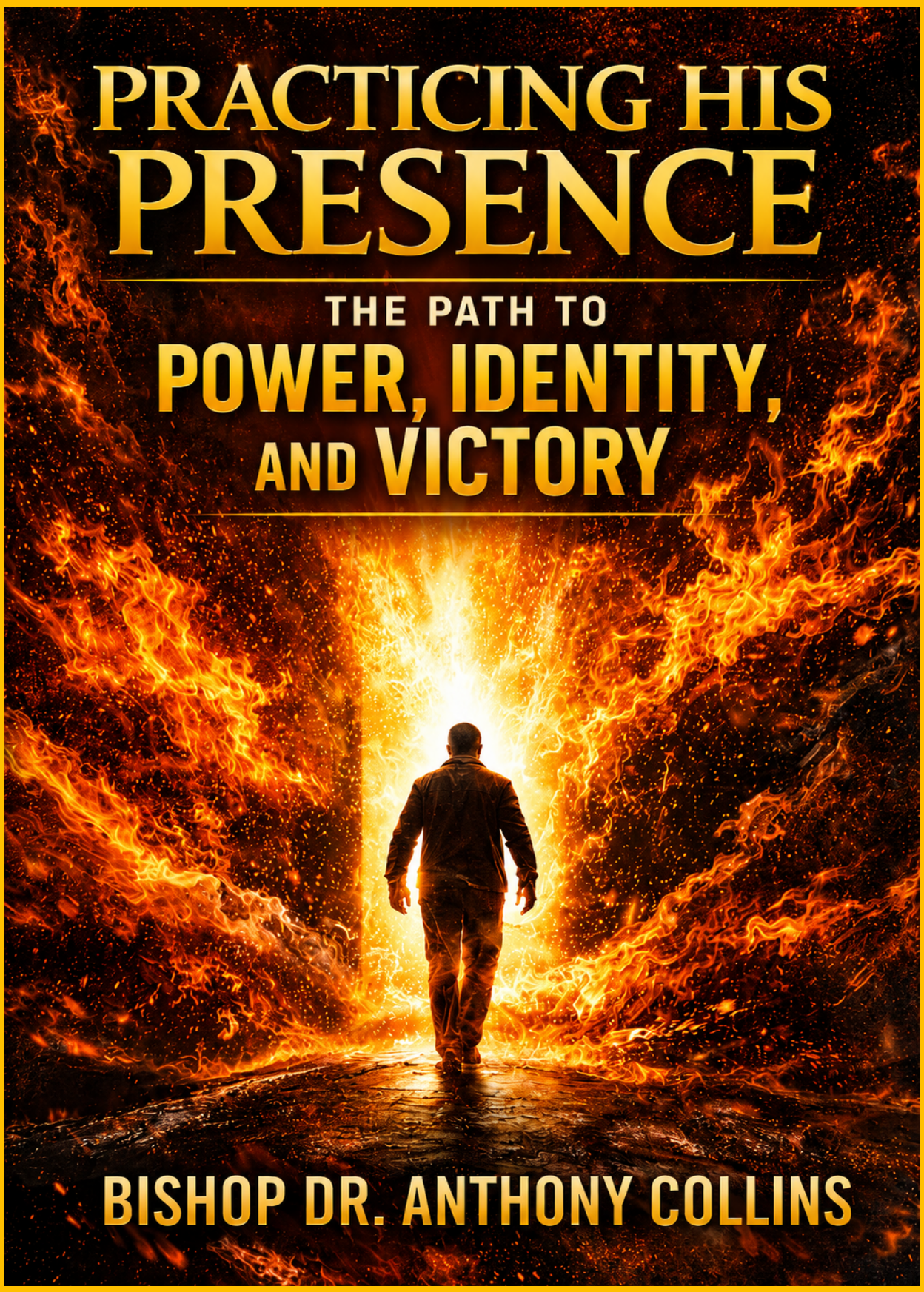
PRACTICING HIS
PRESENCE
THE PATH TO
POWER, IDENTITY,
AND VICTORY
BISHOP DR. ANTHONY COLLINS

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PRACTICING HIS PRESENCE

The Path to Power, Identity, and Victory

By Bishop Dr. Anthony Collins

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"To help people know Christ deeply, walk with Him daily, and represent Him faithfully through lives transformed by the presence of God."

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We address You with souls full of gratitude, recognizing that only You are God; You are holy, righteous, sovereign, and deserving of all honor, glory, and praise. Before we begin to read these pages, we first open our hearts and admit that without You we are unable to do anything, and we realize that our greatest need is not for more knowledge, greater ability, or more success - but for Your presence.

Lord, we thank You for having brought us into a relationship which is personal, intimate, and transformational. Because of the work of Jesus Christ which has been completed, You have provided a means by which we can approach the throne of grace with confidence. We are grateful that we are no longer strangers or servants, but have become sons and daughters accepted into Your family and invited to walk with You each day.

Father, now that we are starting this journey as a team, take away all those distractions which are fighting for our attention. Calm the voices that are leading us away from You. Break down every fortress of fear, lack of belief, pride, selfishness, unforgiveness, complacency, and compromise. Bring to light each hidden part of our hearts which has prevented us from fully enjoying the fullness of Your presence.

Let the Holy Spirit be our Teacher. May He enlighten the Scriptures and grant us the ability to see, the ability to hear, the capacity to understand, and hearts that long to obey. Do not let this book turn into just another collection of information. May each chapter be a personal meeting with the living God. May He transform our way of thinking, reform our desires, renew our minds, and bring us into harmony with the image of Jesus Christ.

Teach us to love what You love and to hate what You hate. Give us a holy longing which cannot be fulfilled merely by religious activities. Let there be in us a deep desire to know You, not just to know things about You. Let us never become satisfied with routine Christianity when You are calling us into regular fellowship with Yourself.

May the Lord make us men and women who regard Your presence more highly than any earthly success. Let us desire to see Your face rather than Your hand. Help us choose intimacy over performance, obedience over ease, humility instead of pride, and surrender over self-will. May our days testify, as Moses did, that 'If your presence will not go with us, do not send us.'

As we learn to practice Your presence, let fear give way to faith. Let confusion be replaced with wisdom. Let weakness become strength. Let brokenness become healing. Let spiritual immaturity become Christlike maturity. Let the truth of your Word defeat every lie of the enemy. Let every obstacle which has kept us from having a deeper fellowship with you become overpowered by Your presence, being taken away by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

I pray for each person who reads this book; meet them right where they are. Encourage the tired, support the weak, restore those who are wounded, convict those who have strayed, and rouse those who have become spiritually cold. Kindle in us our first love. Renew our passion for Christ. Raise believers who will not simply speak Your name but will authentically reflect Your character and bring Your presence into their homes, churches, workplaces, and communities. Let this book bring about more than just inspiration; let it result in true transformation. May it provide for those who make disciples, for leaders who serve with humility, for worshippers who live in holiness, and for ambassadors who boldly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. May every page direct our attention to You and may each lesson lead us into a deeper walk with the Savior.

First and above all else, Lord Jesus, be glorified. May Your Kingdom grow, Your Church be strengthened, and Your name be lifted in every life that is transformed. Let this experience become more than just reading a book; let it mark the start of a lifelong quest for Your presence.

We give ourselves fully to You.

In the mighty, matchless, and glorious name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we pray.

Amen.

Dedication

To the One whose presence changes everything. To *Jesus Christ*, the center of my life, the source of my strength, and the reason this message exists. Without Your presence, I am nothing. With Your presence, everything has changed, and all things are possible.

To every believer who has ever felt:

- Weary in the journey,
- Distant in your walk,
- Or hungry for something more

This book is for you. May you rediscover what was never meant to be lost. May you encounter what cannot be replaced. May you live in the reality of His presence, daily.

And to those I have been called to lead, serve, disciple, and walk alongside: Thank you for allowing me to pour into your lives what God has first poured into mine. Whether you be close or distant, this book is also for you.

