

## **Is God present in your life?**

*by Bob Young*

*"If your presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here" (Ex. 33:15).*

A great danger in Christianity is the temptation to move from a Christian life based on the presence and power of God to a life that operates on our own natural skills, habits, and actions with little or no thought. Once some part of our Christian life becomes established, we easily become complacent in doing the tasks required for daily maintenance. Only when a crisis arises or when seemingly insurmountable difficulties come do we ask the Lord for his presence and help.

As Israel left Egypt and arrived at Sinai, things were going pretty well for Moses and the people despite the difficulties—pursued by the Egyptians, bitter water, and lack of food (met with God's provision of manna and quail). Moses and the people met God at the mountain. God called Moses to the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments. While Moses met with God, the people fell away from the Lord by building and worshipping a golden calf. The spiritual foundation of Israel and the leadership of Aaron were not solid enough for Moses to be gone for an extended period of time. Moses represented God (Ex. 19:9). In Moses' absence, the people forgot God. In one sense, God's presence had left the people.

God's presence is essential for success in the Christian life. In our text, Moses pleads for the return and continuation of God's presence. "How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?" (Ex. 33:16). His request is also an acknowledgement that mere human leadership is not enough for God's spiritual work. Moses pled with God to mentor him: "If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you" (Ex. 33:13). Is the presence of God a part of your Christian life? Is the presence of God a part of our church activities?