

PRACTICE AND PROJECT THE LORD'S PRESENCE

David expresses his one desire in Psalms 27:4. *One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall 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 meditate in His temple.*

There's a great deal we need to understand about the presence of the Lord. How do we know that God is present? If you say, "I feel their presence," this may be inadequate because feelings can be deceptive. Some people may not yet don't feel a thing. Then how do we know that the Lord is here? "We know because the Word says so." Then how can you know it experimentally? There's a difference between what the Scriptures say exists and what we actually experience. We have to appropriate, practice, and develop an awareness of the Lord.

We want Him to be real to us, but that doesn't just happen. We make it happen! We have faith for it. We have to practice the presence of the Lord. We have to Take down the walls and veils to our understanding. The Scripture says, "Draw nigh to the Lord, and He draws nigh to you" (James 4:8). We come close to the Lord by opening the door. *If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.* Revelation 3:20. we're not going to have that spiritual glow or sense the presence of the Lord automatically. It comes because we practice it; we appropriate it.

The practicing of His presence is one thing, but bringing His presence into manifestation for others is another. The Old Testament tells how the Israelites carried the ark of the covenant with the staves placed through the little loops on the side. They believed God was with them because the glow and the glory of God were there. The ark

became a real symbol to them because God said that He would manifest His presence there.

When the people wanted God in the situation they carried Him into it. They moved God right into the tabernacle. His presence was there. They built the tabernacle, but the tabernacle was nothing without the presence of the Lord in it.

After the temple was built Solomon brought in the ark. The priests drew out the staves and discarded them, indicating that the ark was to remain in the temple. No one could move God out of the situation.

When we practice the presence of the Lord we take His presence as it is real to us and bring it into manifestation. When we bless someone we believe to manifest the Lord's presence to that person in the blessing, and the Lord becomes real to them.

If we just worship along with nothing happening, it's because our faith is not working. Worship is an act of faith. God is present, so we tune in to Him.

An understanding of that little phrase "tune in" is very important. Although we can't find it in the Bible or any concordance, it should be there. If we knew how, we could tune in to the many different sounds that are going on around us. The Word of God says "There are so many different voices and none of them without signification" (I Corinthians 14:10). What we really need is that sure word which comes from the Lord—that particular manifestation which is the Lord.

We have to tune out a lot of things when we tune in to the presence of the Lord. When we walk with God we transfer the concentration of our conscious mind to what we want to be real to us.

We can choose what we want to tune in to—it may be another person, some particular situation, or the Lord. But the Lord will become real to us only when we bring His presence into every situation.

When the Israelites were going out to war they took the Ark of the Covenant with them. God said, “The battle is not yours, but the Lord’s” (II Chronicles 20:15), and so they carried the Lord right into the middle of the battle. If it’s the Lord’s battle He should be there to do some fighting.

Once David and his men were down in a little ravine and the Philistines were walking beside it. The Lord said, “Don’t make a move until you hear the sound in the tops of the mulberry trees” (II Samuel 5:24). We’re not to make a move until we know the Lord is in front of us and then we follow Him. The Lord must be brought into the situation. We don’t just practice His presence for our own comfort, but so that His will can be done in every situation.