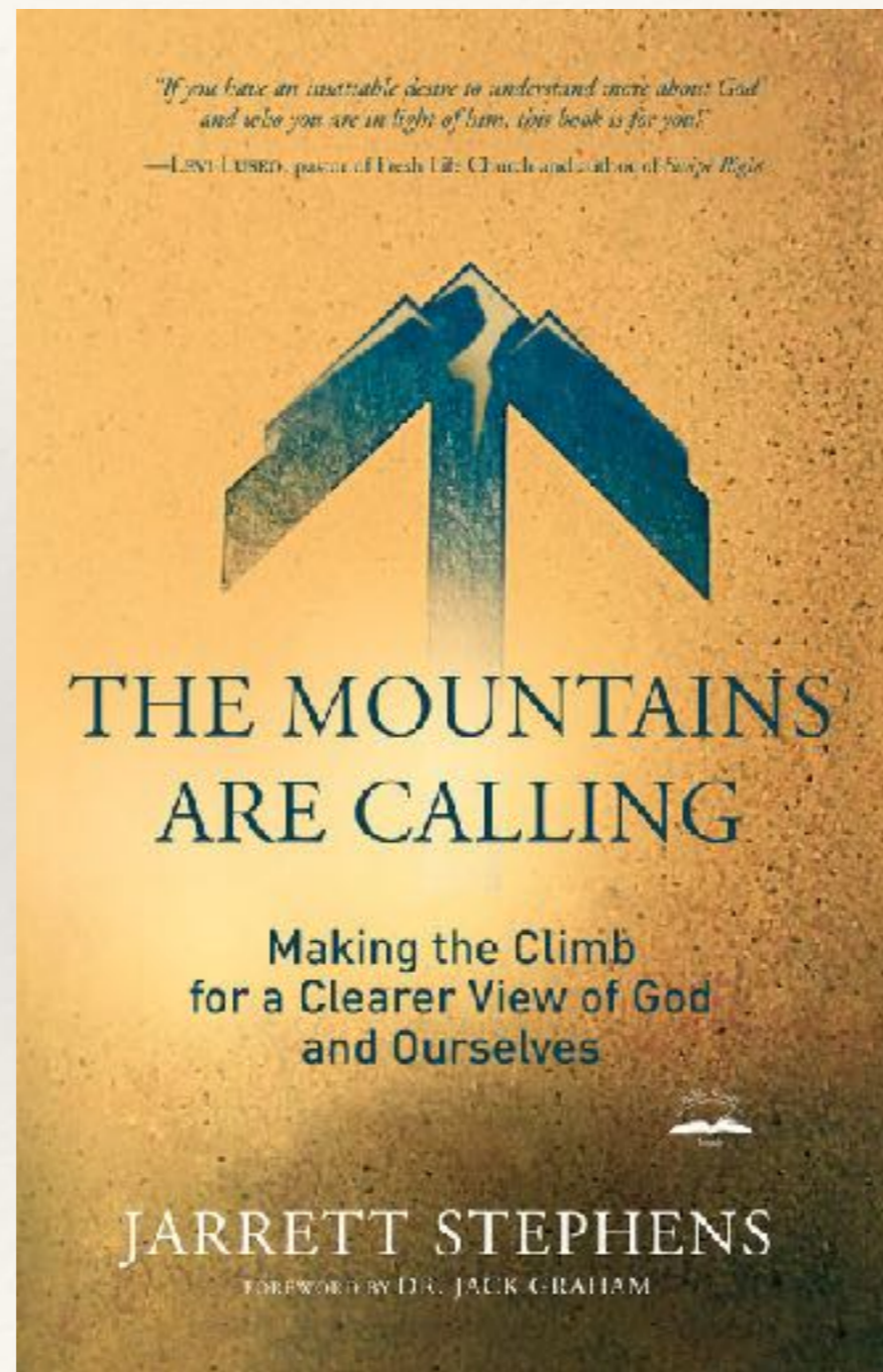

Mountains Are Calling



Mount Moriah

The God Who Is Provider

Call of the Mountain

- Abraham - story of God commanding him to leave his extended family to go to a foreign land, never seen.
- Request from God came with a promise (Genesis 12).
- Throughout Abraham's life, God constantly reassured him of this promise of having innumerable offspring.
- Abraham was not a perfect man, yet God kept His promises to him.

Cost of the Climb

- In the midst of God's promise to Abraham, God calls for him to take his son to the land of Moriah and "offer him there as a burnt offering" (Genesis 22:1-2).
- This was a sacrifice of much more than the first tenth of all that he owned (first fruits of crops and cattle).
- There is always a cost of knowing God fully. Always.
- God is provider, fulfiller, and a loving father.

