

# Word & Spirit Conference, Session 4

by David Ravenhill

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*David Ravenhill emphasizes the importance of embracing both the Word and the Spirit, seeking the presence of God, and avoiding a watered-down approach.*

**Duration:** 1:02:10

**Scripture:** Exodus 33:15, Job 26:14, Psalm 27:4, Psalm 42:1-2, Jeremiah 9:24, Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 1:20, Philippians 3:10, Colossians 2:3, Revelation 3:20

**Topics:** "Christian Life", "The Presence of God", "Holistic Faith"

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## Description

David Ravenhill emphasizes the necessity of embracing both the Word of God and the Spirit of God in our lives, advocating for a balance that avoids the pitfalls of focusing solely on one aspect. He illustrates the importance of seeking God's presence above all else, using the example of Moses who prioritized God's presence over the promised land. Ravenhill warns against the dangers of fragmenting God's truth into parts, urging believers to pursue a holistic understanding centered on Christ. He encourages a deep longing for God's presence, akin to David's desire, and highlights that true fulfillment comes from knowing God intimately rather than merely seeking His blessings.

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## Transcript

And just really enlighten our eyes to what the Word of God says So we're very very grateful for having him here If you don't know this is a word and the Spirit conference And we want to fully embrace both the Word of God and the Spirit of God in our approach That is our ministry approach is fully embracing both We don't want to water down either one We want the fullness of both the best of both worlds the best of the Word the best of the Spirit So David if you want to come forward We all give David a hand Let's pray for him once again and blessing Father I just thank you in the name of Jesus Christ once again for David And I thank you Lord for the gift that you've given him of insight into your word I thank you Lord for his ability turn to turn the logos into the Rhema and father I thank you that many people will hear your Rhema word today Via this vessel Lord who's offered himself for your service So I ask that you just impart yourself to him today in Jesus's name Amen Aren't you glad that's a Mount Zion towers above Mount Diablo Man I Heard of a businessman that went into another businessman's office both of them were Christians and on the desk of the Man who owned the office was a little plaque that said keep looking down And the other brother said to him brother. That's wrong. It's keep looking up He said no brother.

Let's keep looking down. I said no brother. Let's keep looking up Said no brothers keep looking down.

It depends where you're seated The Bible says he's raised us up also with him in heavenly places and We look down and gives you a totally new perspective doesn't it I? Fly as many of you do and you look down on these vast mountains, but when you're up there 20,000 feet above them they look pretty small. You know Mount Diablo is nothing from God's point of view and We need to just look down on it rather than stare up at it as though. It's some great unsurmountable Mountain that we can't Take Bible says he sits above the vault of the earth reduces rulers to nothing Amen Well, I trust that you had a good rest This is my ninth meeting this week.

I think 8th and 9th and so you get a little Weary some of you may be a little tired this morning, but let's believe that God will refresh us I saw a bumper sticker once. I think it was in Dallas and It said sometimes I wake up grumpy And other mornings I let him sleep in So if grumpy is sleeping this morning, just let him sleep, and I trust the rest of you are awake and Amen, I want to speak to you this morning on the presence of God that couldn't have been a more fitting time of worship and introduction as we Just saying about the presence of God And I know that your desire is To know him more and certainly my desire is to know him more and to know his presence I was talking to a prophetic brother some of you know him Jim Gull Just a number of weeks ago. He came down to Pensacola and He said David.

He said I really believe the next move of God is going to be what I call presence evangelism He said where there will be no sort of striving God will just sort of come and the mountains will melt in his presence and we'll see healings and so on just because of the Awesome presence of God and I believe that I believe that day is coming And that doesn't mean that we shouldn't study the word and pray and so on and so forth but there's so much striving so much effort today to try and get the results that we get and yet when the presence of God comes the mountains melt and We need to believe for that my wife and I had the privilege of raising our family in New Zealand in the city of Christchurch city of about 300,000 people It's the largest city down in the South Island of that very beautiful country and the city is built around an old Cathedral called the Canterbury Cathedral it's an Anglican Cathedral and about two or three blocks away. Just a short walking distance away There is a museum called the Canterbury Museum It's an old building goes down back to the turn of the century and over the main entrance as you go into that Museum there is a verse of scripture engraved or inscribed in the relief work And it says this it's taken from the book of Job chapter 26 and verse 14 and it says lo these are a part of his Ways, but how little a portion do we hear of him? Lo these are a part of his ways But how little a portion do we hear of him? I've spent hours in that museum With the kids when they were younger going down the various corridors looking at all the display cabinets looking at all of the handiwork of God looking at all the multiple variety of birds and bugs and butterflies and Every conceivable thing that God has created and pulling out draw after draw after draw showing kids ostrich eggs all the way down to hummingbird eggs and all the various you know hues and colors all the mammals and fish and animals and so on all in these display cabinets and Just marveled again at the the handiwork of God and yet in the hours that I've spent in that museum I've never once heard anybody Say isn't God wonderful look at all that God created I've never heard any child sort of you know say daddy. Come here.

