

**Alive in the
Presence
Of
God**

Alive in the Presence of God

'The mystery that is Christ in you, the hope of glory.'

Col 1:27

'that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.'

Eph 3:17

Jesus Christ died for our sins so we can be a chosen people who are living in the presence of, under the authority of, and to the honour and glory of God.

If we have truly repented from living for ourselves independently, away from the rule of God, and have denied ourselves and taken up our cross to follow Christ, then we are His, born again by God; we are His disciples who are learning to obey all He has commanded.

Therefore, do we walk daily with the Spirit of God living in us, do we live in family relationship with God, or do we live as orphans, absently wandering in the world, without thought of heaven? Or do we consciously live in His presence, as we obediently attend to His sovereign providence and power to direct our thinking to enable us to grow in the image of Christ?

Everything concerning the Christian life is pivotal on believing what the word of God says about our daily INTIMATE relationship with Him. *'All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man or woman of God may be fully capable, equipped for every good work.'* 2 Tim 3:16-17

Scripture tells us that Christ is our life. *'For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.'* Col 3:3-4

Since the Bible affirms many times that God now lives in the believer, what haven't we understood?

Being saved by grace is to live in grace

God's grace is the undeserved love of God applied to us for our benefit, as those who have been chosen by God and given to Christ. God and His grace cannot be separated, for grace comes from the heart of God. Grace is the presence of God working for our good. If we are in Christ we live in the grace of our God.

There is nowhere we can be on earth that can separate us from the grace of God, for God is everywhere we are.

'Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED." But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

Rom 8:35-39

If we want to enjoy the fullness of His grace, we must live in His presence. We suffer a loss when we are absent minded in regards to walking in His presence. And absent mindedness robs us of the complete pure overflowing love that we can know when we consciously abide in His presence, because He lives in us.

'That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner self, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled to all the fullness of God.'

Eph 3:16-19

Grace always completes what God desires, but our awareness needs to be focused on the presence of God for the uninterrupted pleasure of His love to keep us from feeling abandoned, or thinking we walk alone.

Jesus Christ has a lot to inform us of the promises of the presences of God so that we can live by the grace of our God.

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, so that He may be with you forever; the Helper is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him; but you know Him because He remains with you and will be in you. "I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you."

John 14:16-18

"The one who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him." John 14:21

Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will follow My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him." John 14:23

"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." John 17:3

"I am not asking on behalf of these alone, but also for those who believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one; just as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me." John 17:20-21

"The glory which You have given Me I also have given to them, so that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and You loved them, just as You loved Me." John 17:22-23

This is true religion. 'I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.' Gal 2:20

"And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matt 28:20

Because we are born again in the image of Christ with the divine nature, by the Spirit, after repentance and faith, we have His image implanted into us by God. Thus, showing our salvation is all by the grace of God; as the Father, Son and Spirit come to dwell with us who are part of the spiritual body of Christ.

Therefore, we should be as concerned with the spiritual life of each other as the Triune God is concerned for our transformation into the image of Christ. God lives in us so we live for Him. So as one body we live for each other in order to carry out His will. All of us who are joined in Christ need this at the forefront of our minds.

For this to happen, the fellowship we have with the Father and the Son by the Spirit needs to be the same quality of fellowship we have with one

another. Therefore, in the church we need to take personal responsibility for the growth of each other into the image of Christ, as this is part of our personal act of sacrificial worship in devoted service to God.

‘Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.’ Rom 12:1-2

We have received the love of Christ in order to share His love and purpose with each other, and also those still in the world. *‘The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.’* Rom 5:5

By the evidence of love working, we will know who are His disciples.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.” Matt 19:20

Anything that falls short of extending His grace to the world for the perfection of each other in Christ is false religion. Grace is actually our interdependence working through the faithful lives of the elect.

We are united with God, so why don't we major on walking consciously with God?

Having God abiding in us is the most stupendous miracle possible that He has made for our greatest benefit as we live in the world of darkness, but we seem to prefer to live as if He is absent. Why?

Is it because the thought of God being closer to us than our breath frightens us, because we have too much we want to hide from His eyes?

And because we don't acknowledge His presence in us, we fail to experience the comfort and security of knowing that we are eternally and permanently united with the God of glory who rules the Universe. No matter what!!!

We have God, isn't that good news?

What we can learn from scripture means little if we don't realise we are living in the God of scripture, because He is living in us.

Doesn't this make our sanctification our great priority?

Doesn't this make obedience our greatest privilege?

