

Practicing His Presence



You are the Temple of the Lord

Temples signify sacredness. Temples prove the recognition in man's heart and actions, to create a holy space for worship. God made it clear that He will not just dwell in any temple made by man's hands. He has created all things, and yet He **chooses mankind** to be His temple, his resting place. When He asked, "Where is the house you will build for me?" He was asking who would **honor** Him by creating space for Him. Who will give their bodies back to Him, that He may dwell inside of them?

Your body is not just a physical structure made for it's own needs and pleasures. Your body was created to be a holy dwelling place, a resting place and the sacred temple of fellowship with Almighty God.

Scriptures: Acts 7:51, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 2 Corinthians 6:16-17

- *How serious is God in regards to your temple? Have you built a place - in your heart, mind and body, for God to dwell? How do you make room for Him? Do you believe you are the resting place for God? Discuss ways you will honor Him with your temple.*
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Relationship over Religion

Practice: "The actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method, as opposed to theories relating to it. The customary, habitual, or expected procedure or way of doing of something. To perform (an activity) or exercise (a skill) repeatedly or regularly in order to improve or maintain one's proficiency."

'Relationship' replaces 'religion' in Christianity. With that, we still hold fast to the doctrine of the Word, and follow the New Covenant customs, commands and way of living in Christ. The **motive** in which we live and practice these makes the difference.

'Practicing His presence' as we are referring, includes regular, set-apart time with the Lord. **Time spent with Him IS worship.** And He is so worthy! These times include worship, prayer, listening, waiting, learning and meditating on His Word. As we wait upon and become more acquainted with His presence, we grow in Him. As we **behold** Him, we become like Him. This is why we NEVER rush the presence of God. He is the leader, we are His followers. We yield to, flow, and move IN HIM.

Scriptures: Exodus 33:10-14, Psalm 1:1-2, John 15:3-8, Ephesians 5:18-21

- *Are you satisfied with the personal time you spend with the Lord? After you pray, do you take time to listen to His voice? Do you feel that you are acquainted with His voice and His leading? How has your personal time with God shaped your life? How has it helped you to flow at church with the Body of believers?*
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Drawing Near

While the Lord is omnipresent in nature, He still calls us to turn our affection to Him in heart, mind and action. The Lord will never turn us away. He does not hide himself from us. His arms are open wide at all times and in all places, to anyone who comes to Him in faith. There is something very special that happens when we turn from distractions, focus on him, and specifically acknowledge Him. He walks into the room, and into our circumstance in His mighty glory. He rides on the clouds to meet us with His manifest presence.

Time and time through the Word, He beckons souls to **DRAW NEAR** to Him. And the promise that follows, is that He will also draw near to us.

Scriptures: Psalm 27:4-8, Jeremiah 33:3, Matthew 11:28-30, Matthew 23:37, Hebrews 10:19-22, James 4:8

- *How do you press in when you may not feel like it? Do you 'take it to the bank' that He will show up as He promises, every time you draw near to Him?*
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Flowing in the Gifts of the Spirit

As we meet with God and are overcome by His presence, gifts of the Spirit will begin to flow. They bubble up out of our inner most being! The Lord loves to flow with His people. He is pleased to distribute gifts of the Spirit for the edifying of the saints, and for the salvation of souls!

When a church is pressing in to the Lord, there will be manifestations of His gifts. Being close to the Lord in your personal life gives you more accuracy in this atmosphere.

It can take time to grow in this area, but the more you yield, the more you grow! As you learn His presence more, you sense when there is a word, a song, or a special gift flowing from Heaven. At any church you are at, be respectful of the leadership and how the service is being conducted. If it's not the time to deliver a word, write it down, and/or keep it in your heart for the right time!

At the River, we have prayer before church on Sundays, and prayer on Tuesday mornings as a great time to become more acquainted with the flow and gifts of the Spirit. If you are hungry to be used of God in the gifts, you will grow, and you will love flowing with Him in this way!

Scriptures: John 7:37-39, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, Romans 12:4-8

- *Are you willing to let the Spirit of God speak and flow through you? Share a time you've been enabled to operate in a gift/gifts of the Spirit.*
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