Come here. Look at this isn't God wonderful and So that verse is a very fitting verse lo these are a part of his ways But how little a portion do we hear of him and while it fits over the entrance of a museum? It's a tragic verse to put over the house of God And yet the tragedy is that it could go over most congregations every Sunday morning every week It could be the thing that marks them if you like lo these are a part of his ways But how little a portion do we hear of him? I read a book a number of years ago by dr Martin Lloyd-jones famous British writer and author and it was a book on the Sermon on the Mount and In the

preface of that book He makes a statement and I've told people around the world that this statement is worth one semester in any Bible school You can name or any seminary that you can name for that matter And the versity of the quote that he says in there is this there is nothing so likely to lead to error or to heresy As to begin with the parts rather than the whole Let me say it again. There is nothing so likely to lead to error or to heresy as to begin with the parts rather than the whole In the years that I lived overseas 17 years I Came back to this country periodically to do a little bit of ministry visit my parents And almost every time I will come back there was a new emphasis Come back one year.

Everybody's talking about discipleship. Come back another year. Everybody's talking about faith.

Come back another year Everybody's talking about prosperity come back another year. Everybody's talking about prayer come back another year Everybody's talking about the family come back another year Everybody's talking about covenant and there's conferences all over the nation speaking about, you know, covenant conferences prosperity conferences faith conferences and so on and Again, while there's nothing wrong with any of those things They ultimately lead to error and heresy unless we have the the central focus of the Word of God, which is the Lord Jesus Christ the Bible says in him are all the Promises say yea and amen in Christ and we are complete in him Paul says I did not fail to declare unto you the whole counsel of God not just parts I was in India, I guess in about 1987 I think it was ministering in a Bible school there for a week and I noticed that the students when there was a little bit of a recess they'd be out in the sort of a compound of where that Bible school was And there was a Jeep there a brand new Jeep and I saw them sort of eyeing it and looking at it And I assumed that they knew Just a little bit about automotive engineering not too much because they were poor. Most of them didn't even have a bicycle And I was wanting to try and get across the truth of that statement of Martin Lord Jones that there's nothing Again, so likely to lead to error or heresy as to begin with the parts rather than the whole and I said to those students I said suppose I came to the school as a guest lecturer and for six solid months hour after hour day after day week after week month after month I speak about the carburetor and I talked about the importance of the carburetor.

I'm talking now about car engines and I Have an overhead projector and I put a diagram of the carburetor. I talk about the history of the carburetor I talk about all the different types of carburetors single barrel, two barrel, four barrel, six barrel If you're into drag racing, I talk about what that carburetor does the function of that carburetor I give a cross-section of that carburetor to talk about the floats and the jets and the air cleaner and all the other components that make Up that that carburetor. I talk about the evolution of the carburetor that now we have done away with carburetors We now have fuel injection and so on and so hour after hour after hour.

They are steeped in carburetor theology at the end of that period of time they fan out all over India and they establish carburetor churches and their congregations have a Incredible knowledge of carburetor theology because again the pastor has been steeped in it That's the truth that he has embraced and he knows everything about it He's excited about it And so he in turn repeats it week after week after week after week to that particular Congregation and they are convinced that when you lift up the hood of a car, there is one huge Carburetor that drives that car because that's all they've ever heard of when it comes to the you know, the theology of the the car Well another lecturer comes to town and he has another revelation He's never heard of the carburetor But he's heard about the distributor because he sat under a distributor teacher and he's full of distributor theology And he knows exactly what that distributor does and he begins to explain to those students again Like the previous lecture of the importance of the distributor that distributors got, you know Points in it and a condenser in it and so on and what this distributor does it

sends a spark down the wire You know that ultimately ignites the fuel and if that gap is not set just right the car will not start and he begins to Tell those students again that this is the most important part of a car engine is the distributor Again six months later. You have a graduating class they span out fan out all over India and you have now distributor churches and Distributor churches are in competition with carburetor churches because first of all The carburetor church has never heard of the distributor theology and the distributor People have never heard of carburetor theology And so they're at war one with another and they have their conferences and they're coming here the latest distributor theology And then across town you have come and hear the latest carburetor theology and then somebody else comes to town Again, and he lectures those students and he takes out of his pocket a little thing about the three four inches long It's white at the top and black at the bottom and he says without this it's impossible to start the car and He talks about the spark plug and he says, you know, there are some people I hear that Lecturing around this nation. They're talking about distributor theology.

I've even heard of others They're talking about carburetor theology but the latest thing that God is saying to the church is this and without this it's impossible to please God and He says I want to tell you how important this is. You can have a three thousand or a three hundred thousand I should say Ferrari Dollar Ferrari in a brand new car. There it is.

It's immaculate. There's not a single thing wrong with it But I say he says if you lift up the hood of that car and you remove just one of these little things out of One of these spark plugs that whole car will grind to a halt it won't function and so on Therefore this is the most important thing in a car engine and again week after week month after month They get spark plug theology We now have spark plug churches all over the nation The spark plug is the latest thing that God is saying to the church and so on you see now what? Martin Lloyd-jones is saying is there is nothing so likely to lead to error or to heresy as to begin with the parts rather than the whole and we need to avoid if you like the focusing on just one aspect of The Word of God there is tremendous danger in that again Paul says I did not fail but to declare the whole counsel of God to you and the one thing that I have discovered as I've Read through the Word of God and read books over the years that I've been in ministry Is that there is one common denominator to every great man and woman of God and that is their insatiable hunger for the presence of God the bottom line of all the great men and women of God whether it's in the Word of God or whether it's Subsequent to the Word of God. They had an insatiable longing for the presence of God And Jeremiah says he said listen in all of your boasting don't boast about your riches don't boast about your might don't boast about Anything other than this let him that boasts boasts in this that he knows and he understands me says the Lord and Paul at the end of his life after achieving all the Paul achieved He still has that one deep longing that I may know him And the power of his resurrection the fellowship of his suffering Even though Paul has been caught up to the third heaven seen all sorts of things are unlawful for him to utter He's seen the dead raised.

