

Start Expecting and Inviting God's Presence, Not Performance

The Bible is filled with messages to those who read it about just how important the presence of God is to the well-being of His people.

God's presence, woven throughout the Old and New Testaments, serves as a poignant reminder of His closeness, the guidance He offers and the intimate bond He shares with His people.

When the presence of the Lord falls it offers comfort in times of trouble (Ps. 46:1), guidance in moments of uncertainty (Prov. 3:5-6) and the assurance of eternal life (John 10:27-28).

In a recent sermon, Pastor Greg Locke of Global Vision Bible Church explained why he had dropped the political rallies at his church tent in favor of creating a house of God's presence.

"I don't care what party you're with, this is a house of His presence, not a house their political 's a big thing coming from a guy like me," shares Locke.

While being very vocal politically in the past and creating a platform that now focuses on deliverance ministry and movements of the Holy Spirit, Locke implores his congregation that the church needs to focus on God's presence more than the things of this world.

"We have to prepare a place for His presence," explains Locke.

"The fear of the Lord invites the presence of God, and if a church does not prepare themselves for the presence, then they can expect none of it," he adds.

Locke shares that this preparation for the Lord's presence must include an intentional shift towards the righteousness of God as described in the Bible.

No longer is God tolerating the lukewarm silent church, but instead He is moving and shaking His people to either speak His truth found in His Word with boldness and fear of Him, or be removed from His covering of blessing and protection.

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Here are five important lessons about the presence of God:

1. Without a personal encounter with the Lord nothing else matters.

2. We must prepare a place for God's presence: "There's the omnipresence of God and there's the manifest presence of God."

3. A place without mixture of sin will experience His presence without measure: "God will pour Himself out amongst people that want real unity not carnal mixture... Know the difference between peace keepers and peace breakers."

4. The Lord reveals Himself for Himself: "It's not arrogance, it's holiness."

5. The glory of God is never to be rushed: "Our lack of holiness is a result of our hurry-ness."

"I'm telling you we [are] inviting the presence, this ain't a rock concert," declared Locke. "This is a house of worship, this is a house of prayer."

After a moment of consideration, Locke makes a bold declaration of how far the church of today has strayed from its loving relationship with God.

"We have prostituted the body of Christ," Locke says. "We have taken the pure, supposed to be spotless, bride of Christ, and we have stripped her down into hooker clothing, put her on a street and made pastors pimps. [We have] sold her to the highest bidder. Sickening," Locke continues.

The words Locke shares, while intense, ring with truth as churches across the globe are leaving the biblical truths and principles that the Lord has established for the ways of the world.

Apostasy and greed have pulled many away from the presence of God, and instead invite the presence of false gods into the walls of the buildings they gather in. The great falling away of the end times has begun in many places, where people gather for church yet never even mention the Father, Jesus or the Holy Spirit.

This is why, Locke says, you must guard against the false teachings plaguing the church today.

"We're not talking about people that are ignorant. We are talking about people that are purposely manipulating their words. ...If you got some false prophetic word, some false tongue, some false laying on hands of somebody that's false and wicked, you've got that voodoo dude" says Locke. {eoa}

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