Doesn't this make our complete surrender absolutely important?

Doesn't this make His love our greatest desire?

Doesn't our love for Him magnify His glory?

Shouldn't the knowledge of His presence enhance our love for one another?

Shouldn't His presence affect our services for Him?

Shouldn't His love compel us to faithfully witness to Him at every opportunity?

Shouldn't His presence give us the power and the urgency to go and make more disciples?

Then why don't we live in Him?

Maybe it is because we don't get it, we don't comprehend that the result of salvation is to walk in holiness with God from this day forth, not just to wait for heaven.

And because we don't get it, we don't make it clear what abiding in Christ actually means.

Jesus said: *"Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself but must remain in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; the one who remains in Me, and I in him bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."* John 15:4-5

The NIV puts it this way.

"Abide in me, and I will abide in you. Just as the branch cannot produce fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. The one who abides in me while I abide in him produces much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:4-5

Abiding or remaining in Him is to be the result of being born again in His image and likeness. It means we are inseparable from the one who saved us by the shedding of His innocent blood. We have been made a suitable dwelling place for God.

'Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?'
1 Cor 3:16

Jesus teaches us that we are not only where God lives, but that the Triune God lives in us.

"I am not asking on behalf of these alone, but also for those who believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one; just as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me."
John 17:20-21

Everything that our God wants us to understand and live by stands or falls on believing Him, and in our commitment to abiding moment by moment in the presence of our Christ.

Therefore, although we are not yet as we will be, we may still actually live in Him, it is then we would be anxious for nothing.

But this is only true if we believe the word of God so we can declare that
"Christ lives in me"
Gal 2:20

We have already received the first fruits of the divine nature. *'His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.'*

2 Pet 1:3-4 ESV

We have already received the Holy Spirit as the guarantee of our salvation. We already have His anointing. *'But you have an anointing from the Holy One.'*
1 John 2:20

Because we are in Christ, all that Christ has, we share as co-heirs. *'And if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.'*
Rom 8:17

Therefore, while we abide in His presence now, we look forward to the day of His coming for us, but we are patient and long-suffering because our wait gives opportunity for family and friends to be taken into the family of God. 2 Pet 3:12

We also wait patiently until the day of the gentiles is over, (Luke 21:24) and the last soul is born of the Spirit of God in the image of Christ. Rom 8:29

We who are weak have the strength of the almighty God in us while we wait to see His unshielded glory. 2 Cor 12:10

We who are ignorant have the God of all knowledge and wisdom with us to teach us to be like Him. John 14:26

'Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.' Col 2:2-3

We who still have mortal bodies, have the immortal creator preparing us for our immortality. 1 Cor 15:53

We who stumble now in our corrupted surroundings, will be comforted by His presence now, (2 Cor 1:3-5) but soon will be made incorruptible as He is Holy and Pure. 1 Cor 15:54

We who suffer with Christ now, will be raised with Him in His glory. Rom 8:17

We who suffer and groan along with the creation, wait patiently for His coming when we will be made like Him through the redemption of our mortal bodies into the likeness of His resurrection body. Rom 8:23; Rom 6:5

We who have tears now, will be embraced into the bosom of God, who will wipe away every tear for ever and ever. Rev 21:4

We who suffer along with the creation the consequences of sin, will witness the absolving of all things, and the creation of a new heaven and earth. *'Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!'* 2 Pet 3:12

'Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.' Rev 21:1

We who long for the consummation of our betrothal to the Son of God, one day will be seated with Him at the wedding supper of the Lamb of God. *'Let's rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has prepared herself.'* It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are the true words of God." Rev 19:7-8

We who are faithfully serving now imperfectly, will be invited to sit with Christ on His throne to rule with Him in glory. Rev 3:21

We need to seriously consider these things

We desperately need to meditate on the person and the work of Christ our saviour and Lord, until we habitually turn our minds to focus on His glory and majesty we will suffer from over exposure to the world.

If we have all things, and we don't make time to live in His presence, we are no more than paupers.

If we have knowledge of all scripture, and we don't walk with Him by the enabling of the Spirit, we are not only ignorant, we walk alone.

Doctrine is rightly received when it takes possession of the entire soul and finds a dwelling place and shelter in the most intimate affections of the heart.

But in order for doctrine to be fruitful to us, it must overflow into our hearts, spread into our daily routines, and truly transform us within.

The gospel's power ought to penetrate the innermost affections of the heart, sink down into the soul, and inspire the whole man a hundred times more than the lifeless teachings of the philosophers. John Calvin.