This is not just a word. This is a call to return**.** This is a call to intentionally move forward in pursuit of the presence of The One True Living God – to learn to practice the presence of God the Holy Spirit.

THE BISHOP'S NOTE

Some books inform, and others confront. Some messages inspire; others expose, challenge, and finally transform. *Practicing His Presence* is the latter.

In an age where the Church has become increasingly skilled at presentation, production, and performance, I endeavor to deliver a timely and necessary reminder: *none of those things can substitute for the presence of God.*

This work is not simply theological - it is deeply pastoral and profoundly practical. It addresses the real condition of the modern believer, confronting both the outside pressures and internal struggles that quietly pull us away from the very place we were created to live.

What makes this book especially compelling is its clarity. There is no ambiguity here. There is no attempt to entertain the reader. I desire to call you higher. I identify the subtle but destructive strategies of the enemy: fear, isolation, emotional instability, selfishness, unforgiveness- and expose how each one is ultimately designed to separate us from God's presence.

Yet, this is not a message of condemnation. It is a message of invitation. This is an invitation to return, an invitation to realign. This is an invitation to rediscover the power, identity, and victory found only in God's presence. What you will find in these pages is not a formula, but a route. A pathway that leads from:

- Striving to rest
- Confusion to clarity
- Weakness to authority
- Distance to intimacy with God

This message is equally timeless and urgent. It is timeless, because the presence of God has always been central to His people. It is urgent, because many have unknowingly drifted from it. If you are willing to receive it, this book will do more than encourage you. It will challenge you to examine your life, your priorities, and your pursuit of God. And if you respond, it will lead you into a deeper, more authentic walk with Him.

I commend this work to you, not simply as something to read, but as something to *live.* Because this truth remains: *Nothing supernatural happens outside of the presence of God*. And everything changes when we learn to practice it.

Ad Gloriam Christi,
Bishop Dr. Anthony Collins

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INTRODUCTION

Have you ever found yourself in a place where nothing seemed obviously wrong, but you knew that you were missing something?

You may be an authentic follower of Jesus Christ. You might go to church every week. Some may even go on more than one occasion during the week. You read your Bible regularly, perhaps even every day. You pray. You participate and serve at your local church, yet you just have this nagging feeling that something is missing. Something that should be there is not there.

You don't have a problem praising God or participating in spiritual disciplines, but deep down inside you know that something has been skipped over, something has gone astray – something is missing.

You can't determine exactly what it is. You can't put your finger directly on it, but you know that without a shadow of a doubt there is more to this Christian experience than what you know, more than what you are practicing.

It is a feeling, a knowing in the deepest parts of you, that you can't shake – that you can't get rid of. No matter what you do or where you go, it is still there pulling at you. A change is required. There is a hole that needs filling. There is a significant area of your life that needs your attention. Something really important is missing.

The Missing Piece

Here is your confirmation. Something is missing. It's not in God, it's not in His power, and it's not in His promises. The missing piece is in how we live. We have more access than ever before: more teaching, more resources, more opportunities. And yet, many believers still feel spiritually inconsistent, emotionally unstable, and powerless in situations that should not defeat them. The issue is not availability. The issue is *God's presence*.

We have learned everything except the one thing that matters the most. We have learned how to attend church, serve in ministry, and even speak the

language of faith. But many have never truly learned how to: *Live in the presence of God.* And without His presence:

- Knowledge becomes information without transformation.
- Activity becomes effort without power.
- Faith becomes language without substance.

This truth must be settled in our hearts: *Nothing supernatural happens outside of the presence of God.* Nothing. There is no healing, no transformation, and no lasting change. Everything God does flows from His presence. And everything we are called to become must be developed there.

The enemy understands this. This is why his primary strategy is not always destruction. It is disconnection. He looks to distract us, isolate us, confuse us, and weaken our identity. He doesn't have to defeat us. We will live beneath what God has already made available for us, outside of His presence.

This is not a book about doing more. It is not about adding more activity, increasing religious effort, or becoming busier. It is about: *Returning to what was never meant to be optional.*

In these pages, you will learn:

- What keeps us out of God's presence
- How the enemy strategically fights our connection to God
- How to overcome internal and external barriers
- How to restore our identity in Christ
- How to activate God's presence in our daily life

This is not theory. This is *practice.*

This book will not work if it is only read. It must be applied, practiced, and lived. Our ultimate goal is not understanding; it is transformation.

God's presence is not distant. It is not reserved. It is not unavailable. He is waiting. The question is not: "Is God near?" The question is: "Will we draw near?" Will we draw near to Him? That is the question.

It is important to remember that God's presence is not an "it", but a "He". He is a person. He is God. He is the Spirit of God. He is the Spirit of Truth. He is the Spirit of Holiness, Faith, Promise, Wisdom, and Revelation. He is our Comforter and our Guide. He is much more, and we need Him if we are going to live the life that Jesus Christ died on the Cross for us to live – the abundant life – spiritually first, and then in every other way.

Chapter 1

Practicing the Presence

The Gateway to Everything Supernatural

"You shall not be in dread of them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God." – Deuteronomy 7:21

There is a dimension of Christianity that cannot be manufactured, substituted, or imitated. It cannot be programmed into a service, replicated through talent, or sustained by human effort. It is the presence of God.

Nothing supernatural happens outside of His presence.

We can organize, strategize, and mobilize, but without His presence, we remain limited to the natural. The difference between activity and anointing, between effort and impact, between religion and transformation, is the presence of God. His presence transforms everything.

- A persecutor named Saul becomes the Apostle Paul.
- Ordinary fishermen become world changers.
- A forgotten shepherd boy becomes a king.

The common denominator is not opportunity, education, or position. It is an encounter with God's presence.

The first evidence of God's activity in Scripture is not creation. It is His presence.

"And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters…" - Genesis 1:2

Before light was spoken into existence, before form was shaped, before life emerged, God's presence was there. Creation itself was born out of His presence. This establishes a foundational truth: *Everything God does flows from His presence. Everything begins in His presence.* And if that is true, then everything we are called to become must also flow from that same place.

Greatness Is Conceived in His Presence

Every example of true, eternal greatness in Scripture begins with an encounter with God.

Jacob - In Genesis 28:16–22, Jacob wakes from a divine encounter and declares: *"Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."*

Jacob's life shifts the moment he becomes aware of God's presence. What he lacked was not God. What he lacked was awareness of God's presence. Jacob was changed forever in the presence of God.

Moses - In Exodus 3:2–6, Moses encounters God in a burning bush. That moment of God's presence transforms him from a fugitive into a deliverer. Moses was commissioned in the presence of God.

Jesus - In Luke 1:34–35, the angel tells Mary: *"The Holy Spirit will come upon you…"* Even the incarnation of Christ was initiated through the overshadowing presence of God. Christ was conceived in the Virgin Mary by the presence of God.

God's presence is not optional. It is foundational. The presence of God is not abstract. It is profoundly practical. Everything we need is found there. Here are some of the things that we will find in His presence:

Illumination - In His presence, confusion gives way to clarity:

- Direction is established
- Discernment is sharpened
- Our steps are ordered.

Revelation - God reveals what cannot be learned naturally.

- Divine insight into the nature and deep things of God
- Understanding of His will
- Spiritual perception beyond intellect

Protection, Provision, Power, Prosperity, Purity, and Peace - In His presence, we are covered and supplied.

- Protection from the enemy
- Provision for every need
- Power to fulfill divine purpose
- Prosperity – spiritually first and then in every other way
- Purity – clean hands, a clean heart, and a right spirit
- Peace that surpasses all understanding

Transformation of Character - His presence produces:

- Integrity instead of compromise
- Life everlasting instead of eternal separation from God
- Wisdom instead of confusion

Abundant Life

- · Jesus declared: "*I came that they may have life… to the full*."
- · That life is experienced not outside, but inside His presence.

Joy, Glory and Honor - His presence carries the fullness of the Gospel:

- Joy that is not circumstantial
- Glory that reflects His nature
- God honors those that honor Him and His word.

