

# The Power of Practicing God's Presence

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## **Scripture:**

So now Israel, what do you think GOD expects from you? Just this: Live in his presence in holy reverence, follow the road he sets out for you, love him, serve GOD, your God, with everything you have in you...

Deuteronomy 10:12 (MSG)

No doubt about it! God is good—good to good people, good to the good-hearted. But I nearly missed it, missed seeing his goodness. I was looking the other way, looking up to the people... Until I entered the sanctuary of God. Then I saw the whole picture... I'm still in your presence, but you've taken my hand. You wisely and tenderly lead me, and then you bless me. You're all I want in heaven! You're all I want on earth... I'm in the very presence of GOD—oh, how refreshing it is! I've made Lord GOD my home. GOD, I'm telling the world what you do!

Psalms 73:1-3, 17, 23-25, 28 (MSG)

## **Brother Lawrence (1614-1691)**

Brother Lawrence, born Nicholas Herman, a lowly and unlearned man, who, after having been a footman and soldier, was admitted as a lay brother among the barefooted Carmelites at Paris in 1666, and was afterwards known as "Brother Lawrence."

## A Prayer of Brother Lawrence:

Lord of all pots and pans and things... Make me a saint by getting meals, And washing up the plates!

### *Voices from the Past:*

"...we need only to recognize GOD intimately present with us, to address ourselves to Him every moment, that we may beg His assistance for knowing His will in things doubtful, and for rightly performing those which we plainly see He requires of us, offering them to Him before we do them, and giving Him thanks when we have done."

—Brother Lawrence

### *Scripture:*

Moses, man of God, blessed the People of Israel with this blessing before his death. He said, GOD came down from Sinai, he dawned from Seir upon them; He radiated light from Mount Paran, coming with ten thousand holy angels and tongues of fire streaming from his right hand. Oh, how you love the people, all his holy ones are palmed in your left hand... Benjamin: "GOD's beloved; GOD's permanent residence. Encircled by GOD all day long, within whom GOD is at home."

Deuteronomy 33:1-3, 12 (MSG)

### *Voices from the Past:*

"There is not in the world a kind of life more sweet and delightful than that of continual conversation with God. Those only can comprehend it who practice and experience it."

—Brother Lawrence

## Seven Keys for Practicing the Presence of God

### “Practice” Defined:

- A. To do or perform habitually or customarily; to make a habit of.
- B. To do or perform (something) repeatedly in order to acquire or polish a skill.

### “Presence” Defined:

- A. The state or fact of being present; something or someone in immediate proximity in time or space.
- B. A supernatural influence felt to be nearby.

“Presence” Key Number One: \_\_\_\_\_

### Scripture:

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.

Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV)

### Voices from the Past:

“In order to know God, we must often think of Him; and when we come to love Him, we shall then also think of Him often, for our heart will be with our treasure.”

—Brother Lawrence

### Application Number One:

To practice God’s presence is to cultivate a continual, \_\_\_\_\_ and focused \_\_\_\_\_ of the nature and character of God!

### Voices from the Past:

“A little lifting up of the heart suffices; a little remembrance of God, an interior act of adoration... are prayers which, short though they may be, are

nevertheless very pleasing to God... Let him then think of God as much as possible so that he will gradually become accustomed to this little but holy exercise..."

—Brother Lawrence

**“Presence” Key Number Two:** \_\_\_\_\_

***Scripture:***

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

Psalm 91:1 (NKJV)

...I’m in the very presence of GOD—oh, how refreshing it is! I’ve made Lord GOD my home.

Psalm 73:28 (MSG)

***Voices from the Past:***

“I regard myself as the most wretched of all men, stinking and covered with sores... But this King, filled with goodness and mercy, far from chastising me, lovingly embraces me, makes me eat at His table, serves me with His own hands, gives me the keys of His treasures and treats me as His favorite. He talks with me and is delighted with me in a thousand and one ways..."

—Brother Lawrence

**Application Number Two:**

To practice God’s presence is to cultivate a continual, conscious, mental \_\_\_\_\_ of inhabiting God’s secret \_\_\_\_\_ of His ever-present glory.

***Voices from the Past:***

“We need neither art nor science for going to GOD, but only a heart resolutely determined to apply itself to

nothing but Him, or for His sake, and to love Him only.”

