

## Prayer is Experiencing the Presence of God!

Sometimes we grope for a sense of the presence of the Lord. At times, God seems so far away. Even David, the man after God's own heart cried out, "How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?" Psalm 13:1

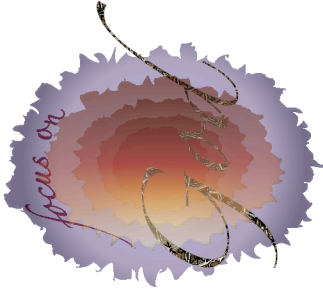
But perhaps we're only focused on our physical circumstances. God wants us to know and experience the unseen reality of life just as well as we know and experience the physical (seen) reality. We may pray, "Lord, come! Lord, make your presence real!" Perhaps we should pray, "Lord, I don't *feel* your presence! But I *know* You promised You would be here." Where is God? Is He not with us, just like He promised? Jesus said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." Hebrews 13:5 "I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:20 Perhaps we simply need to acknowledge and declare our belief in the very real unseen presence of God. Proactively, deliberately, in faith engage in the very real presence of God.

C. S. Lewis said, "The presence of God is not the same as the *sense* of the presence of God. The latter may be due to imagination; the former may be attended with no 'sensible consolation.' It is the actual presence, not the *sensation* of the presence, of the Holy Ghost which begets Christ in us. The *sense* of the presence is a super-added gift for which we give thanks when it comes."

So, we may or may not "sense" God's presence. But even if we do not sense God, we can acknowledge His presence by faith. We can engage with His presence deliberately and expectantly as we "set our minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth." Colossians 3:2 Just as Jesus said to Thomas, "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed." John 20:29

When we pray, are we not engaging with the actual presence of the God Who reveals Himself in Scripture? We have the privilege of rising above our earthly perspective to experience entering into the presence of the Most High God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Creator of the universe, the Shepherd of our souls!

Isaiah had a profound experience of entering the presence of God! In Isaiah 6, God reveals Himself in a vision. Isaiah's experience is a sensory overload! He saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above the Lord. They had six wings. With two they covered their face, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. They called out in a very loud voice, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full



## Prayer is Experiencing the Presence of God!

Sometimes we grope for a sense of the presence of the Lord. At times, God seems so far away. Even David, the man after God's own heart cried out, "How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?" Psalm 13:1

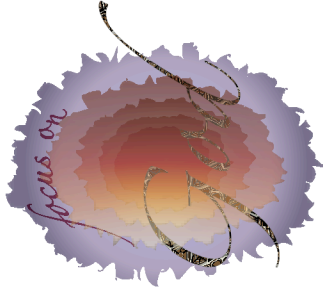
But perhaps we're only focused on our physical circumstances. God wants us to know and experience the unseen reality of life just as well as we know and experience the physical (seen) reality. We may pray, "Lord, come! Lord, make your presence real!" Perhaps we should pray, "Lord, I don't *feel* your presence! But I *know* You promised You would be here." Where is God? Is He not with us, just like He promised? Jesus said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." Hebrews 13:5 "I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:20 Perhaps we simply need to acknowledge and declare our belief in the very real unseen presence of God. Proactively, deliberately, in faith engage in the very real presence of God.

C. S. Lewis said, "The presence of God is not the same as the *sense* of the presence of God. The latter may be due to imagination; the former may be attended with no 'sensible consolation.' It is the actual presence, not the *sensation* of the presence, of the Holy Ghost which begets Christ in us. The *sense* of the presence is a super-added gift for which we give thanks when it comes."

So, we may or may not "sense" God's presence. But even if we do not sense God, we can acknowledge His presence by faith. We can engage with His presence deliberately and expectantly as we "set our minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth." Colossians 3:2 Just as Jesus said to Thomas, "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed." John 20:29

When we pray, are we not engaging with the actual presence of the God Who reveals Himself in Scripture? We have the privilege of rising above our earthly perspective to experience entering into the presence of the Most High God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Creator of the universe, the Shepherd of our souls!

