

How can I really know God's presence in my life?

We are creatures of desire. We move and decide on the basis of desire. Desire is our inescapable motivation.

Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 6:24, "No one can serve two masters. For you will hate the one and love the other; you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money" (NLT).

Many times we say we want the presence of God, but we also want a lot of other things. We want riches and comfort, admiration and pleasure. We want to be esteemed by the world (at least our little world) and honored in heaven at the same time. Deep down, if we were honest, most of us would like to have God and a list of worldly things, too.

However, Jesus Christ is the most precious prize in life, and to know Him requires the giving up of all else.

Read Philippians 3:7-9 and Matthew 13:45-46. How is Paul's experience confirmed by Jesus' parable? What are you willing to give in exchange for knowing Christ?

- Are you willing to spend the time necessary to know His Word?
- Are you willing to surrender your own knowledge and opinions to hear His voice?
- Are you willing to obey what you hear?
- Are you willing to look like a fool? (See 1 Cor. 1:18-29.)
- Are you willing to be a child? (See Matt. 18:3.)

Make no mistake; Jesus never said it was easy to follow Him. To come to Him is easy because He paid the enormous price. The

opportunity to know God is thrown wide open to all.

But to become His disciple, to live and abide in His presence, is to be under His rule, where He is all in all. Jesus said, “‘If you love me, obey my commandments’” (John 14:15).

Living in God’s presence requires a holiness that is beyond us and that can be obtained only by our absolute surrender to Jesus Christ. The good news is: Whatever you lose is only a trinket compared with the vast kingdom of heaven you enter.

Jesus said, “If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it” (Matt. 16:25).

Our God lives in heaven. Therefore, to live in His presence means living from the heavens, with a heavenly perspective. The value of such is immeasurable; the value of intimacy with Christ cannot be matched. It is the purpose of our creation. However, He Himself warned, “The gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it” (Matt. 7:14).