

2. Prayer, and living in God's Presence

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Subtitle: Practicing the Presence of God

Last week we began to speak about prayer & about living in God's presence.

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV) *You will show me the path of life; **in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.***

The need to live in God's presence becomes greater as we move further into end-times.

Times are becoming more stressful (2 Tim. 3:1), we must learn to not just visit God's presence occasionally, but to live "in" it.

Psalm 91:9–10 (NKJV) *Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place, 10 No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;*

When God & His Presence becomes our "dwelling place", we become untouchable to the enemy and to his attacks.

Psalm 31:19–20 (NKJV) *Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who trust in You In the presence of the sons of men! **20 You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the plots of man; You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.***

Psalm 140:13 (NKJV) *Surely the righteous shall give thanks to Your name; the upright shall dwell in Your presence.*

James 4:7–8 (NKJV) *Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. **8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you ...***

HOW DO WE DRAW NEAR TO GOD:

1. Seeking God's will for our lives
2. Prayer & fasting

Fasting intensifies the effects of our prayers.

Acts 13:2–3 (NKJV) *As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I*

have called them.” **3** Then, **having fasted and prayed**, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

This period of fasting & prayer launched Paul’s and Barnabas’ ministries.

2 Corinthians 11:27 (NKJV) *In weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, **in fastings often**, in cold and nakedness.*

Evidently, Paul fasted often, and sought the Lord concerning His life and ministry, to receive direction from the Lord.

- Sometimes we fast and pray, and we don’t always receive immediate direction from the Lord
- But God sees our heart and He hears our prayers
- He will speak to us at a time and through a method of His choosing

Acts 16:6–10 (NKJV) *Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. **7** After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. **8** So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. **9** And **a vision appeared to Paul in the night**. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” **10** Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.*

- Paul & his ministry companions ministered around present-day Turkey
- They tried to go into Asia, but the Holy Spirit forbade them
- Then they tried to go into Bithynia (northern Turkey), but the Spirit did not permit them
- The Holy Spirit directed them through a vision to go to Europe instead
- (of course, the Holy Spirit wanted the gospel preached in Bithynia & Asia also, but seemingly, with limited missionary labourers available, He directed Paul to preach the Word in Europe first).

Matthew 9:35–38 (NKJV) *Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. **36** But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. **37** Then He said to His disciples, “The **harvest truly is plentiful**, but the **laborers are few**. **38** Therefore **pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.**”*

- He saw the Multitudes was moved with compassion
- Like sheep having no shepherd
- Harvest plentiful
- Labourers (too) few
- Pray to Lord of the harvest
- Send out laborers into His harvest

We should pray, not only for the harvest (people), but we must also pray for labourers to be sent into the harvest fields.

The closer we get to God and to His presence, the more we feel His burden and passion for lost people.

3. Feasting on God's Word

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) *So then **faith comes by hearing**, and hearing by the word of God.*

Each time we open our Bible to read, study or meditate, we draw near to God. Without the Holy Spirit's help, we cannot understand the truths of the Bible.

Quote by Smith Wigglesworth:

"I understand God by His Word. I cannot understand God by impressions or feelings; I cannot get to know God by sentiments. If I am going to know God, I am going to know Him by His Word. I know I shall be in heaven, but I could not build on my feelings that I am going to heaven. I am going to heaven because God's Word says it, and I believe God's Word."

4. Committing to serve God in a ministry

The natural sequential outworking of getting close to God is that we engage & serve in a ministry towards:

- Strengthening God's kingdom in the earth (ministry)
- Extending God's kingdom in the earth (missions)

1 Peter 4:10 (NKJV) *As each one has received a gift, **minister it to one another**, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Proverbs 11:30 (LB) *Godly men are growing a tree that bears life-giving fruit, and **all who win souls are wise.***