



SPENDING TIME IN

*The Presence
of God*

A Believer's Secret Weapon

'And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here." Exodus 33:14-15

In the conversation Moses was having with the Lord about taking the Israelites into the promised land, Moses made a very interesting statement – he wasn't willing to make a move if God wasn't going to be with them. Clearly Moses knew something about the difference God's presence would make in the outcome of their journey. Being that Moses was one of the people recorded in the Bible to have spent a significant amount of time with God, he must have observed something that informed this statement.

Apart from Moses, we also see examples in the Bible of other people who intentionally spent time with God and the difference it made in their lives.

This series we're looking at the difference spending time in the presence of God makes in the life of the believer. We pray this series will bless you and encourage you to be intentional about prioritizing time spent with God.

Stay connected.



Open Invitation



FROM JESUS

Day 1

Open Invitation

'He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will remain secure and rest in the shadow of the Almighty [whose power no enemy can withstand].' Psalms 91:1 AMP

When we read about some of the mighty men and women in the Bible, we may be tempted to think that some levels of access to God may be restricted to just a few people, but Psalm 91 shows us that spending time with God is an open invitation to all. This means that in the scripture above anyone can replace 'he' with their own name.

'Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.'" Acts 10:34-35


God doesn't show partiality – the extent to which we walk with God is entirely up to us. We determine the pace and level of commitment we are willing to invest in our relationship with Him. We also decide what we're coming to God for – is He just a source for solving our problems, or do we want to know Him and are willing to get to know His desires as well.

When we come before the Lord with a genuine hunger and desire for Him, we kickstart a journey of getting to know Him better. Our relationship evolves from coming to God not just for what we want, but for who He is. And the wonderful thing about God is that the more time we spend with Him, the more of His presence we're able to access. It doesn't happen immediately and it's a lifelong commitment that requires daily consistency on our part, but the benefits are immeasurable.

God's presence is a spiritual environment we can choose to either dip in and out of, or we can decide to make it our permanent residence. The choice is ours.

Prayer: Lord, put a hunger in me to know you for myself. Help me move from a transactional engagement with you to a connected relationship where I'm motivated not by what you can give me, but out of a genuine love for you.





POWER
IN OUR
WORDS

**Only comes
from being in
God's
Presence**

Day 2

Power in Our Words

“And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word.”” I Kings 17:1

Elijah introduced his relationship with God in a very interesting way – “the Lord before whom I stand” – meaning Elijah was constantly in God’s presence. Because of this relationship and access to God’s presence, Elijah could declare a drought over Israel and have heaven back him up such that there was no rain for a few years until Elijah declared the drought over. Whatever Elijah said came to pass.

“So Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.” I Samuel 3:19 NKJV

We see a similar thing in Samuel’s life, where the words he spoke were backed with power, no empty words came out of his mouth. Not because Samuel was a super star, but because he also spent time in God’s presence and reflected His character. God knew that whatever these two men said to the people would align with what was on His mind because they had taken the time to listen to God and find out what was on His heart.

They were also willing to lay aside personal ambitions and let God lead them. Remember Elijah lived in Israel during the period of the drought which means he would also have been subject to its impact. Instead of trying to preserve himself by watering down what was in his spirit to say, he made an unpopular declaration and trusted God to see him through and indeed through it all he was supernaturally preserved.

Reflect: Can God say the same thing of us? Can He trust that the words we speak will always reflect His thoughts? As believers we have access to the Holy Spirit who searches the things of God - have we ever asked the Holy Spirit to show us what’s on God’s mind and what we can do about it?

Prayer: Lord help me not to be focused on myself all the time. Help me to prioritize not just asking for things from you but also being concerned about what I can do for you.



SHAPING OUR PERSPECTIVES

Day 3 Shaping Perspectives

“... but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.”
Exodus 33:11 NKJV

Joshua was Moses’s assistant, and he did something that separated him from others - whenever Moses left the tabernacle, Joshua stayed behind. Whenever Moses went up the mountain to meet with God, Joshua wasn’t far behind. He must have observed something in the relationship between Moses and God that drew him in to go the extra mile. He must also have seen something in the glory that showed up in the tabernacle that gave him some insight into who God is which shaped Joshua’s perception of challenges.