From the very beginning, the enemy's strategy has been clear*: Keep humanity away from the presence of God.* In the Garden, Adam and Eve did not lose location; they lost fellowship. After sin entered, their instinct was not to run

toward God, but to hide from Him. Since the fall, it has become natural for humanity to avoid God's presence. That is why His presence must be practiced.

"And as soon as you heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes, and your elders. And you said, 'Behold, the LORD our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire. This day we have seen God speak with man, and man still live. Now therefore why should we die? For this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, we shall die. For who is there of all flesh, that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of fire as we have, and has still lived? Go near and hear all that the LORD our God will say, and speak to us all that the LORD our God will speak to you, and we will hear and do it.'"
Deuteronomy 5:23-27

Deuteronomy 5:23–27 reveals something profound: *the people of Israel feared the presence of God. They preferred distance instead of intimacy.*

This tendency still exists today. We attempt to "practice His presence" through:

- Occasional church attendance
- Inconsistent prayer
- Sporadic engagement with the Word

But God's presence is not accessed casually. It is cultivated intentionally. Jesus came to restore what was lost. Through His death, the veil was torn, and access was granted. The barrier was removed. But access alone is not enough. *What has been made available must be practiced.* Jesus came and died that we might have the opportunity to practice His presence.

Jesus did not merely carry the presence. He lived in God's presence continually. Everything He did flowed from His connection to the Father:

- He withdrew to pray
- He spoke only what He heard.

- He moved only as He was led.

He modeled a life where presence was not an event. It was a lifestyle.

The Discipline of Practice

Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." – Joshua 1:6-9

Joshua 1:6–9 connects success directly to engagement with God's Word and presence. An athlete may have natural ability, but without practice, that potential remains undeveloped. In the same way: *Believers have been given the Holy Spirit, but must practice His presence to walk in power.*

"*We are the temple of the living God*." - 2 Corinthians 6:16

The wonderful news is that God's presence is no longer confined to a location. It resides within the authentic believer. We do not go somewhere to find His presence. His presence lives within us.

Pathways into His Presence

Scripture gives us clear access points, clear pathways that lead us into God's presence:

- · The Word - "*In the beginning was the Word…*" - John 1. The Word is alive. It is active. It is described as a two-edged sword. It is part of the armor of

God. When we submit to God and resist the devil, the Word becomes our defense and our offense. The Bible is written from the perspective of God's presence. It is not merely information. It is *interaction*. And ultimately*, we encounter the Word, not just written but revealed.*

- *· Praise is not emotional expression only. It is spiritual alignment.* The tabernacle model shows progression from the Outer Court to the Inner Court (or Holy Place) to the Holy of Holies. Praise moves us inward. It shifts our focus, our atmosphere, and our perspective. Praise fights for us.
- *· Prayer is not a ritual; it is relationship. Prayer is communion with God.* Prayer is not performance. It is intimacy and dependency. It keeps us aligned with God's heart. It reminds us that we are not self-sufficient. Prayer sustains our awareness of His presence. *Prayer interrupts the intentions of evil men. It destroys the devil's plans. Prayer brings chaos to the enemy's camp.* Prayer will bring the answer to us.
- *· Worship - is not praise. Worship is greater than both praise and prayer.* Worship is greater than prayer because prayer seeks God's requests, while worship seeks God's presence as its sole goal. Worship is greater than praise. God does inhabit the praises of His people, but He is searching for a true worshipper.

The Weight of His Name

At the mention of the name of Jesus:

- *Angels bow*
- *The earth responds*
- *All creation recognizes His authority.*
- *Demons tremble*

Demons do not debate His existence – they tremble. And yet, we often live unaware of the very presence that carries that level of power. His presence carries authority, power, and dominion. But we must learn how to enter into His

presence - not by human strength: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit…"

"…at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,…" - Philippians 2:10

The name of Jesus is so powerful that the whisper of His name changes the atmosphere, it changes the spiritual environment. Sickness and disease know the name of Jesus. Trouble and difficulty still respond to the precious name of Jesus. There is no other name that men should call on for their salvation than the name of Jesus.

Renewing the Mind for His Presence

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." - Romans 12:2

Romans 12:2 reveals to us that transformation begins with renewal. To practice His presence, we must:

- *Reject worldly patterns – think differently.*
- *Adopt kingdom thinking – value differently.*
- *Respond differently*
- *Develop the mind of Christ.*

Presence is not just experienced. It is sustained through alignment with the Word and Spirit of God. This is about making Jesus Christ first in every area of our lives. This is about making Him the center of everything, all of the time.

Imagine being given access to unlimited resources, but never withdrawing from the account. That is how many believers live. The Holy Spirit dwells within them, but they never develop the discipline of accessing His presence. The issue is not availability. The issue is practice.

Application: Practicing His Presence Daily

- *1. Start your day with intentional awareness of the presence of God and of the power of God. Acknowledge God before anything else.*
- *2. Engage the Word relationally, not mechanically. Read to encounter, not just to learn.*
- *3. Develop a lifestyle of praise, not just in church, but throughout your day.*
- *4. Pray continuously. Maintain open communication with God.*
- *5. Guard against distractions that dull awareness. The enemy works through subtle separation.*

God is not distant. He is present. The question is not whether God is near. The question is whether we are aware, intentional, and disciplined enough to practice His presence. Because everything we are called to become - everything God desires to do through our lives - everything supernatural, begins and is sustained in His presence.

Moses understood this. In Exodus 33:12–23, he refused to move forward without God's presence. "If Your presence does not go with us, do not send us." This must become our posture.

Nothing supernatural happens outside of the presence of God. But when we live in His presence - everything becomes possible.

Chapter 2

What Keeps Us Out

Breaking the Barriers to God's Presence

"You shall not be in dread of them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God." Deuteronomy 7:21

Let me ask you a question: Did you encounter anything this week that tried to pull you away from God? Not just distraction, but pressure. Not just inconvenience, but resistance. The answer to this question is most certainly – "yes." This is the pattern we see in Scripture.

After the Mount of Transfiguration, where Jesus revealed His glory, the disciples immediately descended into a confrontation with darkness. Glory on the mountain followed by warfare in the valley. This is because every genuine encounter with God is followed by an attempt from the enemy to disconnect us from His presence.

Nothing supernatural happens outside of the presence of God. So, if the enemy cannot stop God's power, he will attempt to interrupt our access to it. From the very beginning, this has been his strategy.

- In Eden, Adam and Eve walked with God, until sin caused separation.
- After the fall, humanity did not pursue God. They hid from Him.

Since that moment, it has become natural for us to drift from the presence we were created to live in. One of the enemy's greatest victories is creating distance between God and us.

We often assume that if something is God's will, it will be easy. But the truth is: *Anything that leads us into a deeper level of God's presence will face resistance.* We can feel inspired on Sunday and pressured by Monday. We can experience clarity in worship on Sunday and confusion by midweek. This is not coincidence. This is conflict.

What Keeps Us Out of His Presence

Several powerful barriers seem to keep us from God's presence. These are not random. They are strategic. They are:

Coercion (Pressure) - Life has a way of pressing us: Deadlines, Responsibilities, Expectations. We begin to feel as if we are being driven rather than led. And when pressure increases, God's presence is often the first thing we sacrifice. But here is the truth: *Pressure is not a signal to disconnect. It is an invitation to go deeper.*

Crisis - When a crisis hits, our instinct is survival, not surrender. We react instead of seeking. But crisis was never meant to push us away from God. It was designed to drive us toward Him. The difference is heart posture.

Code (Nature / Conditioning / Spiritual DNA) - There is a "code" within us, a fallen nature that resists God. It is subtle.

- It prefers independence over dependence.
- It chooses comfort over consecration.
- It drifts toward distraction instead of discipline.

This is why God's presence must be practiced. Because what is natural to the flesh is often the opposite of what is required for intimacy.