Every disturbing situation, every disagreeable person, every trial, every longing for what we don't know, is a call for us to quickly return to abide in the bosom of God. A time to lose ourselves in meditating on Him alone.

For without Him, although we may own the whole city, we have nothing.

Why are we anxious?

It is because we don't believe, so we don't live with God?

We get anxious because our expectations are not surrendered to His sovereign will, and we don't trust Him to work all things for our good.

Why do we give into the flesh? It is because we are not willing to walk with God.

We can only seek to be satisfied with the flesh and the world when we live alone according to our own understanding, and ignore what God has revealed to us through His Son.

If we will only stand in the presence of God, we will see we have no desire for anything other than Him. *'But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.'* Gal 5:16

Walking by the Spirit is actually abiding in Christ, and if we stand in His presence, we will find it impossible to wilfully go on sinning. You can't look the Spirit in the face and poke your tongue out.

We need to take charge of our minds so that we don't operate by default and turn our minds to the world. Every moment that we are not required to be involved with some tasks, can be precious time we can quietly meditate on the presence of God. The more we set our minds on the things of the Spirit, the less satisfied we will be with the things of the world.

We are in serious need of living in the presence of God

He is always available to listen to our troubled minds. Instead of looking for things and activity to occupy our flesh, we can choose the better life of waiting in the presence of God.

Every moment that we are looking to entertain our minds can be precious time we can quietly meditate on the presence of God. Instead of looking for things and activity to occupy our flesh, we can choose the better life of waiting on God.

If God is not more important to us than the mundane things of the world, we have not understood that we are made alive to live with Him.

There is never a time that we should feel alone, because God is real and abiding in us.

Our treasurer is where our heart is. What we accept as important is where we invest our thinking. If our minds are habitually given to the world, then we need a serious reorientation to take place if we are to make real progress with our sanctification.

Respectable progress in sanctification requires diligence and persistence in order to transform our minds from the worldly to the spiritual. If we sit back and leave it all to God, we will never be adequately equipped for a life of righteousness and good works.

If we relax and behave as if we are going to enjoy the ride, we in fact refuse to obey the command to work out our sanctification in fear and trembling. If we are not willing to obey God, it may well be because we are unwilling to be walking in His presence.

Christ in you. Is He really?

Although we might feel God is absent, it is only because of our flesh.

He is always closer to the believer than their own breath.

He looks out through our eyes. He sees what we see.

He listens in in our thoughts. He knows our ways.

He hears what we say because He is in our mouth.

He watches closely over all our deeds. He goes everywhere we go.

He sleeps in our bed. He sleeps with whom we sleep.

He inspects our manners. He measures our ways.

He looks for our good deeds. And He doesn't ignore the bad.

He is constantly examining our hearts.

He never misses an opportunity to encourage self-sacrifice.

He always presents a way out of temptation by calling us to walk by the Spirit.

He is constantly encouraging us to repentance.

He reveals Himself to us in His Son so that we can be conformed to His way of life.

He has birthed His divine nature in us, so the greatest part of the work of our transformation is already achieved.

He will not leave us to our own devices. He is jealous of the life of Christ in us.

Therefore, we can never escape His presence even if we wanted to. We will have to give account for every careless word, even every careless whisper.

But He won't stop us from saying and doing things that are unbefitting His glory, that's our responsibility.

When God is not in control of our hearts and minds, we are not compelled by His love to do all things for Him; because we want to live for ourselves and ignore His presence. So, we will be anxious and we will get angry, for we not trusting in God, and behaving like insecure and undisciplined children.

With this in mind we can now understand the following: *'So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to desire and to work for His good pleasure.'*
Phil 2:12-13

We can only do this work of sanctification effectively if we actually live in His presence

'Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.'
Rom 13:14

Putting on Christ requires the mortification of our self, and this is hard work because what is left of the self in our minds doesn't want to die. To put on Christ, we need a mind set on the Spirit. Without walking by the Spirit our default way of thinking will quickly return to the flesh.

Therefore, Jesus said: *"If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, this is the one who will save it. For what good does it do a person if he gains the whole world, but loses or forfeits himself? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the*

Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory and the glory of the Father and the holy angels." Luke 9:23-26

This is the will of God

Conflict in fellowship with Christ, is inevitable and necessary in the world.

"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me."

Matt 5:10-11

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to turn a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a person's enemies will be the members of his household."

Matt 10:34-36

"It is through many tribulations that we must enter the kingdom of God."