'There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.' Numbers 13:33

“But Joshua... spoke to all the ... children of Israel, saying: ...do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread...” Numbers 14:6-9

The other members of the spy team were not lying when they said there were giants in the land. They compared themselves to the size of the giants they saw while Joshua and Caleb compared the giants to the God who had done so much for them. Same situation, different perspectives.

'God has spoken once, twice I have heard this: that power belongs to God.' Psalms 62:11

'... O Lord, God of our ancestors, you alone are the God who is in heaven. You are ruler of all the kingdoms of the earth. You are powerful and mighty; no one can stand against you!'
2 Chronicles 20:6

There are times when we come before God that the Holy Spirit may lead us to just reflect on the greatness and wonder of our God – how He created every single thing seen and unseen. Looking at the workings of the human body alone shows just how magnificent He is. When we reflect on these, it’s difficult to leave His presence without a sense of awe and also a sense that there really is nothing too difficult for Him to do.

Prayer: Lord whenever I start feeling overwhelmed by what is going on around me, help me to remember how great You are and your infinite capacity to handle whatever it is.



confidence in God

Day 4 Confidence in God

“Don’t be afraid!” Elisha told him. “For there are more on our side than on theirs!” Then Elisha prayed, “O Lord, open his eyes and let him see!” The Lord opened the young man’s eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire. 2 Kings 6:16-17

In the scripture above, Elisha and his servant were surrounded by the troops, chariots and soldiers of the king of Aram’s army. Naturally the servant panicked being under such a siege, but Elisha on the other hand was calm. The servant must have wondered what was wrong with his boss and then Elisha prayed that the servant’s spiritual eyes be opened and they were, revealing the angelic support surrounding them. Question: were the chariots of fire there before the servant saw them? The answer is yes, even though they weren’t visible to the natural eyes. Very likely this isn’t the first time Elijah had received such a revelation and he had spent enough time in a personal relationship with God to know that God would never leave him on his own.

‘Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.’ Deuteronomy 31:6

It’s difficult to trust someone you don’t know – there’s no basis for placing your confidence in them. However when you know someone and their capacity and capability, it’s easier to believe them especially when what they say they will do is in line with their character and capacity. How can we know the Lord’s character and capacity without spending time with Him in prayer, the word, trusting Him for the little things daily? Spending time with Him opens us up to who we’re dealing with and His desire and ability to support us and give us victory at all times. As we grow in faith, we are more willing to release all our cares to Him, trusting that He’s more than capable to meet all our needs.

Prayer: Lord help me to grow in my knowledge of and trust in you so i always remember that no matter what is going on at the moment, I am not alone.

A vibrant sunflower with bright yellow petals is shown against a clear blue sky. A white, hand-drawn sun graphic with rays is positioned behind the flower. A semi-transparent orange circle is centered over the sun, containing the text "FULLNESS OF Joy!".

FULLNESS OF
Joy!

Day 5 Fullness of Joy

“You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” Psalms 16:11

The dictionary defines ‘full’ as: completely filled; containing all that can be held; filled to utmost capacity. Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit that we display as a result of His work in our lives, an outward display of an inner state of being. Happiness, can be fleeting and is dependent on external circumstances, but joy radiates from being in God’s presence. In a world where negativity and gloom appear to be the norm, we have the opportunity to be filled to the utmost capacity with joy.

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:13

Part of the reason we have joy is the hope we have in who God is, who we are in Him and what He’s made available to believers. When we reflect on His goodness and faithfulness, the many guarantees we have in the Bible, and the spiritual resources we have at our disposal, it will be difficult not to be filled with hope and joy. The more time we spend in God’s presence, the greater the ‘dosage’ of joy we receive and are filled with.