Complaining - The Blocker of the Supernatural - Complaining prevents the release of the supernatural. Because it:

- Focuses on limitation
- Rejects gratitude
- Disconnects faith

Complaining is not neutral. It is spiritually disruptive. Consider the feeding of the five thousand. A small amount, two fish and five loaves, was placed in the hands of Jesus. If that moment had been approached with complaint instead of

surrender, the miracle would have been blocked. Complaining is more than negative speech. It is misplaced focus. It shifts our attention from:

- What God is doing to what we don't like
- God's faithfulness to our frustration

And what we focus on determines our experience. We cannot complain our way into His presence.

Concern (Fear) - Fear creates distance. It magnifies problems and minimizes God. Instead of entering His presence, we become consumed by possibilities that may never happen. But Scripture reminds us: *Perfect love casts out fear*. And that love is experienced in His presence.

Consent (Blessing and Promotion) - This is subtle and dangerous. Sometimes what pulls us out of God's presence is not hardship. It is success: Promotion - Opportunity – Increase.

When blessing becomes distraction, we drift. The very thing God gave us can pull us away from Him if we are not careful.

A Distorted Perspective of Obligation

One of the most dangerous mindsets is this: "Look at everything I *have to* do." When spiritual disciplines feel like obligations instead of opportunities, we disengage. But prayer is not something we *have* to do. It is something we *get* to do. God's presence is not a burden. It is a privilege.

Why Did Jesus Come?

Jesus did not just come to forgive sin. He came to restore God's presence into our lives. When Jesus died, the veil was torn. The veil represented separation. Because of the Cross, we now have access once again to God's

presence. But access must be activated through practice. God is not looking for attendees. He is seeking *true worshippers.*

Practice

To have divine success, we must be consistent in our engagement with God. Our talent is not enough. Our potential is not enough. Even our calling is not enough. There must be *practice.* We must learn how to practice hosting the presence of God. Believers have been given the Holy Spirit. But without practice, that gift remains underdeveloped in our daily lives.

We Are His Temple

When we learn that we, as authentic followers of Jesus Christ, are the temple of the living God, this should change everything. This means that we are carrying the presence and glory of God inside us. We don't go to a place to encounter Him. We can encounter God whenever we want. This means that, for the authentic child of God, the issue has never been availability. The issue is awareness.

The Difference Between the Disciples and Us

The disciples were not more talented. They were not more educated. The defining difference was this: *They had been with Jesus.* They practiced His presence. And that practice transformed:

- Their understanding of Scripture
- Their perception of reality
- Their capacity to walk in power

They lived in the presence of God. And because of that, their faith was active. Their authority was evident. Their impact was undeniable.

The Open Door We Ignore

Imagine standing in front of an open door that leads into everything you need: peace, clarity, power, provision. But instead of walking through it, you stay outside - distracted, overwhelmed, and frustrated. That door is the presence of God. And too often, it is not closed - it is simply unentered.

Application: Removing the Barriers

If we are going to remove the barriers that the enemy has set up to prevent us from practicing God's presence and entering the presence of God consistently, there are at least five things we must do:

1. Identify what pulls us away most consistently. Is it pressure? Fear? Distraction? Once identified, we must effectively deal with removing it as an obstacle
2. Replace complaining with intentional gratitude
3. Reframe spiritual disciplines as a privilege, not an obligation
4. Respond to a crisis with pursuit of God, not withdrawal from His presence
5. Engage in the Word, praise, worship, and prayer daily, not occasionally

The Decision to Draw Near

The enemy will always attempt to pull us away from the presence of God. Life will always present pressure. Our flesh will always resist discipline. But the presence of God remains available. The question is not whether we can access it. The question is whether we will prioritize it because everything we need - everything God desires to do - everything supernatural - is found on the other side of one decision: *To practice His presence consistently.*

Anything that leads us into a deeper level of God's presence will face resistance.

Chapter 3

Awakening Faith

Discovering Who You Are in His Presence

"You shall not be in dread of them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God." – Deuteronomy 7:21

Nothing supernatural happens outside of the presence of God. The word *supernatural* literally means above the natural - beyond what human ability, reasoning, or effort can produce. And yet, many believers attempt to live a supernatural life while remaining anchored in natural patterns. We want supernatural results, but we live without God's consistent presence. The truth is simple: *We cannot walk in what we are unwilling to dwell in.*

The Enemy's Secondary Strategy - Identity Distortion

If the enemy cannot completely keep us out of God's presence, he will attempt something equally destructive: *He will try to keep us from knowing who we are in Christ.*

Scripture declares that we are: Royal – Priestly – Holy. But identity is not fully understood intellectually. It is revealed in His presence. Outside of His presence we:

- Question who we are
- Compare ourselves to others
- Settle for less than our calling

Inside His presence our:

- Identity is affirmed
- Purpose is clarified
- Authority is activated

The Awakening of Faith - Our Sixth Sense

In His presence, something awakens that cannot be activated any other way: Faith is awakened. *Faith is the currency of heaven*. Faith is not just belief. It is spiritual perception. It allows us to:

- See what is invisible.
- Believe what seems impossible
- Move in alignment with what God has spoken.

Jesus described it as small, but powerful. Even faith the size of a mustard seed can move mountains. But that kind of faith is not manufactured. It is cultivated in His presence.

The Problem - Inconsistency

Since the fall, humanity has struggled with consistently practicing God's presence. Even after access was restored through Christ. Even when the veil was torn, we still struggle with *practice*. We visit His presence, but we do not dwell there. We touch it from time to time, but we do not remain there. And the result is inconsistency in: Power – Clarity – Spiritual Authority.

This is one of the most critical truths in this chapter: ***We have been asking without practicing.***

We pray for: Breakthrough – Power – Clarity. But we neglect the discipline of His presence. And the result is frustration. Because: *Power flows from presence, not from requests alone.*

Freedom in His Presence

In His presence, we can see the manifestation of His power as we are released from:

- Repetition of old patterns
- Cycles of limitation
- The "prison" of doing things the same way

God's presence breaks cycles. It introduces new ways of thinking, seeing, and living.

The Prodigal Son - Life Outside vs. Life Inside

The story of the prodigal son perfectly illustrates the contrast. Outside the Father's presence, he operated independently of his father, in waste and emptiness, and had a "hog pen" experience. When he returned to the Father's presence, he experienced restoration, reaffirmed identity, restored provisions, and a renewed relationship with his father. The turning point was not effort. It was returning to his father's presence.

Reach Your Potential

We must conclude that:

- God's Presence is not optional.
- God's Presence is not secondary
- God's Presence is everything

Imagine having everything we need to succeed, but lacking the key to unlock it. That key is not effort. It is not knowledge. It is not even desire. It is God's *presence*. Without it, potential remains locked. With it, everything is activated.

Application: Awakening Faith Through Practice

1. Evaluate your consistency. Are you visiting His presence or living in it?
2. Guard your identity. Refuse to define yourself outside of God's presence.
3. Eliminate complaining immediately. Replace it with gratitude and expectation.
4. Watch success carefully. Do not let blessings become a distraction.
5. Commit to daily practice. Word, praise, prayer, and worship are not optional. They are essential.

There is a dimension of life that only opens in His presence. It is where Faith comes alive, Identity is revealed, and Power is released.

We were not created to live naturally. We were created to live supernaturally. But that life is not found in striving. It is found in dwelling in the presence of God. When we practice His presence, we awaken to who we really are.

Power flows from presence, not from requests alone.

Chapter 4

When God Shows Up

How His Presence Changes Everything

"You shall not be in dread of them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God." Deuteronomy 7:21

In previous chapters we have established that:

- God's presence is essential
- His presence must be practiced
- His presence reveals who we are

Now we must answer a critical question: *What actually happens when God's presence becomes active in our lives?* Because, the presence of God is not theoretical - it is demonstrable. When God shows up, things change. The change is not symbolic, it's not emotional, but it is substantial and supernatural.