He's seen churches established. You've seen demons cast out He's seen healings all of those things and yet he's still got this insatiable desire for God that I may know him Writing to the Colossians. He says that in all things He might have preeminence not just be present not just be prominent, but preeminent in all things And again, he says we are complete in him that in him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge He says are all found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and you see we can make God's out of faith We can make God's out of prosperity.

We can make God's out of any part if you like But all of those find their totality there the completeness in the person and the presence of God himself And so Paul says that it's God that I want to know it's his presence that I long for that I may know him you go into the Old Testament And you see in the life of David

again that he's reduced down all of his longings to one Single desire he says one thing of I desire to the Lord and that will I seek after that I may dwell in the house Lord all the days of my life simply to behold the beauty of the Lord Not you know, not three or four or five things But one thing of I desire to the Lord and that will I seek after he said there's only one thing that I pursue one thing That drives me he says and that is just to be in the presence of God Psalm 131 or two he says I'm not going to rest. I'm not going to sleep I'm not going to give slumber to my eyes until I find a resting place for the ark of good and David's longing when he ascended the throne of Israel He gathers together you recall all the leaders of Israel and he says let us bring back the ark of God For we did not seek it all the days of Saul. What a tragedy One generation Saul was a king for 40 years an entire generation in which David Summarizes that generation with that statement.

We did not seek him all the days of Saul and He says let's bring back the ark of God the ark of God. Obviously the presence of God and David says I'm not gonna rest I'm not gonna slumber. I'm not gonna lie down give rest to my eyelids until I restore the presence of God To its right place in the center of all of our activities The presence of God has got to be the the central focus and so David pursues that again this one thing of I desire Another place he says who have I in heaven, but thee and then he says and there's nothing on earth that I desire beside him What if we can honestly say that this morning, you know, it's one thing to say there's Nobody in heaven that I have but you That's relatively easy to get through that statement But then the latter part of the verse says and there is nothing on earth that I desire beside me nothing On earth that I desire beside it not that new car not that new house Not that new dress not that new piece of jewelry that new position Nothing on earth that I desire.

He said beside me Says a day in thy courts is better than a thousand outside David knew the presence of God long for the presence of God His greatest fear when he sinned was Lord take not your Holy Spirit from me But anything but that I can't afford to miss your presence another place He says it's a hard pants after the water brook. So pants with my soul after the Lord He's got that deep longing for the presence of God I was in a prophetic conference up in a place called Moses Lake a number of years ago in Washington and there was a brother there that Was expounding on that verse. I'd never heard it put this way before but he said the only reason that David is Expressing his longing after God as the heart panting after the water brooks He said is the fact that the heart is panting because it's being pursued he said normally the Deer would come down in the sort of the day break and make its way down into the water brook and drink its fill And then go maybe hide The rest of the day, but he said in this case David has watched these animals as he was a shepherd himself sitting out there with a flock night after night day after day and Watching the wildlife round about him and he would see again a deer just Running and and panting and he would know that behind that deer there was an adversary.

There was a somebody was out pursuing Seeking to bring down that deer and David likens his own life to that as he's being pursued by Saul And he's running here and he's running there He never knows when Saul is going to catch up with him when Saul is going to destroy him Saul has got his men out all over the nation and David is pursued and David knew something about the heart The heart knew something if he can find its way down into the water brook It can shake off the one that's pursuing him because it can lose its scent in the water and the one that is pursuing him Can no longer tracking can no longer find him and David says Lord. There's only one place of safety That's in your presence. If I can only find my way into the presence of God There is a place of protection not only a place of protection There's a place of provision where I can just drink in of your presence and I can find restoration.

I can find healing I can find satisfaction and so Lord as a heart pants of have the water broke Lord My soul longs after you and that deep deep cry that David had again just for the presence of God He'd found something about God's presence Again that satisfied him so much and he just wanted to behold the beauty of the Lord I remember Jack Hayford many years ago talking about the 24 elders there Around the throne there in Revelation and they were just bowing down incessantly And Jack Hayford said it wasn't a mechanical thing when they were crying out. Holy Holy holy says every time they would raise their eyes They would see another facet of the nature of God the manifold wisdom of God the the glory of God the majesty of God And it would cause them again to just bow down. Holy.

Holy. Holy they come up again they'd see again something that they'd never seen before the vastness of who God is and David understood something like that and he's got this deep longing again for God's presence I want you to turn with me this morning to the book of Exodus and I Want to look at a portion of Scripture here In Exodus chapter 32 And I'm sure you're familiar with the background to this Portion of Scripture Moses is up on the mountain God has been speaking to him giving him the plans of the tabernacle and in the meantime, the nation of Israel is down in the valley below there under the Watchful eyes supposedly of Aaron Moses brother and the people become restless They see that Moses is gone. He's been gone now for almost 40 days.

The weeks have gone by over a month has gone by There's no sign of their leader and in their restlessness. They decide that they want a God that's a little more tangible than this Invisible God and so they come to Aaron. They put the pressure on Aaron.

