



WEEK THREE: HOW TO ENJOY HIS PRESENCE

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Much has been written throughout the history of the Church about meditating on the Lord and “practicing His presence.” More than a just habit or discipline, a *relationship* is the basis for this communion and fellowship. Jesus intended our relationship with Him to be close, like dear friends rather than master and servant. And good friends communicate often and deeply—they enjoy it! The direction, grace and confidence we receive in the presence of God will empower our spiritual lives and help us develop maturity for living according to His will and purpose. But let’s learn to do more than “practice” and begin to really enjoy His presence throughout our days and lives.

Where Am I Today?

- 1) How many minutes per day do I think about God, hear from Him, pray to Him, or just think about His Word? How often do I sense His presence or direction? Do I tend to spend this amount of time all at once or throughout the day and night?

Into the Bible

- 2) Let’s look at some reasons for “abiding” or spending time with God, found in the scriptures below. List some results or benefits.
 - a. **1 Corinthians 1:9**
 - b. **Psalm 119:9**

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c. **Psalm 37:4 & 16:11**

d. **2 Peter 1:3-4**

e. **Acts 4:13**

3) **Read Psalm 1:2-3** in several different translations. There are two verbs in verse two. And these actions lead to some outcomes in verse three. Jot down some things you notice about this passage.

4) **Read 2 Corinthians 10:5.** This verse has two main thoughts, divided by a comma. We are to be careful about information from outside (others) and thoughts from inside (self). Which do you struggle with more? What separates you from experiencing constant awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit? What types of thoughts do you personally need to be more intentional about controlling?

How Does This Apply?

- 5) Since God created us and loved us enough to sacrifice His only Son in order to have a relationship with us, should this relationship not come naturally to us? Matthew 26:41b (NIV) says, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." That's why we must be intentional—even if it seems artificial or forced at the onset—about turning our thoughts and hearts towards Jesus. After hearing the teaching about "abiding" in Him (John 15:3-11) this weekend, what are some practical ways you have thought of to do just that? How are they working for you? Share what you can with your group.
- 6) Here are some verses that explain what our attitudes should be as we start out, seeking to remain in conversation and communion with God and enjoy the presence of Jesus all day.
- a. **Psalm 46:10**
 - b. **Psalm 119:18**
 - c. **Matthew 6:33**
 - d. **Psalm 42:1**
 - e. **Galatians 6:9**

Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

- 7) We covered meditation last week. But here is a practical reminder for this week. Pick out a verse that you like. Write it down write here:

Now, meditate on it over the next few days in the following ways. Do as many of the exercises below as you can possibly apply to this one verse. Take notes here to share with your group.

1. **Picture it** – Visualize the scene in your mind. Or, draw a simple picture.
2. **Pronounce it** – Say the verse aloud, each time emphasizing a different word.
3. **Paraphrase it** – Rewrite the verse in your own words.
4. **Personalize it** – Replace the pronouns or names with your own name.
5. **Pray it** – Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.
6. **Probe it** – Ask the following questions: In my life, does this verse reveal any...
 - Sin that I need to confess?
 - Promise of God that I need to trust?
 - Attitude that I need to know and change?.
 - Commandment that I need to keep?
 - Example that I need to follow?
 - Prayer that I should be praying for myself or for others?
 - Error that I need to avoid?
 - Spiritual truth I need to know and believe?.
 - Something to thank God for?