His Presence Redefines the Insignificant

One of the first things God does in His presence is this: *He takes what seems insignificant and gives it eternal value.*

God knows how to convert the ordinary into the extraordinary. God specializes in taking what appears irrelevant and making it meaningful.

- Water becomes wine
- A prostitute named Rahab becomes part of the lineage of Christ
- A woman with an alabaster box becomes eternally remembered
- David the shepherd boy becomes a king

What the world overlooks, God elevates.

In John 2:7–10, the miracle at Cana wasn't only about provision. It was about transformation. Water is common, usually overlooked, and just plain ordinary. But Jesus turned it into something of extraordinary value. We may feel Unnoticed, Unqualified, or Unimportant. But in His presence: *Our lives are redefined.* What was once dismissed becomes: Significant – Purposeful – Eternally impactful.

His Presence Revolutionizes the Order of Things

The Kingdom of God does not operate according to human systems. *His presence disrupts natural order and establishes divine order.* In His presence:

- The last becomes first
- The overlooked becomes chosen
- The weak become strong
- The borrower becomes the lender

This is not inspirational language. This is Kingdom reality.

When we begin to practice His presence, things start shifting:

- Our priorities change
- Our relationships change
- Our environment changes
- Our thinking changes

We are being reordered. And not everyone will understand it. People may become uncomfortable with what God is doing in our lives. This is because our lives no longer fit the same old patterns we are comfortable with.

The man at the pool had been last for years. But one moment in the presence of Jesus changed everything. He went from:

- Waiting to Walking
- Forgotten to Restored
- Last to First

When God's presence is active, natural laws are no longer limitations. *Nature submits to the Creator***.** Jesus demonstrated this repeatedly:

- He calmed storms
- He walked on water
- He multiplied food
- He caused fish to respond

These were not random miracles. They were *evidence of authority rooted in presence.*

In Luke 5:1–6, Jesus instructs experienced fishermen to do something illogical: cast their nets again. The result was a supernatural catch. Then later, a coin is found in a fish's mouth. God provides in ways which defy all natural explanation. In His presence:

- Lack is not final
- Limitations are not permanent
- Systems do not define outcomes

When God shows up, the possibilities expand and become limitless. What was impossible before His arrival is now not only possible, but highly probable.

"All things are possible for those who believe." Mark 9:23

His Presence Reverses the Curse

This is one of the most powerful dimensions of God's presence. *He does not change, but He changes everything.*

"Behold, I make all things new." - Revelation 21:5

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law." Galatians 3:13

Being redeemed from the curse means that:

- What was working against us has been broken
- What was limiting us has been removed
- What was spoken over us no longer has authority

Consider Martha's words regarding Lazarus: "*If You had been here*…" Her statement reveals something powerful: she *believed that presence changes outcomes*. But she thought it was too late. And yet, Jesus steps in and reverses death itself.

Scripture records multiple resurrections:

- Jairus's daughter
- The widow's son at Nain
- Lazarus
- Jesus Himself

Each one declares: *Nothing is beyond reversal in God's presence.*

Sealed By His Presence

"In Him (Jesus), you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him (Jesus) with the Holy Spirit of the promise, who is a first installment of our inheritance, regarding the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."
Ephesians 1:13-14

Ephesians 1:13–14 reveals something intensely significant: *Authentic believers have been sealed with the Holy Spirit*. This seal represents:

- Ownership — We belong to God
- Security — We are covered by His blood
- Authority — We carry His power.

It is a guarantee of our inheritance in Christ Jesus.

We are not trying to gain access to God's presence. We have already been influenced by it. This is such a powerful statement. We must internalize it. We must make it part of our identity.

The Pattern of Transformation

When God's presence turns active in our lives, four things consistently happen:

1. Insignificance is redefined
2. Order is rearranged
3. Limitations are overridden
4. Curses are reversed

This is not occasional. This is the *pattern* of His presence.

The Environment That Changes Everything

Imagine placing a piece of iron into fire. At first, nothing seems to happen. But over time, the iron begins to change: it glows, it softens, it becomes moldable. Eventually, it begins to take on the characteristics of the fire itself. That is what happens in God's presence. We do not remain the same.

Application: Positioning Yourself for Transformation

1. Stop evaluating your life based on current conditions. God specializes in changing what seems insignificant.
2. Allow God to reorder your priorities without resistance. What He redeems, He rearranges.
3. Expect supernatural intervention. Do not limit God to natural phenomena.
4. Reject every mindset rooted in limitation or curse. We have been redeemed.
5. Live with awareness of the Holy Spirit within you. We are sealed, marked, and set apart.

When Presence Becomes Reality

The presence of God is not a concept to believe in. It is a reality to live in. When we practice His presence:

- Our life is redefined
- Our world is reordered
- Our limitations are broken
- Our past is redeemed

Because: *Nothing supernatural happens outside of the presence of God…But everything changes when He shows up.*

God knows how to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Chapter 5

Demonstrations of Power

When His Presence Overrides Everything

There is a difference between believing in God's power and experiencing His power. Many believers are convinced that God *can* move. But far fewer consistently live in environments where He does move. This is because *God's power is revealed in His presence and His presence must be practiced.* This chapter moves us from understanding to expectation. It is not just that God works, but that He demonstrates His power in the life of those who pursue His presence.

We have already established that when God's presence is active, it produces four consistent outcomes:

1. It redefines the insignificant
2. It revolutionizes the order of things
3. It rebuffs the power of nature
4. It reverses the curse

Now we go deeper into the last two because this is where many believers struggle to believe fully.

God created natural laws. But He is not subject to them. The natural world operates with precision:

- The sun rises and sets
- Tides move in rhythm
- Gravity holds everything in place

This order is not random. God establishes it. But when His presence is revealed*, the Creator overrides the system He created.*

Jesus did not simply teach truth. He is the Truth. And He demonstrates His authority no matter where He is. Whatever wasn't true before He spoke it becomes true immediately in His presence. He calmed storms with a word. He

walked on water without sinking. He multiplied food beyond limitation. He directed fish to nets. These were not isolated events. They were evidence of divine authority rooted in His presence.

When Jesus told experienced fishermen to cast their nets again, it did not make sense. But *obedience positioned them for the supernatural*. The miracle was not in the net. The miracle was in the presence of God. And *when His presence and obedience meet: Overflow becomes inevitable*.

There is a coin in a fish's mouth. Provision from an unlikely source. This reveals a critical truth: *God is not limited to our system of supply***.** In His presence:

- Resources can be redirected
- Opportunities can be created
- Solutions can emerge unexpectedly

"For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse…" – Galatians 3:10

"Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them." Deuteronomy 27:26

If His presence overrides nature, it also overrides spiritual consequences. Galatians 3:10 and Deuteronomy 27:26 make it clear: The law exposes humanity's inability to meet God's standard. The result is a curse: Separation- Limitation - Spiritual death. But "*Christ redeemed us from the curse*…" – Galatians 3:13. This is not symbolic. It is a legal and spiritual reality.

- What was against us has been canceled
- What held us back has been broken
- What defined our past no longer defines our future

This is why resurrection is central to the Gospel. Jesus demonstrated authority over death itself:

- Jairus's daughter — life restored
- The widow's son — hope restored
- Lazarus — time reversed
- Jesus Himself — death defeated

And then this truth expands to us: *We were spiritually dead and were brought to life.*

Martha's Statement - A Limited Understanding

Martha said: "*If You had been here*…" She believed in presence, but limited God's timing. But God is not bound by time, or delay, or human finality.

In His presence, even what seems finished can be reversed.

The Scriptures reveal a powerful identity truth: *Authentic followers of Jesus Christ have been sealed with the Holy Spirit.* We have been marked with the seal of God. This seal represents: Ownership – we belong to God. We were bought with the blood of Jesus. It represents Security - our position is protected. It represents Authority - we carry the right to operate in His power. This is not theoretical. It is a mark that guarantees: *Who we are - Whose we are - What we have authority to do.*

God's power is not random. It is purposeful. Here is the pattern. We see God move, then faith increases, confidence grows, and joy is restored.

