

The Mystery of Practicing the Presence of the Lord

Do you know what I want most as a believer? More and more of the presence of God.

Of course, the day I stand before the Lord Jesus, I want Him to look at me with a smile and say, "Well done." But while I'm still here on the earth, I want more and more of His presence. The Word of God clearly states that we are to seek the Lord with all our hearts—not half, not two-thirds, but with all our hearts.

"Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole my whole heart have I sought Thee: O let me not wander from Thy commandments," (Ps. 119:2, 10).

Seeking God with our whole hearts empowers us to keep His testimonies. The Hebrew word that is translated "testimonies" in Psalm 119:2 means God's precepts. A precept is a principle or rule that regulates behavior or thought. When we seek God with our whole hearts, it gives us the strength to not wander from His commandments. Seeking God with our whole hearts is a master key to practicing the presence of the Lord.

"And I will walk at liberty: for I seek Thy precepts," (Ps. 119:45).

Seeking God with our whole hearts requires time. The tangible presence of God is what we're after in our walk with Him because the presence of the Lord Jesus nourishes, protects, strengthens and empowers our inner man. But it only becomes a reality when we spend time with Him. Time is the price we pay. God will not show up, His presence will not become tangible, if we do not set our hearts on giving Him our uninterrupted time.

Another key to unlocking the door to a life alive with God's presence is placing your focus upon the Lord. We cannot have divine communion and human communion at the same time—we absolutely cannot. I cannot stress this enough—you cannot pollute the waters of communication with the Lord and expect to get a pure drink of His presence. He will not allow it. He wants your full and undivided attention, your whole heart. If something sidetracks you, He will hold back or pull away altogether, and regaining His trust will be very difficult.

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God will not share His time. For example, you're in the presence of God, and the phone rings, so you stop and answer it. The Lord will not manifest His presence if you answer that phone. The flow of communication will be disrupted by the interruption. He will hold back until you finish what you have to do or say, and you will have to make an effort to get back to the place where you were before you answered the phone. You will have wasted time by cutting the line of communication with God in favor of a line of communication with another human being.

Our God is a jealous God. He wants all the time that you put aside for Him. When you say to the Lord, "This is Your time," He wants all of it. He wants every minute of it. Every second of it belongs to Him. He will not manifest His presence if someone knocks on the door and you answer it. The God we serve is jealous. You must stop the distractions that will steal your focus from seeking the Lord with your whole heart.

"And ye shall seek Me, and find me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart," (Jer. 29:13).

Another important key to practicing the presence of the Lord is spending time with God daily. It is absolutely vital that

you set aside a period of uninterrupted time to commune daily with God. First Chronicles 16:10–11 says, “Glory ye in His holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord and His strength, seek His face continually.” The Hebrew word translated here as “continually” could also be translated “daily.”

I cannot overstate how important it is to build upon this daily. I find that if I miss a day, I go backward; I’m not at the same place I was before I missed my time with Him. The more I spend time with Him, the quicker I get into His presence; the less I spend time with Him, the slower I get in.

Sometimes you miss your time with God because something comes up and your schedule changes that day—you’re traveling, or something distracts you. But you have to decide that nothing and no one will prevent you from having time with the Lord. I typically spend time with the Lord at 1:00 p.m., but if I miss that time, I’ll do it at night.

God is not concerned that you missed a specific time. He is concerned that you missed the day. Don’t go to bed without giving the Lord the time that belongs to Him. {eo}



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