

## I'm No Moses

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the water." -- Genesis 1:1,2 -- I have often overlooked those first two verses of the entire bible. When we talk about the creation we think first of the six individual days in which God put together all the elements that he created in these first two verses. The thing that gets me is the last part of verse 2, "the spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the water". The power of that statement gained full perspective for me one evening at sunset as I was leading a short devotional on the creation for a group of young boys and their fathers. We were at a place called Lookout Point. When it is dark one can look out over the seemingly barren landscape, read these two verses and with closed eyes almost see the spirit of God hovering over the surface. You can feel something. God has always been, and always will be. It has been and always will be our mission to search him out for ourselves and share him with others.

My wife served on a church committee with Dale Burnett, one of the board members of a new non-profit organization called Outdoor Christian Ministries (OCM). OCM tasked itself with the mission of sharing the outdoors in a Christian atmosphere with people of all ages and backgrounds. Dale was looking for some people to help. My wife brought me the organization pamphlet. I believe she knew how I would react! I made an inquiring phone call and could not volunteer fast enough!

The Tierritas Blancas Ranch in the remote south Texas brush country is the setting for the experience. Just driving in to the ranch one gets the feeling of God's majesty and power in such a remote location. Luke 5:16 then tells us "But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed". Initially, this place feels lonely. Sometimes it is hard to hear God amid all the noise and confusion of TV, cell phones, job, bosses, social commitments, etc., etc., etc. and the list is never ending. We need to get to a quiet lonely place to pray and let God speak to us! That is the sanctuary I have found in this place. The "Spirit of God"

replaces that loneliness. I have been blessed as well as challenged with bringing this experience to others by volunteering At OCM. My biggest challenge is to communicate God's majesty, God's sovereignty, God's grace, and the saving power of Jesus to those who come to this place for a retreat. Wow! Why me Lord? I have never done that before! How can I do that? To say I am humbled by the confidence shown in me to complete this task would be an understatement. I consider Exodus 4:10 when Moses said "O Lord I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." The Lord follows in verse 12 by saying to Moses, "Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say". He also reassures Moses that he will have some help by way of Aaron his brother. Amen on the help! The Lord does not care what your problems are he just says "Trust in me and do it and I will help you"! God will give you what you need. We need to listen to that still small voice that is God and accept the challenges that he puts before us.

I am just a regular guy. I am certainly no Moses. I do know this however, in the three retreats and numerous work weekends I have participated in as a guide, group leader, game cleaner, corn scatterer and as a retreat participant, I have been continually amazed and blessed by the redeeming power of the "Spirit of God". This ministry filled a spiritual void in my life. Through that spirit that hovers in, over and around us when we are in this remote place, we are able to see more clearly the issues in our lives that we need to let God have and take action where God says act. I am grateful for the opportunity to help at OCM. It is allowing me to grow as a Christian and servant in God's Kingdom.

We are on this journey together. Let us retreat to that quiet lonely place just as Jesus did and pray. Let us give God a chance to speak to us without all the distractions that the modern world puts in front of us. Come to "The Ranch" and retreat with us. God is there. I know. I have seen him! Maybe not face to face like Moses, but if you look for him you will see him too!

Blessings,  
Mike Schneider