Mount Sinai

The God Who Is Holy

Incredible Privilege

- Moses - he has an incredible privilege to meet and interact with a personal God.
- But the presence of God was not something that Moses or the people of Israel could take lightly.
- They were being delivered from Egypt and being led by the pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.
- They also had specific instructions about the Tabernacle.

The Character of God

- God was teaching them a spiritual lesson - God is infinitely holy. No one and nothing can compare to God.
- He is in a category of his own. Perfectly pure. Perfectly righteous. There is no hint of impurity in God.
- The glory of God is found throughout the Bible. Isaiah got a glimpse of God on His throne (Isaiah 6:1-3).
- Hebrew word of glory (*kevod*) means “weight or heaviness.”

Suppress, Exchange, Ignore

- Suppress its reality - this is the essence of sin. Our sin nature is an animal unto itself.
- Exchange it for something else - Romans 1:21-23, do not honor God, leads to place of arrogance and ingratitude.
- Things we exchange for the glory of God: pleasures of the flesh, pursuits of success, and approval of man.
- We should not take for granted the presence of God.

Mount Carmel

The God Who is Trustworthy

Average Elijah

- Elijah - had no formal education, not from a family that was well off or highly respected.
- Bible goes to great lengths to communicate that he was a normal person “with a nature like ours” (James 5:17).
- Before God used Elijah, he led him through a period of brokenness (through the valley to the mountain). He spent time in a place called Cherith (to be cut off or to cut down), eliminating Elijah’s pride and self-reliance.

The Task At Hand

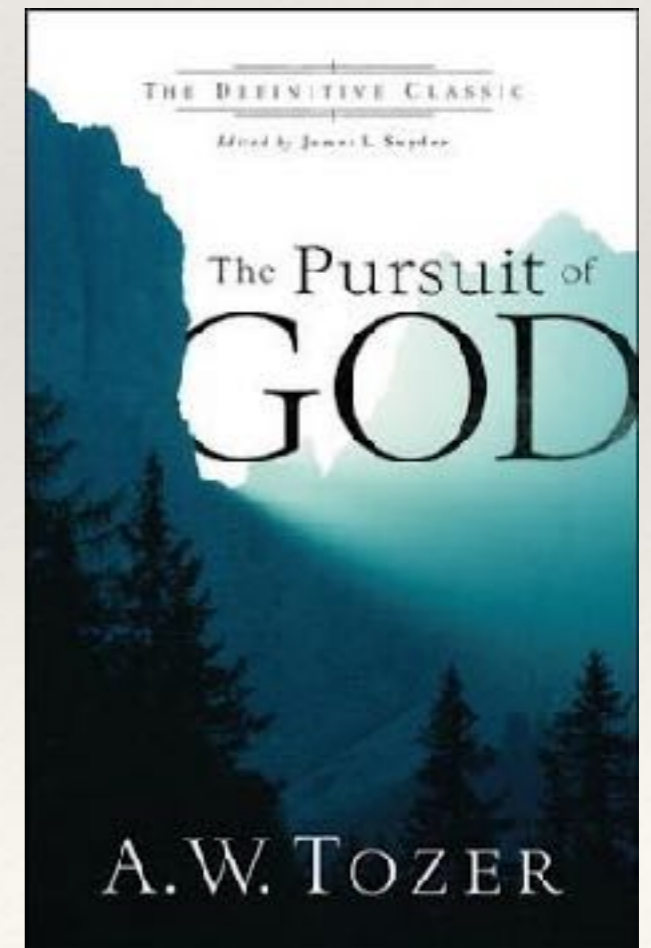
- After long days of humbling and of ordinariness, Elijah was eventually given quite a task.
- Ahab - “did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him” (1 Kings 16:30).
- He called out the king and also issued a challenge to the people of Israel (were wavering between two opinions).
- Before Elijah saw the all-consuming power of God, he first had to understand the faithfulness of God.

Mount Desolate

The God Who is Intimate

Practice Makes Perfect

- Jesus had a routine - “went to a desolate place and prayed” (Mark 1:35).
- Even when the crowds came, he “went out to the mountain to pray” (Luke 6:12).
- *The Pursuit of God* by A.W. Tozer
- “The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God.”



Enemies of Intimacy

- Enemy #1 - Busyness
 - Busyness keeps you from intimacy with God.
- Enemy #2 - Complacency
 - Sometimes routine gets in the way of intimacy.
- Enemy #3 - Comfort
 - Ease and comfort are the opposite of cross-bearing.