“Oh come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.” Psalms 95:1-2

Thanksgiving and joy also go hand in hand. Try starting off your prayer with a list of things to wholeheartedly thank Him for before you begin asking for anything and see the difference it makes to your prayer life and your joy levels through the day. Now imagine if you did this everyday? A life of joy is achievable as long as we’re intentional about thanking God for who He is, what He is doing/has done and what He’s assured us He will do.

Prayer: Lord today I choose to be thankful and to allow my heart to be filled with your joy.

G R O W

I N

L  **V E**

Day 6 Growing in Love

“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” 1 John 4:8

Selfishness is the nature of mankind – look out for yourself first before thinking of others. But the nature of God and His kingdom is to look out for others first before self. A very different dynamic from what we would naturally gravitate to. Spending time with God is like spending time with any loved one, over time aspects of His character starts rubbing off on us the longer we're with Him. And one thing that underpins God's character is love.

“But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.” Romans 5:8

God didn't send Christ to die for us because we loved Him, quite the opposite. Christ died in order to reconcile us back to God because He loves us so much. We may never fully comprehend the depth of God's love for us but spending time with Him helps us to demonstrate love to others.

“Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” John 13:35

Jesus chose love for one another as the differentiating factor for identifying His disciples. Not riches, prophecies or miracles, but love. That shows how seriously He takes the matter of love. This type of love has absolutely nothing to do with how we feel about a person and everything to do with recognizing that we're dealing with someone God almighty sent His son to die for.

“Love is patient and kind... not jealous or boastful or proud or rude... not demand its own way... not irritable... keeps no record of being wronged... rejoices whenever the truth wins out... never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.” 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NLT

So we're not left guessing what love is from God's perspective, the Bible answers the question for us. And we can see that it would be impossible to show this love without God equipping us. The more we stay in His presence realising just how much He loves us, the easier it is for us to consistently show God's kind of love to others.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for loving me as much as you do. Help me demonstrate your love to others.

An aerial photograph of a coastline, showing a mix of turquoise and deep blue water, with golden-brown landmasses and islands scattered throughout. The water's color varies from light turquoise near the shore to a deep, dark blue further out. The landmasses are irregular in shape and appear to be covered in dense vegetation or low-lying terrain.

DIVINE GUIDANCE

Day 7

Divine Guidance

'The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.' Psalms 32:8

One of the benefits of spending time with God is access to divine guidance. The God we serve sees the end from the beginning and knows all things. He's also a faithful and loving father who delights in helping His children. So when we spend quality time with Him, we also begin to get specific advice on what to do at each point in time.

'Your own ears will hear him. Right behind you a voice will say, "This is the way you should go," whether to the right or to the left.' Isaiah 30:21

'There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.' Proverbs 14:12

When we intentionally go to God and ask Him to form our plans for the day and for our lives – and obey whatever instructions we receive – we tap into divine resources that ensure we don't have to stumble our way through life. Our access to the Lord gives us a unique opportunity to function at a high level of accuracy. Spending time with God opens up our spiritual eyes which gives us access to the supernatural so we see things for what they really are and not what they may appear to be. Life is deep and there is a lot our natural minds simply cannot comprehend.

'Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.' Galatians 5:25

God's counsel covers every single aspect of our lives – nothing is too big or too small. Remember this same God has a record of the number of the hairs on our heads, He is that detailed. So let's not short change ourselves by trying to live any part of life based on our own capacity.

Prayer: Lord thank you for delighting in every detail of my life. I put myself totally in your hands because I acknowledge that there's nothing I can do for myself better than you. Please lead me daily, in every area of my life, so my life will align with your plans for me.





**KEPT IN
PEACE**

Day 8

Kept in Peace

'These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' John 16:33

The world can be a tough place with all sorts of issues coming up daily. Jesus himself acknowledges that we will face many challenges in life but being in Him gives us an indescribable peace that insulates us from being overwhelmed by the pressures of these challenges.

