

Message Title: Abiding in His Presence – A Call to Greater Intimacy with God

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Service: Go Church Centurion

Kathryn Kuhlman:

“The Holy Spirit is more real to me than you are.”

David:

Psalm 42: 1-2 (Sons of Korah)

As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. ² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God.

Psalm 84:1-2 (Sons of Korah)

¹How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts! ² My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Psalm 84:10 (Sons of Korah)

For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Psalm 63:5 (David)

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips.

Philippians 3:10 (Paul)

¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.

If you were to express your longing for your God, for intimacy, closeness with Him what would you say?

Some years ago, I was introduced to tool called an **Individual Spiritual Health Audit**. It covers questions on your historical and spiritual journey, devotion, stewardship, relationships, marital relations, personal development, outreach, and purity.

I would like to invite you to take a few moments to ponder these questions: (the objective here is not to pass judgement on anyone but for you to carry out a self-assessment which will hopefully propel you to desire a deeper relationship with God.

QUESTIONS

1. Where is your relationship with God going?
2. How far do you want to go in God?
3. Do you prioritise spending time with God? What does that look like?
4. How often do you read the Bible?
5. How often you meditate on Scripture.
6. What does your personal time of prayer with God look like? Are you happy with where it is?
7. Where is God in your priority line-up?
8. Do you think that you are growing in God? Are you in a better place in God this year than you were same time last year?
9. What are the things, attitudes derailing your progress in God?
10. What are you doing about them? Do you even want to do something about them?

Include more of your own questions.

Your journey with God is your personal responsibility. Yes, there may be tools available to help you grow, there may be people to disciple you along the way. However, the ultimate responsibility in terms of how deep and far you want to go in God is entirely up to you.

WHY SHOULD WE SEEK INTIMACY WITH GOD?

1. In His Presence purging takes place:

Malachi 3:2-3.

“But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire and like launderers’ soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver, He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness.

Isaiah 6:5-6

“⁵ So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. ⁷ And he touched my mouth with it, and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged.”

2. It is in the place of intimacy that mighty men and women of valour are bred.

Judges 6:12. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, “The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valour!”

It is in the place of intimacy that God speaks to the treasure in us. He draws out our potential. He tells us things about us that only He can see and others around us cannot. It is in the place of intimacy that dreams are born, rekindled, reshaped, and redefined. That's the place where the called are commissioned...it happened with Gideon.

Romans 4:17

“¹⁷ (as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations”) in the presence of Him whom he believed - God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.

It is in the place of His presence and intimacy that God calls out those which do not exist as though they did.

Isaiah 60:22. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation. I, the Lord, will hasten it in its time.

It is in the place of intimacy that God the little ones become a thousand and the small one a strong nation.

3. In the presence of God, in the place of intimacy we become spiritually buoyant and gain spiritual might.

Paul exhorts us:

Ephesians 6:10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Ephesians 3:16. that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

Isaiah 40:31

But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Luke 2:40. And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

4. In the presence of God, as we seek a deeper relationship God our spiritual senses will become sharpened.

Intimacy with God is our gateway to divine intuition.

Isaiah 30:21

Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it. Whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.

Romans 8:14. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

John 14:26. ²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

5. In His presence, in the place of intimacy we're inspired to know the mysteries and secrets of God.

1 Corinthians 4:1. Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Matthew 13:10-11

¹⁰ And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?” ¹¹ He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.

Psalm 25:14:

The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.

Psalm 91:1-2

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. ² I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Him I will trust.

6. It is in His presence, in the place of intimacy that we become conduits for divine outcomes.

Mark 16:16-17.

He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues. ¹⁸ they will take up serpents, and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.

John 14:12

¹² “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

We cannot be ordinary Christians if we want to see the world around us changed.

7. In His presence, in the place of communion with the Lord we are trained to fight and conquer our battles, we're trained for the battlefield.

Psalm 144:1 Blessed be the Lord my Rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle.

Our walk with God sometimes feels like a battlefield and there is no demilitarised zone. It's either you're fighting or something is fighting you. It's either you're pulling something down or something is pulling you. Fighting infirmity, fighting lust, fighting lack, fighting unbelief, fighting naysayers, fighting the voice of the enemy.

It's in God that we're encouraged, strengthened, we're given a different perspective on our situations.