—Brother Lawrence

**“Presence” Key Number Three:** \_\_\_\_\_

***Scripture:***

[God] gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:29-31 (NKJV)

***Voices from the Past:***

“Do not be discouraged by the resistance you will encounter from your human nature; you must go against your human inclinations. Often, in the beginning, you will think that you are wasting time, but you must go on, be determined and persevere...”

—Brother Lawrence

**Application Number Three:**

To practice God’s presence is to cultivate a willingness to schedule \_\_\_\_\_ seasons of spending \_\_\_\_\_ time just to wait alone with and upon the Lord!

***Voices from the Past:***

“One way to recollect the mind easily in the time of prayer, and preserve it more in tranquility, is not to let it wander too far at other times. You should keep it strictly in the presence of God; and being accustomed to think of Him often, you will find it easy to keep your mind

calm in the time of prayer, or at least to recall it from its wanderings.”

—Brother Lawrence

**“Presence” Key Number Four:** \_\_\_\_\_

***Scripture:***

“Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can’t bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can’t bear fruit unless you are joined with me. I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you’re joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can’t produce a thing.”

John 15:4-5 (MSG)

**Application Number Four:**

To practice God’s presence is to cultivate a moment-by-moment sense of \_\_\_\_\_ with and \_\_\_\_\_ alongside the Lord Himself as we go about our daily tasks.

***Voices from the Past:***

“The time of business does not differ with me from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were on my knees.”

—Brother Lawrence

**“Presence” Key Number Five:** \_\_\_\_\_

***Scripture:***

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come

to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG)

***Voices from the Past:***

“I wish you could convince yourself that GOD is often (in some sense) nearer to us, and more effectually present with us, in sickness than in health.”

—Brother Lawrence

**Application Number Five:**

To practice God's presence is to cultivate a continual recognition that Jesus Christ is our \_\_\_\_\_ companion in carrying our many \_\_\_\_\_ burdens and concerns.

***Voices from the Past:***

“I cannot imagine how religious persons can live satisfied without the practice of the presence of GOD. For my part I keep myself retired with Him in the depth of centre of my soul as much as I can; and while I am so with Him I fear nothing...”

—Brother Lawrence

**“Presence” Key Number Six:** \_\_\_\_\_

***Voices from the Past:***

“I drove away from my mind everything capable of spoiling the sense of the presence of God... I just make it my business to persevere in His holy presence... My

soul has had an habitual, silent, secret conversation with God.”

—Brother Lawrence

**Scripture:**

With many stories like these, [Jesus] presented his message to them, fitting the stories to their experience and maturity. He was never without a story when he spoke. When he was alone with his disciples, he went over everything, sorting out the tangles, untying the knots.

Mark 4:33-34 (MSG)

**Application Number Six:**

To practice God’s presence is to cultivate a habit of spending intimate seasons \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with God both within and beyond the secret place of prayer.

**Voices from the Past:**

“That we should establish ourselves in a sense of GOD’s Presence, by continually conversing with Him. That it is a shameful thing to quit this conversation, to think of trifles and fooleries... That we need only to recognize God intimately present with us, to address ourselves to Him every moment...”

—Brother Lawrence

**“Presence” Key Number Seven:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Voices from the Past:**

“Our Lord does not ask much of us, merely a thought of Him from time to time, a little act of adoration... to thank Him for the graces, past and present, that He has

bestowed on you... Lift up your heart to Him during your meals and in company; the least little remembrance will always be the most pleasing to Him.”

—Brother Lawrence

**Scripture:**

One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek:  
That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of  
my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire  
in His temple.

Psalm 27:4 (NKJV)

**Voices from the Past:**

“How happy we would be if we could find the treasure  
of which the Gospel speaks; all else would be as nothing.  
As it is boundless, the more you search for it the greater  
the riches you will find; let us search unceasingly and let  
us not stop until we have found it.”

—Brother Lawrence

**Scripture:**

Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who  
blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It  
means we’d better get on with it. Strip down, start  
running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no  
parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began  
and finished this race we’re in.

Hebrews 12:1-2 (MSG)

**Application Number Seven:**

To practice God’s presence is to cultivate a continual  
mental state of \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of  
the Lord in all we think and do throughout our daily  
activities.