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all. 2 Thessalonians 3:16

'You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!' Isaiah 26:3

God is peace, but we need to be with Him long enough to access, receive and absorb His peace. If we were to measure the amount of time we spend with God – not just dedicated prayer/Bible study time, but in reflecting on Him through the day– and compare with the amount of time spent being bombarded by the issues of life, it will be clear which one we're giving more space to take root in our minds. Isaiah gives us one of the keys to accessing and retaining this peace and it involves fixing our thoughts on the Lord. The daily grind of life is designed to keep us so busy focused on other things that we don't think about God, so we have to be deliberate and intentional about fixing our thoughts on Him.

One way to do this may be to take a scripture and dedicate an amount of time through the day to reflect on that scripture, maybe 2-5 minutes every hour. Not to recite or memorize, but think about what it means, how it applies to your life, asking the Holy Spirit to give you understanding and the grace to do this through the day. It's not necessarily about the length of time, but the act of consciously fixing our minds on what God says. As we're consistent, these little nuggets of time will take root in our spirits and minds and start to build up God's peace in us.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be diligent about keeping my mind on you because I see that's where my peace comes from.





*Seasoning Our
Environment*

Day 9

Seasoning our Environment

'You are the salt of the earth...' Matthew 5:13

Time spent in God's presence, gives us the grace not just to be insulated from being overwhelmed by the pressures of challenges of life, but also to affect the spiritual atmosphere/environment we function in. There are some people who impact an environment when they leave because their presence was so negative and oppressive. There are also people who impact an environment by the type of seasoning their presence brings.

'... but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.' Matthew 5:13

When preparing a meal, we would ideally add some salt to flavour the meal otherwise it would be tasteless. But the interesting thing is that the amount of salt required to season a meal is quite small in proportion to the size of the meal. The same applies to believers – an environment just needs a few real believers to make a significant impact. Looking at the examples in the Bible, it just took a few people – sometimes just one person – who carried God's presence to dramatically alter communities and nations.

It's critical we note that it's possible to be salt but not have any flavour and only salt which retains its flavour makes a difference. Imagine the frustration of a person preparing a meal with tasteless salt, heaping large spoonfuls into the meal but not seeing any difference. There is a difference between believers who have a superficial relationship with the Lord and those who take the time to cultivate His presence. The evidence is in how our lives, words, outlook, relationship with others are seasoned by our 'salt'. It's a journey and we are all at various stages of having the Lord improve our 'flavour' by being soaked in His presence. The important thing is for us to realize that as we focus on spending time with God, our capacity to add His flavour to our environment increases.

Prayer: Lord I recognise that your presence in my life makes a difference beyond me. Help me Lord to be the type of believer who positively seasons any environment I engage in.





URGENT!!

Day 10 Sense of Urgency

“Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom.” Psalms 90:12

Picture your life as sand running through an hourglass, the sand will eventually run out on one side and fill the other. The challenge most of us face is that we don't know how large the hourglass for us is or how fast time is running. So we're at risk of believing we have more time than we do. Time in God's presence gives us a sense of just how little time we have here on earth compared to eternity and how intentional we must choose to live.

“... we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.” 2 Corinthians 4:18

The brevity of life means we shouldn't relegate spiritual things to the background, focusing only on the here and now. Spending time in genuine personal fellowship with God gives us a strong realisation that we should consciously fix our thoughts on those things that have eternal value. Not doing so would essentially mean we will waste valuable time focusing our lives on what won't matter in eternity. That's a very dangerous choice to make especially as the enemy will surely put all forms of distractions before us to keep us from pursuing more of God and the things of eternal value that please Him.

“Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.” Matthew 25:3-4

Both the foolish and wise virgins were believers on the journey of life. The only difference between the two was that the wise ones went the extra step of securing more oil for themselves ahead of time so that when the bridegroom came they were ready. The foolish virgins had been casual about getting extra oil and so didn't have the same sense of urgency the wise ones did and it cost them. It pays to live with a sense of urgency so we're not caught unawares regarding spiritual matters.

Prayer: Lord teach me to live with a sense of urgency, help me fix my mind on what really counts in eternity and give me the grace to consistently pursue more of You

Thank you for completing the study. We'll love to hear from you, so please connect with us on:

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