They said Aaron we want a God like the nations round about us and Aaron bows to the pressure He gathers together all the jewelry the gold Throws it into the fire and out pops the golden calf at least that was his explanation wasn't quite that simple but he fashioned a golden calf and around that golden calf there is a Just basically a sexual orgy that takes place. The people are out of control. They're unrestrained.

Their passions are unrestrained There's idolatry. There's immorality. There's everything else going on with this nation that has just been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb and God is angry very angry and God is about to destroy the nation and he says to Moses in verse 7 Go down at once for the people whom you brought from the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves They've quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them They've made for themselves a molten calf and have worshipped it and sacrificed to it and said this is your God Oh Israel Who brought you up out of the land of Egypt? And the Lord said to Moses I've seen this people and behold they're an obstinate people Now then let me alone that my anger may burn against them that I may destroy them and I will make of you a great nation God is angry and He expresses that anger to his servant Moses and he says Moses let me alone Don't intervene don't interfere.

I'm gonna wipe them out and I will make of you a great nation You know, that's the secret longing of every pastor He longs that God would come and take sides with him and say pastor I know what you're going through They are rebellious. I would agree. They are cantankerous.

I'll agree with you They are always murmuring. I agree with you. I'll tell you what pastor.

Let me just simply wipe them all out for you You know, you'll be totally free You know, it'll be a freak storm tornado or something. It'll be selective. It'll take care of every one of your congregation and I will make of you a great nation See God was in the cloning way back then I Want to be wonderful if everybody was like

us We all thought alike, you know We all had the same likes and dislikes and so on and so forth all on the same wavelength and you know Every marriage would be just bliss, you know, you'd get up at the same time go to bed at the same time you know snore at the same sink and You know love the same foods and like the same color schemes and you know You go shopping and we'd be a perfect agreement about everything.

I mean wonderful Think it was Ralph Mahoney that said years ago. He said to live Above with the Saints we love that will be glory to live below with the Saints. We know that's another story and Anyway, God comes to He comes to Moses and he says Moses let me begin all over again again, he's angry and Moses does what every good Shepherd does he loves his sheep? and he begins to intercede he begins to pray and He says in verse 13.

Remember Abraham and Isaac and Jacob or Israel Thy servants to whom thou didst swear by thyself and to say to them I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven All the land which I've spoken I'll give to your descendants and they shall inherit it forever You see in the middle of all that is going on Moses remembers something about God that God is a covenant-keeping God that when God makes a promise he is bound by that promise and In the midst of this pressure right now Moses reaches out to God. He says God Remember Abraham Remember Isaac. Remember Jacob you made an agreement a binding oath a covenant that you would give us our land What about it God basically and God sort of backs up he says Moses you've got me this time And it says the Lord changed his mind in verse 14 about the harm that he said he would do to his people and then you go into chapter 33 and It's a day or so later.

It seems to imply in Chapter 32 verse 30 it came about the next day but in verse 1 It says the Lord said to Moses depart from here You and the people who you've brought up from the land of Egypt to the land which I swore to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob Saying to your seed I will give it It's now God's turn to remind Moses that he is a covenant-keeping God and he says Moses. Listen to me I'm the God of Abraham. I'm the God of Isaac.

I'm the God of Jacob I made an agreement with you with your forefathers that I would give you the land And he says I Promised to give it to you and your descendants verse 2 and I'll send an angel before you I'll drive out the Canaanite the Amorite the Hittite the Perizzite the Hivite the Jebusite verse 3 go up to a land flowing with milk and Honey, and so God commissions Moses said Moses now is the time I Want you to take the nation of Israel? into their Inheritance into the blessings that I have for them. And of course that land was described In those words, it's a land that flows with milk and honey. It wasn't literally that they were wading through milk and honey It was descriptive of the blessing of God the sweetness of the land He says you'll go into houses that you've never had to build cities You've never had to establish olive groves and vineyards that you've never had to plant Everything is going to be turned on laid out for you All you've got to do is go in and dispossess the nations and take possession of the land.

It's yours I've intended you to have it for hundreds of years I made an oath of binding agreement back to in the days of Abraham hundreds of years ago and the nation of Israel had Anticipated this day again 400 years of slavery in Egypt 400 years in which they were cruelly treated They knew what it was to be beaten. They knew what it was to be harassed. They were under the oppressive Nature of that that land with all of its witchcraft and everything else The Bible says when God spoke to Moses, he says I've seen your suffering.

I've seen your oppression I've seen your affliction. You can look up those words they all seem to have to do one with the physical one with the mental one with the emotional or spiritual and God says I've seen all that you've gone through and I come to bring deliverance and Here was this nation of slaves a nation of slavery and God says one day you're gonna have your own land a land of Freedom a land of blessing a land of prosperity a land where you'll no longer be under the taskmaster under the whip Having somebody to tell you what to do. You'll have your own home.

You'll have your own vineyard. You'll have your own Olive groves, you'll have water that will come down from heaven. You won't have to carry buckets of water and so on and Everything is going to be wonderful one day and he says to Moses Moses now is the time I want you to take the nation of Israel into their inheritance And Then he says in verse 3 PS I am NOT going with you Read it Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey for I will not go up in your midst Because you're an obstinate people Unless I destroy you along the way Now if you were Moses, what would you do? You've got quite a dilemma, don't you? You've got a million plus people That have anticipated the day when they would have their own home Have their own vineyard their own olive grove.