When we see God move, we are reminded that God is not distant. He is near and active. Every demonstration of God's power sends a message: *The enemy is defeated.*

Yet, miracles are not just for believers - they are witnesses for all to see. They reveal: God's reality - God's power - God's mercy. And they draw people into salvation.

The Danger of Passive Christianity

One of the greatest dangers is this: Believing in power, but never expecting it. Can we truthfully say that we believe in something that we never expect to see or to experience? When we have this type of spiritual mindset, Christianity becomes informational instead of transformational.

Imagine having a powerful electrical system installed in your home, but never turning it on. The wiring is there. The capacity is there. But the experience is missing. That is how many believers live. The power is available, but not activated.

Application: Positioning for Demonstration

1. Expect God to move beyond natural limitations. Do not confine Him to logic.
2. Obey even when it does not make sense. Obedience activates the supernatural.
3. Reject every mindset rooted in curse or limitation. You have been redeemed.
4. Live with awareness of your spiritual authority. You are sealed and empowered.
5. Pursue His presence daily, not occasionally. *Power flows from proximity*.

When Presence Becomes Power

God's presence is not passive. It is active and powerful. When we practice His presence:

- Nature no longer limits us
- The past no longer defines us
- The curse no longer holds us

And our life becomes a demonstration:

- To the believer, that God is faithful

- To the enemy, that God is victorious
- To the world, that God saves

When His presence and obedience meet:
Overflow becomes inevitable.

Chapter 6

The Battle for His Presence

Overcoming the Enemy's Weapons

"Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and have done everything, to stand firm." - Ephesians 6:11-13

If we are going to practice the presence of God consistently, we must understand something: *We are in a fight.* This is not a casual struggle. It is not an occasional inconvenience - but a *spiritual battle - a spiritual war.*

Scripture is clear: "*Put on the full armor of God… For our struggle is not against flesh and blood*…"

The enemy does not mind activity. He does not mind religion. He does not even mind church attendance so much. But he will fight relentlessly against anything that leads us into being consistently in God's presence.

One of the greatest deceptions the enemy promotes is this: *He wants the battle to feel natural instead of spiritual*. If he can convince us that:

- Our problem is people
- Our struggle is circumstances
- Our frustration is external

Then we will fight the wrong fight. And when we fight naturally, we lose spiritually. The victory comes when we recognize that this *is a spiritual battle and must be fought spiritually.* That means:

- Through prayer
- Through the Word

- Through worship and praise
- Through faith
- Through the presence of God

Paul instructs us to: *"Fight the good fight of faith." in 1Timothy 6:12.* Faith is not passive. Faith engages the presence of God, resists the devil, and advances the Kingdom of God. Faith is strengthened in the presence of God.

The Enemy's Primary Weapons

We are now moving beyond the barriers we discussed in chapter two and will discuss the spiritual weapons our enemy tries to use against us. Barriers are passive obstacles intended to prevent passage: pressure, crisis, our fallen spiritual nature, complaining, and fear. These things are inherent in everyone's life to some degree. It's like having a wall there to prevent us from accessing a specific area or person. However, a weapon is used to attack an adversary. We will discuss several of our enemy's top weapons of warfare in this chapter and chapters to come.

It is worth noting that fear is both a barrier and a weapon. It is the most commonly used weapon and is nuanced among the other weapons the devil uses. That is why some version of the command "Do not fear" or "Do not be afraid" is the most often repeated command in the Scriptures.

There are two major weapons the enemy uses to keep us out of God's presence: ***Fear*** and ***Ignorance*****.** These are foundational and devastating if left unchecked.

Weapon #1 — Fear

Fear is one of the enemy's most effective tools. Fear was introduced in the Garden. Eve was afraid that she was going to miss out on something good, so she sinned, and Adam followed her. After sin had entered humanity, Adam said: "*I heard… and I was afraid*." - Genesis 3:10. Fear created sin. Sin produced

separation. So, understand this: *Fear is often a symptom of disconnection from God's presence.*

Fear is designed to: Intimidate us, paralyze us, cause us to panic, and prevent obedience. We become afraid when we are not in the presence of God or do not understand that He is with us and for us.

One of the purposes of fear is to mock our commitment to God. Fear comes to make us realign our priorities from God's agenda to our own. But God has not given us a spirit of fear. If we are afraid of anything other than reverent fear for God, that spirit did not come from God, but from the enemy of our souls.

Fear that prevents obedience is sin. And sin will have the same effect on us as it did on Adam and Eve: *It will make us afraid of God, afraid to be in His presence*. But we do not have a spirit of fear. We have a spirit of sonship in Christ Jesus. We are not afraid to follow the Word of God. God calls us to leave the security of our familiar, to fulfill our destiny in Christ Jesus.

We are not those who panic. When fear is in full bloom, we panic. Abraham panicked and had Ishmael. King Saul panicked and lost a kingdom. Elijah panicked and ran for his life. When we are practicing the presence of God, we don't panic. We cause evil to panic. Fear not. Take courage, for honor and glory follow the courageous in Christ.

Fear will always try to keep us in the familiar. But destiny requires movement. *We cannot step into God's purpose while clinging to comfort.* If we want to go deeper in God: We must move - We must trust - We must step beyond what feels safe. *We must learn how to become comfortable being uncomfortable*.

Scripture gives examples of what happens when fear takes control:

"And he (Adam) said, "I heard the sound of Thee in the garden, and I was afraid"
Genesis 3:10

Fear distorts judgment. But we also see the opposite:

- Abraham trusted
- David confronted
- Joseph endured
- Esther risked
- Job remained steadfast

These individuals did not eliminate fear. They overruled it with faith.

"Do not fear, for I am with you." - Genesis 26:24

One of the most repeated commands in Scripture is: **"***Do not fear***."** This is because fear is incompatible with faith. And faith is essential for God's presence.

Yet, there is one fear we must retain: The fear of the Lord. Proverbs 1:7 reveals:

"*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*."

This is not terror. It is reverence. And it draws us into His presence, not away from it.

Weapon #2 — Ignorance

If fear paralyzes, ignorance blinds. Hosea 4:6 reveals to us: "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*." Not a lack of power. Not a lack of opportunity, but a lack of understanding. Ignorance allows:

- Deception to thrive
- Compromise to grow
- Complaining to develop

It creates a false sense of truth.

Not all knowledge is from God. There is a knowledge that leads to: Rebellion, Self-reliance, and Distortion of the truth. But true knowledge:

- Reveals God's character
- Reveals God's will
- Aligns us with His Word
- Tempers our emotions that the enemy tries to use against us

When we grow in knowledge of God: We gain discernment – We recognize opportunity - We avoid deception - We walk in wisdom. *Knowledge applied gives us an advantage over the enemy.*

Knowledge is not meant to replace presence. It is meant to lead us into it. The more we know God, the more we pursue Him.

The Armor of God - Your Defense System

Ephesians 6:14–18 outlines the full armor:

- Belt of Truth
- Breastplate of Righteousness
- Gospel of Peace
- Shield of Faith
- Helmet of Salvation
- Sword of the Spirit (Word of God)

This is not symbolic language. It is a spiritual system of protection and engagement.

The Word is not passive. It is a weapon. The Word is a defense. It is the declaration of truth. When Jesus was tempted, He did not argue. He responded: "*It is written*."

Prayer is not passive. It is a weapon. It keeps us connected. It keeps us alert– aligned– empowered. Without prayer, we become vulnerable. With prayer, we remain positioned in God's presence.

Worship is not passive. It is a weapon. It is the foundation for keeping God's presence preeminent in our lives by continually focusing on Him. This is not just emotional expression. This is a life fully lived with the Cross in view.

