

The Key to Winning People

You've been apprehended by God for a reason. Even without words you should impact those around you with His power and anointing.

Time and again we ask ourselves, "Why can't I win my friends to the Lord? Why is it that my family members just don't seem interested in God?"

The answer may shock you: The reason people who know you aren't interested in God may be because you don't have enough of His presence in your life.

I don't know about you, but I want to be so saturated with God's presence that when I walk into public places everyone near me will suddenly feel uncomfortable if he's not right with God. I'm not wanting to condemn or to convict; I just want to carry the fragrance of my Father with me so that people will know that He is there.

THE PURPOSE OF HIS PRESENCE We understand "program evangelism"—knocking on doors, passing out tracts or participating in other outreaches of the church designed to reach the lost. And John Wimber helped us to understand "power evangelism," which involves praying with someone on the street instead of just witnessing or giving out tracts.

But there is little understanding of what I call "presence evangelism." This is what occurs when the residue of God on a person creates a divine radiation zone of His manifest presence that affects those around him (see Acts 4:13).

"Shadow healing" would fall into this category. That's the kind of healing that took place when the shadow of the One with whom Peter walked created a healing zone around him (see Acts 5:15-16).

So would spontaneous deliverance—the kind that occurred when Jesus set foot on the Gardarene shore and a possessed man a half-mile away was suddenly freed from the grasp of demons (see Mark 4:35-5:20).

The demonized man ran to worship Jesus as soon as he saw Him. Up until that moment, he had had no control over his own actions. He responded to the demons' commands, even when they told him to harm himself.

Today we need to hear the footfall of God as His foot touches the earth. When it does, we won't have to worry about telling demons to run. We won't even have to scream Scriptures against their princes or practice pulling down demonic strongholds—because the purpose of His manifest presence is to set the captive free (see Luke 4:18). This purpose will be fulfilled automatically when He shows up.

BRING BACK HIS GLORY If the Father of us all can allow His manifested presence to touch earth just once, then the flood of glory it will spawn will bring revival throughout the land as demons flee and sinners fall to their knees!

We have managed to turn what we erroneously call “church” into a big “bless me club.” I'm not so sure that we need to seek blessings anymore.

We need to seek brokenness and repentance and say by our actions as well as our words, “God, we want You. We don't care if You ‘do’ anything or not. We are crawling up on the altar. Let Your fire of cleansing fall so we can finally see Your face.”

Why would we go through all this? There are at least two reasons I can think of. First, the experience of seeing God's glory is life-changing. It is the most habit-forming experience a human being can have, and the only side effect is death to the flesh.

Second, God's glory aids evangelism. If we can carry even a residue of it back into our homes, businesses and lukewarm churches, then we won't have to beg people to come to the Lord in repentance. They will run to the altar when His glory breaks their bondage.

We have tried to pave the way for people to come to God through painless, cheap grace and costless revival. But all we wound up with was bargain-basement salvations that lasted hardly a week. We gave people an emotional encounter with man when what they really needed was a death encounter with the glory and presence of God Himself.

THE NATION IS HUNGRY FOR MORE I have a problem with our "part-time, gone fishing" church mentality. Most of America's churches attempt to satisfy the nation's hunger for God while operating only two hours a week on Sunday morning!

Aren't we supposed to be offering the Bread of Life to the hungry? Something is terribly wrong, and I don't think it is America's hunger for God.

People are hungry, but they are smart enough to know the difference between the stale bread of yesterday's religious experience and the fresh bread of God's presence. We must conclude that the reason the hungry aren't knocking on our doors is because the House of Bread is empty.

The hungry need fresh bread in abundance, not stale crumbs from the last century. The United States is ripe for revival. It is time for God's people to get desperately hungry for Him because the fires of revival must first ignite the church before its flames can spread to the streets.

I am weary of trying to accomplish God's works with the hands of man. What we need for nationwide revival is to have God show up.

There have been times when God's glory has been flowing in His

churches so much that His people had to be careful in area restaurants. Bowing their heads to pray over their meal, they would look up to see waitresses and other customers weeping uncontrollably and asking, "What is it with you people?"

My wife had an experience like this. She was standing in line to pay for some purchases at a store in Houston during God's recent visitation when a woman tapped her on the shoulder. She turned around to see a total stranger weeping unashamedly.

The woman told my wife, "I don't know where you've been, and I don't know what you've got. But my husband is a lawyer, and I'm in the middle of a divorce." She began to blurt out her other problems and finally said, "What I'm really saying is, I need God."

My wife looked around and said, "You mean right here?" She said, "Right here." My wife just had to ask again, "Well, what about the people in line?"

Suddenly the woman turned to the woman standing in line behind her and asked, "Ma'am, is it OK if I pray with this lady right here?"

But that woman was also crying and replied, "Yes, and pray with me too."

THE FRESH BREAD OF HIS PRESENCE Supernatural experiences such as the one my wife had will happen to you too, but there is no shortcut to revival or the coming of His presence. God's glory comes only when repentance and brokenness drive you to your knees, because His presence requires purity.

What we need to do is come clean and confess our sins. We must repent and ask God to put a hunger in our hearts for Himself, not just for His things.

Like the prodigal son, sometimes we use the very blessings God gives us to finance our journey away from the centrality of

Christ. It's very important that we return to ground zero, to the ultimate, eternal goal of abiding with the Father in intimate communion.

It was the prodigal's revelation of his poverty of heart that propelled him back into his father's arms. We must recognize our poverty of spirit—that we don't have what the lost are hungering for. And what is that? The fresh bread of His presence.

If we repent, God will give us such a heart and passion for Him that we will begin to see His glory flow out of us to convict and save the lost. The faintest shadow of His presence in our lives will heal the sick and restore the lame we meet in the streets.

His presence can so saturate us that unsaved guests won't be able to step into our homes or be around us with unrepentant hearts. His glory will bring conviction in their lives that leads to salvation—not because of the words we say, but because of His presence and power in our hearts.

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