

# The Presence Of God

by David Valderrama

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*This sermon emphasizes the transformative power of experiencing the presence of God through obedience to His word, focusing on the themes of the fear of the Lord and the love of God. It highlights the importance of prioritizing God's presence over worldly distractions and activities, recognizing the need for continual communion with God for spiritual growth and empowerment in daily life.*

**Scripture:** John 14:21, Proverbs 7:1, Psalms 36:7, Psalms 30:7, Ephesians 5:18, Colossians 3:1, James 4:8, Luke 10:38

**Topics:** "Transformative Power of God's Presence", "Prioritizing Communion with God"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the transformative power of experiencing the presence of God through obedience to His word, focusing on the themes of the fear of the Lord and the love of God. It highlights the importance of prioritizing God's presence over worldly distractions and activities, recognizing the need for continual communion with God for spiritual growth and empowerment in daily life.

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## Transcript

About 20 years ago when I turned to the Lord, I experienced the presence of the Lord, the manifested presence of the Lord. It says in John 14 21, he that has my words and keeps them, he it is that love, he it is that loves me. And my father will love him and I will love him and will manifest myself in him.

So there's something that Jesus manifests within the heart of that man and that woman that has his words and obeys them. It says in Proverbs chapter seven, I believe in verse one, it says, my son treasure my commands within you, lay out my words in your heart. When I turned to the Lord, Jesus Christ, 2001, there was such an anointing that was just poured upon me.

I just, I remember I was so immensely grieved by just, as some people would call it a trivial sin, just any, I just, I recognized the presence of God in my life. I devoted a lot of my time, pretty much all of my time for the most part to studying the Bible, witnessing, fellowship, church, church activities. And I volunteered, I wasn't working at the time, but I was volunteering at the church.

And I remember I would be so blessed studying the Bible and reading the Bible all the way through for the first time. And the two things that the Lord was teaching me, that these scriptures just stood out to me, it was the fear of the Lord and the love of God. And it started with the fear of the Lord.

And I was reading through the Psalms and it would say, the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, saving one from the snares of death. No good thing will the Lord withhold from them that fear him. It says, God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints and held in reverence by all who come near him.

And then I just started reading about the love of God, especially 1 John, the book of 1 John. I actually memorized the entire book of 1 John. It's 105 verses.

That was in 2003 and 2004. And I just, I really felt that these two themes were foundational for me. And I saw the wisdom of God and how he led me to really focus on these two things, fear of the Lord and the love of God.

But I remember early on, I think it may have been 2001, 2002, I just came out of the world. I was very lost in the world, drugs, immorality, sorcery, many evils. And I forsook everything by the grace of God and experienced a new birth, a new heart through faith in Jesus Christ and the presence of God.

And I lived each day. I remember I'd be so excited to wake up in the morning because whenever I was asleep, I wasn't awake. And I wanted to be awake because the presence of God was so obvious.

It was so felt, so real, so experienced. And I was so excited to wake up in the morning. And I remember there was one time that I woke up, I woke up hearing myself say these words, from the fruit of my lips, I bless you, oh Lord.

It is you who puts good things in my mouth. When I woke up hearing those words, I was so inspired. And I felt so alive.

I just, I remember I hardly had any sleep that night because I went to bed late. And then I woke up saying those words, but I felt so strong, so alive, so sharp in my mind, so clear headed. It was such a blessing.

But anyways, I remember the presence of God and just, I don't know how to describe it other than just a very keen perception of the nearness of God. You know, God is within us, but he's also around us and God can be felt. He can be experienced.

He can be tasted. He can be heard. He can be smelt.

All these different things are in the scriptures. Spiritually, things are spiritually understood. So anyways, I had, you know, and I think childlike faith is key to the presence of God.

Without childlike faith, you're just going to try to analyze everything and experience little to nothing. But I was blessed with a childlike faith. I believe that this power that was at work in my heart, this purifying, sanctifying, cleansing power at work in my thoughts and my desires and my feelings was God's very presence, God's very life, his very spirit within me, all around me, consuming me.

And I was very sensitive to different things that I did or said or didn't do or didn't say that would separate me or make my perception of his presence or this power that at work within me that hindered it or separated me from it or distanced me from God in some way. And I remember, I think it was 2001 or 2002, I learned about this cartoon called Dragon Ball Z. And I had never heard of it before, but there was this young boy named Goku, and I was very fascinated with it for some reason. And I think it was at three o'clock the episode would come on, last about 30 minutes.

And I remember I got addicted to this cartoon. And it's hard to imagine being addicted to it because I was also addicted to the presence of God, addicted to the study of the scriptures and addicted to witnessing many other spiritual things. But somehow I sat in front of a TV and watched this program.

