

Spirit-Filled Worship Leader and Intercessor: God's Presence Changes Everything

God's presence changes everything. This is the tagline of the *Presence Pioneers* podcast, but it's more than a slogan for me.

The summer after my high school graduation, I found myself on a dirty youth camp floor in eastern North Carolina. I was overcome by the power of the Holy Spirit and laid there for hours encountering God's love. It was an extended time of worship after the messages, with a young worship leader in the corner singing simple love songs to Jesus with an acoustic guitar.

This experience changed my life. In those hours, God began to set me free from insecurity, confront my selfish ambitions and lead me into my ministry calling. I had a vision of God inviting me into His lap and revealing His love to my heart. His perfect love began to cast out my fears.

I was a singer-songwriter who wanted to be a famous rock star, but God began to show me that He gave me those musical gifts to worship Him and minister to His heart. He told me that I was called to be like King David. I was called to lead worship, yes, but I was also called to somehow "carry" His presence into my city just as David brought the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem.

This life-changing encounter shifted the trajectory of my life. I came home and began to seek the Lord in private prayer, Bible reading and worship. But I was also burning to have my friends and peers experience the same transformative presence of God that I had known at camp. This yearning initially led to a series of Friday night worship nights, and I have now been leading day-and-night worship and prayer

ministries for nearly 20 years. I have seen consistently the simple truth that worship brings God's presence, and God's presence changes lives, cities and nations.

This is the theme of my brand new book, *David's Tabernacle: How God's Presence Changes Everything*. In Episode 73 of the *Presence Pioneers* podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network, I share more about my summer camp encounter, including some unbelievably supernatural smells and sounds that I experienced! {eoa}

Matthew Lilley is an author, worship leader, intercessor and Bible teacher with a passion for God's presence, extravagant worship and prayer and a desire to see cities transformed by Jesus. In 2004 he founded *Presence Pioneers* to help fulfill his calling to connect, equip and plant presence-centered Christian communities. He has helped launch two houses of prayer in North Carolina and has also served in national leadership roles in worship and prayer movements such as *Burn 24-7* and *Awaken the Dawn*.

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