Isaiah had a profound experience of entering the presence of God! In Isaiah 6, God reveals Himself in a vision. Isaiah's experience is a sensory overload! He saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above the Lord. They had six wings. With two they covered their face, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. They called out in a very loud voice, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth



of His glory." The foundations shook from the sheer volume of the voices of these angels! And now the temple was filling with smoke. Somehow, Isaiah was in the midst of this spectacle. He cried out, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! I am undone! I am toast! Because I am a man of unclean lips and I live among people of unclean lips, and I have seen God! I've seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" Then one of the seraphim flew straight at Isaiah with a burning coal taken from the fire in front of God. Isaiah probably thought (if he could even think), "I'm about to be vaporized with that coal! I'm history! I'm not getting out of here alive!" The seraphim touched Isaiah's mouth with the coal and flew away. He said, "Your sin is taken away and forgiven because I touched your lips with this coal!" Now Isaiah is burned, but glad to be alive! Now God speaks! The voice of the Lord said, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? We have a message to send to this people." The Trinity has a conversation among themselves. Isaiah, cleansed, sang with a coal, alone in the presence of God, responds, "Here am I. Send me!" Essentially Isaiah was saying, "Lord, I'll be glad to take Your message, if You'll trust me with it!"

Being in the presence of God should have a profound effect upon us! As we acknowledge that we are in the very presence of the unseen God, we need to adjust ourselves to Him. We need to see Him for who He is. We need to be in awe of God just as Isaiah was in awe. We need to have our sins thoroughly dealt with, cleansed and forgiven. We need to hear God speak. We need to partner with God as He entrusts His words to us.

Consider these thoughts concerning the unseen reality, that you are in fact, in the presence of God. So many verses support this truth. Psalm 139 :7 expresses, "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?" The answer is, if I go to heaven, He's there, if I go Sheol, He's there, if I could fly away, He's there. He's there leading me, laying hold of me to protect me. Even the darkness cannot hide Him. Romans 8:35 paints the picture that absolutely nothing, nothing in heaven or nothing on earth or nothing in hell itself can separate me from the love of God! I can't even mess up badly enough to separate myself from the love of the Lord.

As you soak in this truth, begin to explore the environment that is the spiritual, unseen reality of engaging with the presence of God. As you connect in truly knowing God, gazing through the portal of Scripture, allow your prayers to take on new form and meaning. Your prayers can simply be a response to God's revelation of Himself in Scripture. In essence, you will be conversing with the Lord, dialoguing as you hear Him speak from Scripture. By His grace, the relational dimension that we talk so much about will increasingly become your reality! Ephesians 2:6 says, "God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus." Seated - past tense - done deal! So, seated in His presence, simply turn to the Lord and have a conversation!

is full of His glory." The foundations shook from the sheer volume of the voices of these angels! And now the temple was filling with smoke. Somehow, Isaiah was in the midst of this spectacle. He cried out, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! I am undone! I am toast! Because I am a man of unclean lips and I live among people of unclean lips, and I have seen God! I've seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" Then one of the seraphim flew straight at Isaiah with a burning coal taken from the fire in front of God. Isaiah probably thought (if he could even think), "I'm about to be vaporized with that coal! I'm history! I'm not getting out of here alive!" The seraphim touched Isaiah's mouth with the coal and flew away. He said, "Your sin is taken away and forgiven because I touched your lips with this coal!" Now Isaiah is burned, but glad to be alive! Now God speaks! The voice of the Lord said, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? We have a message to send to this people." The Trinity has a conversation among themselves. Isaiah, cleansed, sang with a coal, alone in the presence of God, responds, "Here am I. Send me!" Essentially Isaiah was saying, "Lord, I'll be glad to take Your message, if You'll trust me with it!"

Being in the presence of God should have a profound effect upon us! As we acknowledge that we are in the very presence of the unseen God, we need to adjust ourselves to Him. We need to see Him for who He is. We need to be in awe of God just as Isaiah was in awe. We need to have our sins thoroughly dealt with, cleansed and forgiven. We need to hear God speak. We need to partner with God as He entrusts His words to us.

Consider these thoughts concerning the unseen reality, that you are in fact, in the presence of God. So many verses support this truth. Psalm 139 :7 expresses, "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?" The answer is, if I go to heaven, He's there, if I go Sheol, He's there, if I could fly away, He's there. He's there leading me, laying hold of me to protect me. Even the darkness cannot hide Him. Romans 8:35 paints the picture that absolutely nothing, nothing in heaven or nothing on earth or nothing in hell itself can separate me from the love of God! I can't even mess up badly enough to separate myself from the love of the Lord.

As you soak in this truth, begin to explore the environment that is the spiritual, unseen reality of engaging with the presence of God. As you connect in truly knowing God, gazing through the portal of Scripture, allow your prayers to take on new form and meaning. Your prayers can simply be a response to God's revelation of Himself in Scripture. In essence, you will be conversing with the Lord, dialoguing as you hear Him speak from Scripture. By His grace, the relational dimension that we talk so much about will increasingly become your reality! Ephesians 2:6 says, "God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus." Seated - past tense - done deal! So, seated in His presence, simply turn to the Lord and have a conversation!