Whatever your battlefield is: if the battlefield is infirmity, fight for fullness of health and healing. If the battlefield is a struggling business, believe God to resuscitate it. If the battlefield is an addiction, fight for your freedom, call out to Him for help and seek practical help. If the battlefield is depression: **2 Corinthians 7:6a**
⁶ Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast. 1 Peter 5:7: Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Isaiah 49:24-25 NKJV. **²⁴Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the captives of the righteous be delivered? ²⁵But thus says the Lord: “Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away. And the prey of the terrible be delivered. For I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children.**

Isaiah 49:24-25 NLT.

Who can snatch the plunder of war from the hands of a warrior? Who can demand that a tyrant let his captives go? ²⁵But the Lord says, “The captives of warriors will be released, and the plunder of tyrants will be retrieved. For I will fight those who fight you, and I will save your children.

There is no battle in your life that is too strong for God, that He cannot overcome it. Jehoshaphat says the battle is the Lord's and victory is mine. There is no evil pattern in your family that you cannot conquer...even curses that your bloodline thought were permanent.

8. It is His presence, in the place of intimacy that we build prayer altars that impact generations.

Isaiah 62:6-7

I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem. They shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent,⁷ and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

God has chosen to work through His people.

Ezekiel 22:30

³⁰ So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.

When you don't feel like praying – just remember that there are destinies reliant on faithfulness in prayer. The stakes are just too high!

It is in His presence, in the place of intimacy that we download God's burdens for our generation. We become passionate about advancing the Kingdom of God. Families that just don't raise children but deliverers of our generation, gatekeepers of realms.

Psalm 144:12: That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth that our daughters may be as pillars, sculptured in palace style.

SOME HINDRANCES TO ACHIEVING INTIMACY WITH GOD:

1. Laziness...I don't feel like praying, reading the Word, going to Church. Living your life based on feelings.

1 Peter 5:8

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Resolve in your heart – that you will not be an easy target for the devil. If he's going to attack your life make it hard.

2. Fatigue...feeling too tired and if not managed well...it becomes chronic fatigue. Be wise in managing your time, activities, and energy.
3. Complacency... 'no need to be too serious with God, after all he knows my heart and issues.'
4. Procrastination
5. Voice of the enemy...'God is mad at you, slow down you try too hard.'

John 10:10:

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

6. Other priorities/distractions
7. Depression...you become so overwhelmed leading to mental instability.
8. Sickness/infirmity...your body is weak and it's hard to focus on God.
9. Sin...unrepented sin and you feel far from God.
10. Temptation... what are your weaknesses/crevices in your life/fault lines?

Luke 4:13. Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

11. Unbelief...without faith it is impossible to please God.
12. Relational turmoil...marriage, family, workplace, dynamics...can take a toll on you.

Whatever you're going through, share with one or two praying people so that they can walk with you and pray with you during that season.

Don't be unaware of the enemy's strategy against you.

WHAT IS GOD'S HEART FOR YOU?

1. James 4:8

⁸Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

2. Deuteronomy 6:5

⁵You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Jeremiah 31:3

The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying: Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love. Therefore, with lovingkindness I have drawn you.

3. Matthew 11:28-30

Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

4. Jeremiah 33:3

Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.

5. Psalm 55:22

Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you. He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.

6. Isaiah 46:4 NJKV

Even to your old age, I am He, and even to gray hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear. Even I will carry and will deliver you.

7. Isaiah 46:4 NIV

Even to your old age and gray hairs. I am He, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you. I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

8. Exodus 19:4-6

“You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.

9. Psalm 91: 14-16

14 Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him. I will set him on high, because he has known My name. 15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him and honour him. 16 With long life I will satisfy him and show him My salvation.

10. Ezekiel 36:26

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

11. Obadiah 17-18a

17 But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness, The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. 18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame...

12. Job 14: 7-9

7 For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again and that its tender shoots will not cease. 8 Though its root may grow old in the earth, and its stump may die in the ground. 9 Yet at the scent of water it will bud And bring forth branches like a plant.

13. Isaiah 44:3-4

³For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground. I will pour My Spirit on your descendants and My blessing on your offspring.

⁴ They will spring up among the grass like willows by the watercourses.

14. John 15:4

⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

CONCLUSION

1 Samuel 13:14

¹⁴ But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.

One of the cries of our hearts should be: 'Lord saturate me, consume me, take over.'

The enemy will fight your intimacy with God with everything he has.

Secure the presence of God so that you don't not lose out in battle.

Don't start in the spirit and end up in the flesh.

Reset your relationship with God.