At its core, this battle is not about circumstances. It is about access. The enemy fights: Our time with God, Our focus on God, Our dependence on God.
Because he knows: *If we gain and remain in His presence, we not only win, but we become extremely dangerous to the enemy's kingdom.*

Imagine a soldier in the middle of battle who becomes distracted and focused on the wrong thing. Even with the best weapons, that distraction becomes dangerous. That is what the enemy does. He shifts our focus away from God's presence. And in that moment, we become vulnerable.

Application: Winning the Battle

1. Recognize the fight is spiritual. Stop fighting natural battles with natural responses.
2. Confront fear immediately. Replace it with truth and faith.
3. Pursue the knowledge of God intentionally. Stay grounded in His Word.
4. Put on the armor daily. Do not engage unprotected.
5. Stay in prayer and worship consistently. These will keep you positioned in His presence.

Victory Through Presence

We are in a fight. But we are not fighting for victory. *We are fighting from a place of victory.* Because through Christ:

- The enemy is defeated
- The curse is broken

- The guarantee of the Spirit is given

Only those who remain in His presence can experience His Victory. So, fight, but not with fear or ignorance. Fight with faith *because the battle is won when we refuse to leave His presence.*

Fear is often a symptom of disconnection from God's presence.

Chapter 7

The Enemy's Strategy

Breaking Isolation and Restoring Identity

"Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and have done everything, to stand firm." - Ephesians 6:11-13

We have established that:

- This is a spiritual battle
- The enemy uses fear and ignorance
- Victory is found in God's presence

But now let us go deeper. The enemy is not only attacking our faith. *He is targeting our connection with God and our identity in Christ.* If he can isolate us and redefine us, he doesn't have to defeat us. We will begin to defeat ourselves.

The Good Fight of Faith Requires Connection

The good fight of faith is what builds the Kingdom. This fight was never meant to be fought alone. The enemy understands this. He knows that: *Isolation weakens faith, while connection with God strengthens it.*

Isolation is one of the enemy's most effective and subtle weapons. Scripture shows that being alone is often powerful.

- Jacob was alone when he wrestled with God
- Abraham was alone when he encountered God
- Moses was alone when he had his burning bush experience
- David was alone in the fields before he became king

Aloneness can lead to encounter. But isolation is different. *Aloneness is chosen for connection. Isolation is imposed for disconnection.* The enemy seeks to isolate us to:

- Separate us from God's people
- Separate us from God's Word
- Separate us from God's presence

Because when those three are removed: Our perspective shifts - Our strength diminishes - Our vulnerability increases. We can be surrounded by people and still be isolated. Jesus experienced this moment when He said: "*Get behind me, Satan*." Even in the presence of others, there can still be a disconnection in alignment. Isolation is not always physical. It is often mental and spiritual.

"The Lord will not forsake His people for His great name's sake." - 1Samuel 12:22

Isolation often begins with thoughts like:

- "I'm never going to do that."
- "That will never happen to me…"
- "I don't need help. I can handle this."
- "No one understands what I'm going through…"
- "What I should do is…"

These thoughts seem harmless. But they are dangerous. Because they cut off accountability, reject support, and open the door to deception.

Hebrews 10:25 reminds us: "*Do not give up meeting together…*" This is because encouragement sustains faith. And connection keeps us grounded in truth.

A Case Study in Isolation (1 Kings 19)

After a great victory, Elijah became overwhelmed, isolated himself, and lost perspective. He believed he was alone. But he wasn't. Isolation distorted his reality. We must safeguard against isolation. The solution is for us to become intentional. We must stay connected to God through the Word, Prayer, Praise, and Worship, and Godly relationships. These are the spiritual disciplines that keep us connected to God's presence. *Whatever we do – we must not let the enemy isolate us.*

The Enemy's Weapon #4 - False Self-Image

We have discussed fear, ignorance, and isolation. Now, let us move on to discuss a false self-image. If isolation separates us externally, false identity corrupts us internally. False self-image is when our picture of who we are is not grounded in the Word of God.

False self-image is built on: Fear – Ignorance – Isolation. When we are disconnected from truth, we begin to believe lies. The enemy will tell us:

- "You are a failure."
- "You are not enough" (low spiritual self-esteem).
- "You will never change."
- "This is just who you are," even though this is contrary to God's word.

And if we have nothing to repudiate those lies, they begin to feel like truth. We can be: Spiritually Free in Christ – Forgiven – Redeemed, and still live like we are bound. This is because what we believe about ourselves determines how we live.

Scripture declares: "*Christ has made us free*." - Galatians 5:1 and "*Whom the Son sets free is free indeed*." - John 8:36. This is not partial freedom. This is complete freedom.

The challenge is not what God says. The challenge is for what we believe. It is what we really believe because we *can be positioned in truth yet live in false perception.*

And false perception, if not corrected, becomes limitation. *God's word over us may be freedom, but if we don't believe it in our hearts and confess it with our mouths, we can still be bound because of our unbelief*. And so, we limit the power of God's word to work in our lives because we don't believe His word. Identity is not discovered in isolation. It is revealed in *God's presence*. When we are in His presence: Lies are exposed - Truth is revealed - Confidence is restored. If we don't know who we are:

- We won't submit to God
- We won't resist the enemy
- We won't walk in authority
- We won't pursue purpose

Identity determines function. Behavior follows identity.

In His presence, we begin to see ourselves as: Chosen – Redeemed – Empowered – Called. This happens not because of us, but because of His work.

The Combined Strategy - Isolation + Identity Distortion

When these two weapons work together, they become powerful: *Isolation removes truth and false identity replaces it*. And the result is: Spiritual Weakness, Spiritual Confusion, and Spiritual Stagnation. But when we break isolation and restore identity*, everything shifts toward God.*

The Lion That Believed It Was a Sheep

Imagine a lion had been raised among sheep. It eats what they eat. Moves how they move. Lives how they live. Until one day, it sees its reflection. In that moment, everything changes. It realizes: "I am not what I thought I was." That is

what happens in God's presence. We don't just see ourselves differently, we see ourselves correctly.

Application: Breaking Isolation and Restoring Identity

1. Refuse isolation at every level. Stay connected to God and to His people.
2. Challenge every thought that contradicts God's Word. Do not entertain lies.
3. Engage consistently in God's Word, prayer, worship, and praise. These keep you aligned.
4. Invite accountability and encouragement. You were not meant to walk alone.
5. Declare your identity daily. Reinforce truth until it becomes your reality.

You Are Not Alone and You Are Not Who You Think You Are - Unless Who You Think You Are Is Who God Says You Are

The enemy wants us: Isolated – Confused – Misidentified. But God has already declared: We are His - We are free – We are called. When we step into His presence, isolation breaks, identity is restored, and strength returns. Because: *The fight is not just to survive; it is to stand, knowing exactly who we are, and refusing to stand alone.*

Identity determines function.
Behavior follows identity.

Chapter 8

The Inner Battle

Overcoming Immaturity and Emotional Control

"Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and have done everything, to stand firm." - Ephesians 6:11-13

We often think of spiritual warfare as something external. We think of it as something happening around us. But one of the enemy's most effective strategies is not just attacking from the outside. It is exploiting what is unresolved within. Fear, ignorance, isolation, and false identity are powerful. But when combined with *immaturity and emotional instability*, they become even more dangerous. Because now the enemy doesn't have to fight us - He can trigger us.

The Battlefield of Maturity

The good fight of faith requires more than belief. It requires growth. Because immaturity makes us:

- Reactive instead of discerning
- Emotional instead of spiritual
- Impulsive instead of disciplined

And when immaturity is present, the enemy gains access points. This is not about age. This is about spiritual development. Many patterns we carry into adulthood are formed in childhood. We can carry emotional wounds. We can lack affirmation. We can display a lack of discipline and unresolved rejection. If left unaddressed, these become behavioral patterns:

- Feeling unloved = difficulty committing

- Lack of affirmation = nothing satisfies
- Being ridiculed = envy, insecurity, drama
- Inability to handle correction = anger and defensiveness
- Not getting your way = withdrawal and quitting
- Constant criticism = projecting unresolved pain
- Angry and offended over the smallest things = never say you are sorry

These are not just personality traits. They are unhealed areas the enemy can manipulate. Immaturity also shows up in decision-making:

- "Buy now, deal with consequences later"
- Living beyond our means
- Lack of discipline in habits
- Avoidance of responsibility

This is what happens when the body grows, but the soul does not mature.