They've told their children about it. They've longed for it And you're their leader how do you handle that and So Moses now is faced. I think with one of the greatest choices he ever faced.

I may be wrong I know Hebrew says there came a day in the life of Moses when he Chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than all the treasures and pleasures of Egypt After all, he was the son of Pharaoh's daughter raised with every advantage no doubt being groomed to take over a position of leadership in that incredible nation and Yet the day came when he says I'm going to identify with the people of God with all the pain the suffering the affliction and everything Else it cost him everything And that was one decision here is another decision. What do I do? I've got two choices. I can take These people that long for freedom long for Liberty long for blessing long for prosperity long for all the material blessings.

I Can take them into the promised land Because it's the land that has been provided for us by God. It's part of our covenantal Blessing isn't this amazing? You can have all the covenantal blessings and still not have the presence of God You See sometimes I think in the old covenant there were some advantages to the new covenant I know that's not true theologically, but it seems when you read some of these things that You know, it wouldn't be too bad to be back in the old covenant Imagine that we're the nation of Israel this morning And there's a particular area here of Danville. In fact, all of Danville that I've seen looks pretty good to me But and God says listen, I want you to have Danville.

That's the land of Canaan and It's yours Long ago. I predestined it long ago. I planned it that this community would become the center of My people's inheritance and The time has come now.

I want you to go in and possess it. You say well look that's impossible I mean people own these houses God says don't worry about it All you've got to do is dispossess them. How do we do that? Look? Well, you just march into town and tell them And so you go, you know you walk down one of these beautiful streets and you see a beautiful home there with the one with a tennis court the Lexus and the swimming pool and You say to your wife like it, honey.

I Sort of like that one next door, you know it's got a Jaguar instead of a Lexus and they you know, it's Got a few horses in the backyard and after all swim pools are a nuisance to keep care of and I'd rather have horses Anyway, so you decide between you well, we'll have that you go up and knock on the door My

name is David my wife Nancy and just want you to know God said this is our house And they say forget it, yeah Say no, I'm serious. This is our house. We want you to get out Obviously, you know they get a little upset and you say angel Take care of them.

Would you see God said I'll send an angel He'll drive out from before you the Canaanite the Danite the Amorite the Hittite the parasite Jebusite and so if you have problems you just say angel Take care of it and all of a sudden they just you know Disappear in thin air and you walk in You don't have to go to the bank. Don't have to apply for the loan. Don't have to have a good credit It's yours lock stock and barrel, you know word of knowledge you get the combination of safe, you know You've got all the all the jewelry Keys to the car.

I mean, you know, really Houses lands vineyards olive groves cities that you've never built And You say well Sunday morning and you know, that's a little this is a trick question because this is very materialistic, you know and We don't want to be materialistic at least on Sunday morning But so you we've added a little dab of the Supernatural in there so that sort of at least bounces out now we've got angels on our side and Signs wonders and miracles going on because they're gonna do the impossible and we're gonna stand back and be amazed at what takes place So it's not quite that carnalism. So anyway, that's choice. Number one choice Number two is to stay where you are and let me describe the beauty of where you are.

It's a waste howling wilderness That's the way the Bible describes it a waste howling wilderness pure sand Everywhere you can see so like the Mojave Desert Nothing there whatsoever. Nothing will grow there's no Vegetation, there's no provision whatsoever. Unless it's supernatural It is not exactly the American dream The reason is called a howling wilderness is because again of the incredible winds that would be whipped up I was just a few weeks ago in the Canary Islands a little group of islands off the Northwest coast of Africa and they lie only 150 miles off the African coast and it's right opposite the Sahara and the guys were telling me there the Missionaries that I was with they said, you know There are times when the wind will blow so hard in the Sahara That it will come all the way out here 150 miles out in the ocean and the entire place is just covered with sand You know, you open your windows and there'll be sand everywhere.

You just have to dust everything I said you can hardly see it's it's just blinding with sand 150 miles away Imagine being in the middle of that a waste howling Wilderness a place of scorpions a place where the Bible says, you know, the Sun just beat down on mercifully Bible says the Sun will not smite thee by day or the moon by night The reason for that of course is the presence of God was it? The tabernacle the cloud that covered them by day and it protected them from the fierce elements again the Sun And the fire by night. I think it was John Paul that said he had a revelation Wasn't it there of the fire of God? It wasn't just a little cloud It went hundreds of feet up why because it was God's way of heating the camp. I mean really Saying where it were they were around the presence of God The Sun would not smite them by day nor the moon by night because it got extremely cold But you see there's nothing there whatsoever no material blessing whatsoever apart from the presence of God And so that's your choice Now, what would you choose? I Mean, you know, we've got to look at it in the light of what am I really aiming at all my life? I've you know put money aside.

I've got my little nest egg I've got some involvement in the stock market you know the American dream to have my own home my own vineyards my own olive groves or whatever the equivalent is and That's what we dream of that's the American dream, isn't it? Not exactly to have an acre of sand Where nothing will grow there's no vegetation. It's just a blinding heat of the Sun But Moses again does something here. He begins to pray And in verse 13 he says now therefore I pray thee if I found favor in thy sight Let me know

thy ways that I may know thee So that I may found favor in thy sight consider to that.

