

Prayer, and living in God's Presence

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Subtitle: Practicing the Presence of God

In recent weeks, one of our focuses has been on prayer. Today we continue to look into God's Word, which teaches us and stirs us to fast and pray.

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 is becoming greater as we move further into endtimes.

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

In God's presence:

- is fulness of joy (Ps. 16:11)
- is safety & protection (Ps. 91:1, 2 & 4)
- is deliverance & healing (Ps. 91: 3)
- is provision (Ps. 23:5)
- is freedom from fear (Ps. 91:5)

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.

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 ...***

Verse 8 says: ***Draw near to God and He will draw near to you ...***

This speaks of two individuals moving closer together, God & us (individually).

- Initially God draws us into His presence by His Spirit (John 6:44)
- Then we respond to Him by drawing near to Him
- He then draws near to us

Notice, the Bible speaks of “near-ness” with God instead of “far-ness”. God wants a “close” relationship with us, not a “distant” acquaintanceship

- Enoch walked with God (Genesis 5:24)
- Moses walked into the presence of God (Exodus 3:3)
- Moses asked: Lord, show me Your Presence (Exodus 33:18)
- Moses said: Lord, let Your Presence go with us (Exodus 33:15)
- God’s Presence overshadowed Jesus, Peter, James & John on the mount of transfiguration (Matt. 17:5)

HOW DO WE DRAW NEAR TO GOD:

- Seeking God concerning His will for our lives
- Prayer & fasting
- Feasting on God’s Word
- Committing to serve God in a ministry

1. Seeking God’s will for our lives

Deuteronomy 4:29 (NKJV) *But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.*

Psalm 14:2 (NKJV) *The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God.*

Psalm 27:7–8 (NKJV) *Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me. 8 When You said, “Seek My face,” My heart said to You, “Your face, Lord, I will seek.”*

Anybody who has ever done great things for God has made a considerable effort in seeking God for His will for their life.

2. Prayer & fasting

Fasting intensifies the effects of our prayers.

Acts 13:1–3 (NKJV) *Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 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 became the launching point of the ministries of Paul and Barnabas. These two men were separated (set apart) for a holy purpose.

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, and to receive direction from the Lord.

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.**”*

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| • 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 the harvest |

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, we draw near to God.

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 God's leading in our lives is that we engage in 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.***