Mount Eremos

The God Who Is Father

Forgotten by God?

- The people of Israel felt forgotten in Jesus' day.
- They had the promise in Genesis 12 that they would be His “treasured possession.” He had also promised that a deliverer (the Messiah) would come.
- On a mountainside in Galilee, Jesus taught His first sermon - a sermon on the coming kingdom of God.
- He taught them how to pray (Matthew 6:9-13).

Forgotten by God?

- Father - the word *Abba* means “daddy.” Jesus used this word seventeen times in this sermon.
- Hallowed be your name - to reverence as holy
- Your kingdom come - the coming kingdom is what the ministry of Jesus was all about.
- And forgive us our debts - sin and guilt weighed people down, forgiveness is granted when God’s followers confess their sins to Him.

Mount Hermon

The God Who Is Jesus

True Identity

- Disciples were about to see the true identity of Jesus.
- This revelation takes place days after Peter has affirmed that Jesus is the Messiah and Jesus has confirmed it.
- He not only confirmed His identity to the disciples, but then showed His identity to the disciples.
- Until now, there was nothing (outside of His teaching and miracles) to indicate He was any different from anyone else (ate, slept, prayed, grieved).

Reflection or Radiation?

- Moses reflected the glory of God on Mount Sinai. But Jesus radiated the glory of God in the transfiguration.
- As with each mountaintop revelation, there is a new insight about us, the people of God.
- The disciples gained new insights into themselves, into their position before the glorified Christ.
- Reactions (terrified, no fear, build some tents).

Mount Olivet

The God Who Is Near

Mountain or Valley?

- After celebrating the Passover and sharing the Lord's Supper, Jesus led them to a mountain called Olivet.
- Jesus and the disciples are in the Garden of Gethsemane away from the sights and sounds of Jerusalem.
- Jesus is “greatly distressed and troubled” (Mark 14:33).
- The first time we see Jesus emotionally distraught.
- This cup - whatever God determined to give a person.

Easy Christianity

- This picture of Jesus suffering in the Garden shatters the idea that those who love God and walk with Him will never endure heartache.
- John 16:33 - “In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”
- 2 Timothy 3:12 - “Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

Dark Mountain

- “Don’t trade what you know for what you don’t know.”
- Certainty #1 - Suffering is universal and unavoidable.
- Certainty #2 - Suffering is not a judgment for sin.
- Certainty #3 - Suffering is temporary.
- Certainty #4 - God loves me and has not forgotten me.
- Certainty #5 - God empathizes with me in my suffering.
- Certainty #6 - When we suffer, it’s OK to ask, “Why?”

Mount Calvary

The God Who Is Love

Holy Ground

- Romans made it against the law to use crucifixion against one of their own citizens.
- “It was not uncommon for a Roman scourging to be fatal in and of itself.”
- Jesus endured the cross for six hours after everything He has already endured from the Roman lectors.
- The cross is the central symbol of Christianity. Jesus went to the cross and became sin for us.

The Mountain With No Name

The God Who Sends

Mission Statements

- Prestonwood has a mission statement. The most important is the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).
- Jesus invested His life in this small band of believers.
- They climbed a few mountains together, literally and figuratively.
- Jesus had one more mountain in mind - an unknown mountain in Galilee

As You Go

- The Greek verb tense - “As you go, make disciples.”
- The Great Commission is for everyone.
- We are to make disciples (2 Timothy 2:2) - “entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”
- Two PB&J promises: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” and “Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The Last Mountain

The God Who Is Returning

Get To Work

- The physical return of Jesus is an essential tenet of the Christian faith.
- One out of every thirty verses in the Bible speaks of the return of Christ or the end of time.
- Twenty-three of the twenty-seven New Testament books speak of Jesus' return.
- There are 109 prophecies of his first coming, and 329 prophecies referring to his second coming.

Leave The Light On

- Motel 6 - “We’ll leave the light on for you.”
- Jesus gave the parable - “Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him as once when he comes and knocks” (Luke 12:35-36).
- Reward or regret: Will we prepare and receive a reward, or will we one day be filled with regret?

*"If you have an insatiable desire to understand more about God
and who you are in light of him, this book is for you."*

—LEVI LUSEK, pastor of Fresh Life Church and author of *Swipe Right*



THE MOUNTAINS ARE CALLING

**Making the Climb
for a Clearer View of God
and Ourselves**



JARRETT STEPHENS

FOREWORD BY DR. JACK GRAHAM

Next Week

