses appealed for God to go with the Israelites as they journeyed to the promised land and to continue to accept them as His holy people. He admitted that the Israelites had a strong inclination toward rebellion but asked God to continue to forgive their sins.