This nation is I people what a strange prayer considering the circumstances You see my prayer would have been something like this God Now that you've had time to settle down I know you're mad. In fact, I've never seen you so mad You were so angry yesterday. I could not believe it But now that you've had a good night's rest, let's at least reason together How about and I know you're still a little agitated, but how about once in a while at least showing up? How about coming once in a while and let's say on the Sabbath from 10 to 12 you know home group night and And Moses doesn't do that Moses says this in his prayer.

Let me know thy ways that I may know thee He's not talking about some sort of compromise. He's not talking about God change your mind and give us The vineyards and the olive groves and so on don't be so stubborn. He says God.

I want to know you Lord my desire more than anything else is to know you to understand you to know your ways. Let me know you and something happens where God is moved by the Desire of this great man of God for the presence of God And he says in verse 14 my presence will go with you and I will give you rest and Then Moses says if your presence does not go with us Do not lead us from here See Moses knew his priorities God I'd rather have your presence and nothing else who am I in heaven, but thee and there's nothing on earth that I desire beside me and If the choice is houses lands vineyards olive groves and all of that versus your presence I'll take your presence And if your presence doesn't go I'm not budging I don't care if they scream and holler and jump up and down stone me to death Which they no doubt would have I'm not going and Then he makes I think one of the most beautiful verse statements in the Word of God in verse 16. How can it be known that? I found favor in thy side I and thy people is it not by thy going with us So that we I and thy people may be distinguished from all the other people who are on the face of the earth Isn't that an incredible verse? God he says if you don't go with us We're no different than anybody else on the face of the earth See in the mind of Moses is thinking, you know All these nations have got their gods All these nations have got their equivalent of a tabernacle or a temple all these nations have got their holy books all these nations have got Their holy days all these nations have got their rules and their regulations All these nations have got their days of celebration and feasting and so on all these nations have got those things but the one thing they don't have they don't have your presence and God if you withhold your presence from us, we're no different Than anybody else We'll have our songs.

We'll have our buildings We'll have our dress code. We'll have our eatings eating Rules and so on so forth our laws precepts But Lord, it's just a form of godliness That denies the power there and if your presence doesn't go with us, we're no different Turn with me to Song of Solomon for a moment just as we close And you are familiar I'm sure with this wonderful little book That is a love story relationship of the bride and the groom And obviously a picture of The Church and the bridegroom And it begins in chapter 1 Verse 2 where they're expressing again their love for one another and the bride says the bridegroom kiss me with the kisses of your mouth For your love is better than wine In other words, she's found something about his embrace his presence that satisfies More than wine wine that which the world uses to drown its sorrows that which the world uses to get a little Temporary relief to add a little bit of joy to their busy nurse and their heaviness and so on wine that is used all over the nation today to somehow just get a little bit of a lift and Make them feel happy and she says listen There's something I found that's more exhilarating. It's more satisfying.

It's more wonderful. It's just to be in your embrace kiss me again Lord Just Hold me it's your presence that satisfies it exhilarates it It's exciting just to be in your presence your oils have got such a beautiful aroma

and a fragrance to them And then they begin this beautiful relationship as we see them skipping over the hills together You know visiting one another's homes going into the banqueting table Expressing his love his banner over me is love and they've already embraced embrace. They've kissed They've expressed again their love and then we get to chapter 5 and we have a sort of a little hiccup that happens here in verse 2 Says I was asleep.

The bride is speaking. I was asleep, but my heart was awake a voice My beloved was knocking open to me my sister my darling My dove my perfect one for my head is drenched with dew and my locks with the damper the night And so here he is. He's wanting to come in.

He's wanting to deepen this relationship He's wanting to spend time with her yesterday's Relationship is not sufficient. He's wanting a new relationship a vital relationship And so here he is he's knocking and he's calling he's wooing her open to me. My darling my dove my perfect one My head is drenched with the dew.

He's out there in the middle of the night He's been walking along the dew has been settling is running down his locks and he's wanting to come in and and she hears him knocking and Notice in verse 3 her response and I don't think it's an audible response. I think it's one of those internal responses It's like when your wife nudges you in the middle of the night. She wants to talk Anybody got a wife like that three o'clock in the morning wide awake wanting to talk about some deep thing and honey you awake Anyway, I've taken off my dress she says and again, I think it's an internal thing I've taken off my dress.

How can I put it on again? I've washed my feet. How can I do to them again? in other words I'm just comfortable where I am the way I am. I'm clean.

I know I'm clean. I've taken off the You know the old raiment I'm washed And if I get up it's gonna cost me something I'm gonna get out of bed I don't feel like getting out of bed. I'm gonna have to put on my dress again I'm gonna have to walk across the room.

I'm gonna have to open the door, which means that after you've gone I'm gonna have to you know, repeat the process and wash my feet again and then just go away And so she doesn't respond and he's standing there pleading and he Extends his hand in verse 4 through the openings and my feelings were aroused for him seemingly He's trying to get in through the latticework and open the door. He knows that she's in there And again, she doesn't respond and we don't know what sort of time period goes by here whether it's a matter of 30 seconds or a minute or 5 minutes 10 minutes that he's standing there knocking and Calling and beckoning and nothing's happening And eventually she becomes aroused and she becomes awakened to the fact that You know She really should get up and so she does And verse 5 I arose and I opened to my beloved my hands drip with my fingers with liquid myrrh on the handles of the bolt I opened to my beloved but my beloved had turned and gone What a sad sort of ending You see she's grieved him. She's hurt him.

