

ARE YOU QUALIFIED? 7: QUALIFIED BY GOD'S PRESENCE

Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here." (Exodus 33:15, NIV)

THROUGH THE YEARS, I HAVE WRESTLED WITH JOINING A CLUB. I grew up playing golf in the same club, but my travels now and my annual season of coaching make it hard to justify the expense. Someday maybe.

I have a greater reason still for not attaching myself to someplace new. A couple of times I have bought in for a year or so at a semi-private facility, but here's what was missing: my favorite playing companion. He wasn't positioned or desirous of making the move with me, and while I always found games, it wasn't the same. He and I have a history of ribbing one another, encouraging one another, and enjoying similar interests off the course that fill up our conversations on the course. When I played elsewhere, I missed all that.

A good marriage, of course, intensifies this sense of connection. It is a sad truth that many widowed spouses dry up socially and emotionally when they lose the partner of their vows. The widow cannot figure out life without the lost one.

These earthly examples should remind us what it means to have God in our lives. When we keep him at a distance, our spiritual strength is sapped, and along with it often go our purpose and drive. We can mask these weaknesses by filling our days with lesser pursuits (even tending toward idolatry), but the deep meaning is missing; we're just passing time.

In the earliest accounts of God bringing his people into community, we read of their leader, Moses. Like us, Moses was just a man, though he is so dearly venerated by the Jewish people and many of the rest of us in the faith. Humbly, Moses recognized his shortcomings, especially when the challenges were great and the enemy was strong. One thing he knew: he could not lead these people alone. He wasn't qualified.

Into this context, Moses asked the LORD to reveal to him who would go with him in this role of leader. God said, "My Presence will go with you."

Moses could not have imagined a better answer. "If your Presence doesn't go, don't even send us," he told God. His sentiment? *We must have you!* Oh, that we would be as desperate for God as Moses was; it's our only hope for victory.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2017 Links Players International. An introductory video is available at <https://youtu.be/VVpdrp1qLfw>.

Opening questions What do you enjoy about your favorite golf partners? How would the game be different without them? • How great do you sense your need for God's presence is in your life?

READING Exodus 33:12-23; John 14:8-14

Moses' prayer (Exodus 33:13)
What did Moses ask for in his prayer? How might we employ similar requests in our own lives?

God's Presence (Exodus 33:14-23)
Why do you think God honored Moses' prayer with his Presence? To you, what was most powerful in the way God revealed himself to Moses?

Jesus and the Father (John 14)
If you want the Presence of God in your life, why is it vital that you have a relationship with Jesus? What does Jesus supply us when we have such a connection with him?