And I just got really excited about it. And I remember after watching it, something within me just didn't sit right. And I just began to take notice of this.

I continued watching. I probably watched it for about a month until I finally realized that all the blessed revelation and nearness I experienced with God all morning long was somewhat extinguished from a 30 minute cartoon. And I remember just feeling very troubled.

And like the Psalmist said in Psalm chapter 30, verse maybe two, it says, by your favor, you have made my mountain to stand strong. You hid your face and I was troubled. I think King David, you know, he experienced the presence of God.

And whenever he couldn't perceive the nearness of God, an intimate connection or exchange of God's thoughts and feelings and desires with him, that there wasn't this intimate communion with God, or he sensed he perceived some distance between him and God on a relational level, it troubled him. And this is what I experienced. And I realized that I was addicted to this cartoon and that this cartoon was robbing me of this blessed intimacy and communion that I experienced with God.

And the anointing that I experienced was God opening up to me his word and making me more ready to witness on the streets because I was going out on the weekends, every weekend, Fridays and Saturdays, usually every Friday and Saturday. And every day, wherever I went, grocery store, gas station, wherever I was at, I would witness. And sometimes it would take hours for me to get anything done because I could feel God's love for these souls wherever I was at.

And abiding, the more that I abode in the presence of God, the more of this love that I felt for those souls, wherever I went, grocery store, gas station, so forth. But other times whenever I got caught up in fruitless distractions like cartoons, there was even a time I played laser tag. I got addicted to laser tag.

Just running around this really dark room with these vest on that would vibrate if you got shot by some laser and trying to hide from all these people and shoot them in secret and all these different things. I got addicted to that. It's so vain, so vain, so empty, so void of any spiritual life and I was addicted to it.

But thank God I began to realize that this again was a hindrance to the presence of God in my life and His anointing and sweet communion with Him. And I desperately needed this just to live a virtuous life, to walk in victory in my thoughts and my feelings and my desires because as I lived my life with this reality that God was with me everywhere I went, that He was not only like looking down from heaven upon me but by His very spirit He was living on the inside of me. The more that I was aware of this, I just, I felt His love for lost souls and I was just very purified in my thoughts and my desires.

And the way that I would feel about things that I would hear or see. I remember there was this, in San Francisco around Easter time there was this homosexual parade where the homosexuals were carrying a cross and dressed up like Jesus and mocking Him. And I remember I fell to my knees and I was just weeping, just uncontrollably weeping, just shaking and weeping because I was so deeply moved by what I was seeing.

And I just, I guess what I'm trying to say is that we need to live our lives, like what's the most important thing? What do we really need the most in life? We would all say we need God. We really thought about it. But do we prefer other things more than God? Are we pursuing other things or are we pursuing God? Are there fruitless distractions like cartoons and laser quest and sometimes even fellowship, you know, this religious activity? We, I know I desperately need the presence of God.

I know that I can do nothing apart from the presence of God. And if I do accomplish, if I do walk into any victory apart from the presence of God, it's wearisome to me. It's hard because it requires so much self-effort and striving in my flesh just to be patient sometimes.

But when I live each day in the presence of God with a very keen perception and awareness that God is with me, God is with me. And it just, when I just direct my heart, my thoughts, and my affections towards that reality, everything changes sometimes. And just I'm empowered to love others, to be patient, to be kind, to be humble, to be gentle.

And it requires very little of me. But I just, where I'm at in my life right now, I'm at a place in my life where I want the presence of God more than anything. And I just don't want it to be some flash of emotion stirred in my heart because I know how desperately I need this, but then wake up the next morning and just sleep in bed or just focus on work, paying bills.

Where I'm at in my life, I desperately need the anointing of God. I need the presence of God. I need those rivers of living water flowing from my innermost being.

I need the empowering of the spirit of God every day in my life. There's a work to be done. Time is short and we're to redeem the time because the days are evil.

Jesus said there's one thing that is needful, one thing, that's to sit at his feet, hearing his words and his presence. We're to draw near to him as Mary. We're to humbly draw near at the feet of the living Christ by faith, a childlike faith, and enjoy his presence and perceive his presence and be comforted by his presence, instructed by his presence, edified by his presence, built up by his presence, empowered by his presence and his presence through his fullness of joy, and to hear his words.

May the Lord bless you and may the Lord help us to really do nothing without that presence of God in our life, to acknowledge him in all of our ways. He's not some distant God that's a far off. He's a God right near at hand.

He's a God that actually lives within us by faith. May the Lord bless you.

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