He's been wounded How many of you know that the person that loves you the most is capable of hurting you the most isn't that right? Who cares what your neighbor thinks about you? Really, it's what your wife thinks or what your husband thinks and they have the ability to speak a word that can devastate or can bring life Death and life into the power of the tongue and he's been knocking and Again, she's already said how much she loves him and he's already expressed his love for her but now there's no response and no doubt through his mind is Going these thoughts is a somebody else what's going on? You know what's happened She found somebody else is she in love with somebody else And so he turns and he leaves

And the thing I love about this story is the fact that she doesn't go back to bed She doesn't sort of adopt the attitude. Well, you know, he'll be back if he really loves me. He'll be back Yeah Instead she gets up She puts her shawl on and she goes out in the middle of the night.

The Jew is coming down And it says my heart went out to him as he spoke. I searched and I did not find him. I called he did not answer me And Here she is now going down road after road alleyway after alleyway calling and there's no response trying again down this road There's no response You see I'm convinced that this is a time when God is calling again, there's a new call of God to his bride There's a deepening of our relationship with him And the tragedy is that we can miss the day of our visitation and when we miss it it costs us something It's not quite that easy to find again It really isn't you see because God doesn't make it easy because he wants to see how desperate we really are and So he'll if you like he'll hide himself for a while It says of Hezekiah God withdrew in order to test him to see what was in his heart Sometimes God will withdraw in order to test us to see what's really in it.

I see you're going in that direction If you see my beloved, would you give him a message? Tell him I'm lovesick Tell him I'm sorry tell him I miss him so much tell him I've got to get back together with you would you do that for me, please and They're amazed notice their response in verse 9. What sort of beloved is your beloved Oh most beautiful among women What sort of beloved is your beloved that thus you ask us or adjure us? In other words the sort of startled by this beautiful woman. They said listen, you're such a gorgeous woman You're just a beautiful woman and what sort of guy basically is worth this I mean, what sort of guy you're crazy one You're beautiful. You could have any man in this town.

I mean, what sort of a guy is he? Doesn't make sense Here you are you're black and blue your shawl has been taken from you and you're telling me you're out looking for Some guy and you're so beautiful. I mean forget it Go back the phone will be ringing. You know, you don't have to worry about And all of a sudden she begins to describe her beloved What sort of a guy is he and she remembers she recalls again that the the beauty of who he is And she said my beloved is dazzling and ruddy verse 11 outstanding among 10,000 She said you can take 10,000 men in Jerusalem here line them all up and put my beloved in the middle and you won't even notice the rest of He's outstanding.

I mean he will outclass every single one As the song says he's beautiful beyond description He's the fairest of 10,000, it's a lily the valley Is he all together lovely one? She begins to describe him his head is like gold like pure gold his locks like clusters of dates as black as a raven His eyes are like doves beside streams of water bathed in milk repose in their settings his cheeks like beds of balsam Banks of sweet scented herbs his lips are like lilies dripping with liquid myrrh His handles are rods of gold set in barrel his abdomen is carved ivory and laid with sapphires his legs are pillars of alabaster And she goes on and on And notice what she's doing. She's describing him not his assets You see so easy to fall in love with God for what we can derive from him, isn't it? You see that's why you can have his covenant without his presence I went to a conference a number of years ago in Dallas a huge conference and Snuck in one afternoon. I was invited in and there's a gentleman there spoke for about an hour and a half on the covenants on our covenant right and the whole message really Boiled down to this that if you can sort of twist the arm of God and remind him of his covenants You can derive from him.

Whatever you want. I Am the Lord that healeth thee. You know God you said it.

Come on cough up the goods. I know God will provide for you And the whole message was about how we can extract from God the covenantal blessings, but there wasn't one thing about his presence and She

doesn't say listen when I let me tell you about my beloved You know as you drive out of town there that bluff with that magnificent home on it. That's my beloved's Have you ever seen those beautiful chariots that come into town those chestnut? Horses pulling that magnificent coach, that's my beloved's You know the banks in this town my beloved owns three out of four of them And you know when I get married It's all gonna be mine I'm gonna have all the finery I've ever wanted all the jewelry I've ever wanted my beloved has promised me my own coach I like white horses.

He's promised me six white stallions pulling a magnificent coach I'm gonna live in that house. You know, I'm not even sure how many maids there are there are servants. He's got dozens I'll never have to work again.

I'll have all the money the resources we can travel we can do everything, you know She doesn't describe his assets she's in love with him. Let me tell you about him Let me tell you about his eyes his hair his lips his hands And she ends by saying His mouth is full of sweetness. He is wholly desirable Everything about him is desirable.

She said she said I haven't found one single fault one single blemish in my beloved Everything about him is perfect. And then she summarizes the whole thing. She said this is my beloved and this is my friend He's a friend He's not a master He's a friend Jesus said no longer do I call you servants.