Acts 14:22

'Indeed, all who want to live in a godly way in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.'

2 Tim 3:12

'And if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.' Rom 8:17

The way of Christ is the way of suffering. All those who He has called will have to enter by the narrow gate that leads to the place of personal crucifixion.

Faithfulness is rewarded

"The one who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him."

John 14:21

"I will reveal Myself" - manifest His presence.

- Lexical: ἐμφανίζω - : em-fan-id'-zo. - Definition: to make visible, to manifest, to appear before.

It is the will of God that we who love Christ will be blessed by His presence.

Reveal, a verb, - Tense F: Future, - Mood I: Indicative, - Voice A: Active

- Person 1: 1st Person "I"

The future tense has either simple or progressive/repeated aspect and future time, equivalent to the English, "I will do (once)", "I will do (often)" or "I will be doing."

The context: is John 14:18 *"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."*

If He revealed Himself once and leave, it means we can expect to feel like orphans. No. He comes to abide in us so we can abide in Him. We cannot remain abiding in someone who isn't present.

And in His presence, we learn to fear not. Nothing can separate us from His love, because nothing, in heaven or on earth, can separate us from Him who has claimed us to be His precious possession intended for His bride.

This means that in His presence we will also be fruitful concerning His life and purpose, because He has given us His life. The promise of His presence means we can embrace our cross, because our cross of suffering with Him is our key to heaven.

Faith alone is not only necessary for our salvation; it is required for our sanctification in the presence of God. Faith is believing in what the word of God says is true, even if it seems unbelievable and too much for us, because we cannot see the reality.

However, the flesh wants nothing to do with suffering, so the flesh seek comfort and pleasure in the world.

In our faith be true

In order to live as we should, we need to accept that we have received from God the gift of the divine nature, and that the Lord of glory who has made us alive with Him, now lives in us as we are being completely transformed, heart and mind, into His image and likeness.

There will come a day when we will see Him, and we will see ourselves as like Him. *'For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I also have been fully known.'*

1 Cor13:12

We cannot be complete, having obtained all the necessary and appropriate aspects of mature children of God if we don't actually abide in the presence of our heavenly Father.

Children who grow up with a physically and emotionally absent father, struggle with life, because an important aspect necessary for full mature character is missing. Their internal confidence and sense of security is often missing, or over compensated for.

To have an "ABBA Father", there must be an ongoing personal intimacy closer than all other relationships.

If someone else, or something else takes His place, we will be deficient in our spiritual development and incomplete. The complete relationship is faithful by not wandering away, it is trusting in dependence, secure in facing opposition, obedient in conduct, productive in labour, reflective of God in character, confident of support, persevering in adversity, constantly conversing with God, and able to love as the Father loves us.

Jesus spoke these things; and raising His eyes to heaven, He said, *"Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, so that the Son may glorify You, just as You gave Him authority over all mankind, so that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."* John 17:1-3

Intimacy isn't an email. Real prayer is intimate conversation in the very real presence of God, speaking with Him according to His will and purpose for all things. If we don't know what He has written in the scriptures so we can know His will, we won't know how to pray correctly.

Prayer supposes that God will always be God who is sovereign over all creation as He works out His providential care for our ultimate good and exaltation in the last day. The Lord makes it clear, to know our Father, and His Son, is more than doctrine. It is personal. It is intimate. It is together, it is for us; and it is forever.

"Righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." John 17:25-26

Abide in Him

Living Water Resources Come to the River

“Maybe Christ said all this more simply in John 14:21: "I... will manifest myself to him." For what have we been labouring here but the sublimely simple New Testament teaching that the Triune God wills to dwell in the redeemed man's heart, constantly making His presence known? What on earth or in heaven above can be a greater beatitude?"

A.W. Tozer Man: The Dwelling place of God.

"Therefore, the goal of believers, when they assess this mortal life and realise it's nothing in and of itself but misery, should be to direct themselves wholly, briskly, and freely toward contemplation of that future and eternal life. By way of contrast to that future and eternal life, this present life cannot only be safely disregarded but, in view of that life come, thoroughly despised and scorned. If heaven is our home, what is earth but our place of exile? If departure from this world is entrance into life, what is this world but a grave? What is continuing in this life but remaining submerged in death? If being liberated from the body means laying hold of real freedom, what is the body but a prison? If the pinnacle of happiness consists in the enjoyment of God's presence, is it not misery to be without it? But until we escape this world, "we are away from the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:6).

Calvin's Institutes book 3 chapters 6-10

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