I call you friends Abraham the friend of God See a friend is somebody we feel comfortable with in fact, very comfortable with we can share the most intimate things with them And likewise they can share back Again, the moment a woman gets pregnant after telling her husband she'll call up her closest friend Maybe she gets engaged. She can't wait to tell her friend about it The friends are always the ones around the inside and Jesus said that he said, you know servants just hear orders But they don't really know the heart of the master And she said this is my beloved and this is my friend or daughters of Jerusalem and they notice a strange thing takes place Verse 9 what sort of guy is he anyway? You're crazy lady. And she says well, let me tell you about him And now notice what happens in chapter 6. Unfortunately, there's a chapter division But in verse 1 where is your beloved gone? almost beautiful among women Where is your beloved turned? That we may seek him with you Say would it be okay if we tag along Would you mind if we went with you I Mean we don't want to intrude but you've sort of wet our appetite a little bit now Could we just come along would you just let us have a glimpse of him would you by any chance introduce us to him? See isn't this what really should be taking place in the house of God that the people of God are so in love with him Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all your soul with all your strength with all your mind with all your heart That out of us just flows this love relationship and the world says listen Would you mind? If I came to your church Because we're not describing the building we're not describing anything other than listen the presence of God is there I'd like you to meet my friend.

I'd love to meet your friend The way you talk about your friend. I've never heard anybody talk about God that way before I Hear of rules and regulations. I hear of you know laws and I grew up in Sunday school It's most miserable thing.

I went to church for a while. But you know, you described something so different a relationship with the Living God It sounds so incredible. Is there any chance he could become my friend the way he's becoming your friend And you say well, that's just an Old Testament story Well, let me give you the New Testament equivalent in Revelation chapter 3 And we have the same Bride and we have the same bridegroom and Verse 20 behold I stand at the door and knock If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I'll come in

and I will dine with him sup with him and he with me See that's the same bridegroom And he's talking to his bride.

He's talking to the one that at one time loved him. So so much that first love And he's wanting to renew he's wanting to deepen he's wanting to come in he's wanting to spend time He's wanting to fellowship. He's wanting to be intimate And while we've used this verse so many so often for reaching the last and say, you know God's standing at the door of your heart really it's God standing at the heart of the church the life of the church and Her response is listen.

I've taken off my dress I'm rich. I'm increased with goods. I don't have need of anything right now.

Just leave me alone This isn't a very convenient time. We're doing well, just the way we are. I'm I'm just so happy and He's saying listen, I want you to go deeper I want to sit down.

I want a fellowship. I want to share with you. I want to hear your voice I want to know what it is to just be in your presence and you be in my presence If anybody opens the door, I'll come in See God's knocking again at the door of the church.

I'm convinced of it The thing that he's wanting more than anything else is fellowship Just to sit in his presence Just to enjoy him Just to get to know him The most intimate time in the East was to sit down around a table At the end of a day, no electricity. No television And just to share heart-to-heart as they broke bread And just to hear What was going on? Tell me about your day. I'll tell you about my day and just that lingering around the place of hospitality God says that's the thing that I want.

Again, it's the Mary and the Martha, isn't it? See Mary's chosen the better thing. She just wants to sit here Listen to me, fellowship, be with me. I love being with her And some of us it's been a while because we know we're saved, we know we're clean, we know we've been washed And we even know that he loves us But somehow there's been a breach.

It's been a while since we really took time Just to be with him again And he's knocking open to me my darling, my dove, my perfect one. That's just close Father we say with the words of that song awaken my heart To love and adore thee O my Lord Awaken my heart to bow down before you Father awaken us afresh today Awaken Lord within us that love Father arouse us again Lord we may hunger and thirst and press in and desire you Lord more than anything else Father we were grateful for the houses. We're grateful for the lands.

We're grateful for the olive groves, the vineyards For the milk and the honey. We're grateful for the signs, the wonders, the angelic visitations and all of those things, but Lord we say don't ever take your presence from us Because Lord if your presence goes we're no different. We heard last night Lord about the supernatural that the world can do Father there's something they don't have That's the presence of the Living God Father we long for you today We ask you Lord just to come as we draw this meeting to a close Lord you just hover over this meeting And Lord as you knock on each of our Lives again this morning and say open to me my darling, my dove, my perfect one, but Father we wouldn't hesitate Lord we'd spring out of bed as it were Fling open that door, wrap our arms around you and say God I can't live without you Lord I need you more than my necessary food Come Lord Jesus Have your way in Jesus name Why don't we all stand Let your presence come Lord We're in a worship and I Feel of course that there are many here that have been missing that intimate relationship of the Lord And that You are longing in your heart to experience that love relationship With a bridegroom as his bride Men and women He is a lover of our

souls We need to know him that way we are being called out as his bride We know him and not just his attributes to be in love with him To experience his love for us to fall madly in love with Jesus It's no other place to be So as we Begin to worship if you feel like that's part of what's going on in your heart that you want to have more of him And you need more of that intimacy.

You need more of his personal touch. You want to experience his intimate love Just come up forward Worship up here If you don't know the Lord yet and you you feel him knocking on your heart And you want to say yes to the Lord and this is the first time for you We want to invite you to get to know our very best friend We all share him as our mutual friend the lover of our lives And that's what draws us all together Is that we're in a mutual love relationship with our friend Jesus Christ he wants to be your friend as well So I'd invite you to come up and let us introduce you to him Let's worship Jesus I need to know true love It's deeper than the love found on earth Take me into the King's chambers Cause My love Too much Jesus Jesus I need to know true love

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