"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." - 1Corinthians 13:11

The Call to Grow Up

Paul writes: "*When I became a man, I put away childish things*." Maturity is not automatic. It is intentional. We must recognize childish patterns and not only reject them, but replace them with discipline.

Immaturity keeps us: easily offended, easily distracted, easily discouraged. And all three will pull us out of God's presence because presence requires: Surrender, Stability, and Consistency.

Weapon #6 - Out-of-Control Feelings

If immaturity is the doorway out of God's presence, then uncontrolled emotions are the accelerator. In the Garden, Eve did not fall because of logic. She fell because of: Desire – Perception – Emotion. The enemy knows: *If he can control how we feel, he can influence what we do.*

One of our most destructive patterns is making long-term decisions based on short-term feelings. Examples include:

- "I'm tired of this marriage…"
- "I don't feel fulfilled…"
- "I'm done with this responsibility…"

And in moments of emotion, people make decisions that alter their future, damage relationships, and disrupt their sense of purpose. Unchecked emotions lead to escalation:

- Frustration leads to Anger
- Anger leads to Destructive behavior
- Pain leads to Addiction
- Discontent leads to Compromise

What begins as a feeling can become a pattern. Emotions often come with justification:

- "I deserve this…"
- "They made me feel this way…"
- "This is just how I am…"

We rationalize our anger, our addictions, our sin, and our panic. We excuse how we feel. But our feelings are not always the truth. They must be submitted to the Truth of God's Word.

Galatians 5:22–23 gives us the solution: Operate in the fruit of the Spirit. This is the antidote: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Notice the last one: *Self-control.* This is critical, because without self-control our emotions will control us. Without self-control, our circumstances and our reactions will control us. But with self-control: *We can remain anchored in God's presence.*

The Connection Between Emotions and Presence

Uncontrolled emotions: Distort perception, interrupt focus, and break consistency. But Spirit-led living produces: Stability – Clarity – Peace. We cannot sustain God's presence while being ruled by our emotions.

The Enemy's Combined Strategy

Now we see the full picture:

1. Fear weakens us
2. Ignorance blinds us
3. Isolation separates us
4. False identity confuses us
5. Immaturity destabilizes us
6. Emotions control us

And when all of these work together, we are pulled out of God's presence without even realizing it.

The Untrained Driver

Imagine giving someone a powerful vehicle without training them how to drive it. They have access to power, but no control. The result? Damage. That is what happens when believers have spiritual power, but lack emotional and spiritual maturity.

Application: Winning the Inner Battle

1. Identify immature patterns honestly. What reactions are still childish?
2. Commit to growth intentionally. Maturity does not happen accidentally.
3. Stop making decisions based on emotions alone. Filter everything through the truth of Gods Word.
4. Develop self-control through the Spirit. This is not willpower. It is surrender.
5. Stay anchored in God's presence daily. Presence stabilizes what emotions try to disrupt.

From Reaction to Authority

The enemy wants us to be reactive, emotional, and immature. This will keep us unstable. But God is calling us to grow, mature, and walk in self-control so that we can remain steady in His presence. Because the more stable we become, the more consistently we can live in the presence of God. And when we live there:

- Feelings do not control us
- Our past does not define us
- We are not moved by pressure

We are instead guided by God the Holy Spirit.

When immaturity is present, the enemy gains access points.

Chapter 9

The Heart Battle

Overcoming Selfishness and Unforgiveness

"Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and have done everything, to stand firm." - Ephesians 6:11-13

The enemy attacks our heart as a strategy to disrupt God's presence in our lives. He attacks what we think with a design to affect how we feel. The ultimate tactic is to use humanism (what we think and how we feel) to cause human rationalization and finally rebel against the Word of God. Operating from a humanist perspective is one of the obvious signs of spiritual immaturity. We can never operate in alignment with the Word and Presence of God until we have killed the flesh and conduct ourselves according to obedience to God's Word, which in and of itself is spiritual maturity.

One of the clearest indicators of spiritual maturity is perspective:

- "I don't feel like it…" vs. "I get to…"
- "I don't want to…" vs. "I'm privileged to…"

This is not just language. It is heart posture. The battle is not just external. The battle is within our desires, our motives, and our choices. And one of the greatest deceptions we can believe is this: *"If I change my environment, I will change my behavior."* But the truth is: *Transformation does not come from changing environments. It comes from changing choices. And we change choices when we change what we believe, when we change what we think. And it is the presence of God that most facilitates this change.*

The Core Issue - The Heart

We have exposed many weapons of the enemy:

- Fear
- Ignorance
- Isolation
- False identity
- Immaturity
- Emotional instability

Now we confront two of the most deeply rooted: *Selfishness and Unforgiveness.* These are not just behaviors. They are *conditions of the heart.*

Weapon #7 - Selfishness

Selfishness is subtle, but powerful. Selfishness is: *Placing our interests above all others, including God's.* It is, at its core: Godlessness. Selfishness removes God from the center and replaces Him with self. Selfishness never travels alone. It is accompanied by:

- Self-deception - believing we are right when we are wrong
- Self-sufficiency - believing we don't need God
- Self-superiority - believing we are better than others
- Self-righteousness - justifying our behavior
- Pride - elevating our perspective above truth
- Preference - prioritizing comfort over calling
- Prejudice - judging others unfairly
- Pain avoidance - refusing growth to avoid discomfort

Selfishness asks:

- "What do I want?"
- "What benefits me?"
- "What feels right to me?"

But the Kingdom asks a different question: "What honors God?"

Romans 15:3 says: "*Even Christ pleased not Himself.*" Jesus, who had every right to prioritize Himself, chose selflessness.

"Whosoever shall seek to save their life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose their life shall preserve it." - Luke 17:33

Luke 17:33 is a Kingdom paradox that reveals the following: *Clinging to self leads to loss while surrendering self leads to life*. Righteousness is the opposite of selfishness. It is marked by: Self-denial, Self-awareness, Self-control, and Humility. Selfishness pushes us out of God's presence. Selflessness draws us into it.

Weapon #8 - Unforgiveness

If selfishness hardens the heart, then unforgiveness imprisons it. Unforgiveness is often rooted in selfishness. It says: "I have the right to hold this against you." It clings to: Hurt – Offense - Justice (as we define it).

Scripture is clear - Forgiveness Is Not Optional. It is a command. It is a requirement. It is a condition.

"*Forgive, and you shall be forgiven*." - Luke 6:37

This is not a suggestion. If we do not forgive, we sin. It is a prerequisite for our sins to be forgiven.

"…I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes." - 2Corinthians 2:10-11

2 Corinthians 2:10–11 reveals something critical: *Unforgiveness gives the enemy an advantage*. It opens the door for bitterness, division, and deception.

On the other hand, forgiveness is:

- Choosing to release someone from their debt to us
- Relying on God for the strength to forgive
- Praying for those who have hurt us. Ask the Lord to bless them.
- Trusting God with justice

"Pray for those who mistreat you." Matthew 5:44

Forgiveness is not a feeling. It doesn't feel like I have forgiven. It's not an immediate emotional resolution. And it's not forgetting what happened. We can do the right thing while still having the wrong feelings. We have to trust God to heal our heart over time. We need to rest upon the Word of God. Forgiveness is not a moment. It is often a process that begins with a decision: "I release them."

Why These Two Weapons Are So Dangerous

Selfishness and unforgiveness are especially dangerous because they: Feel justified - Seem reasonable - Appear personal. But they do something devastating: *They disconnect us from God's presence while convincing us that we are right. We can never be right if we are disconnected from God's presence.*

Perspective Shift - Privilege Over Obligation

We don't *have* to. We *get* to. Let us return to the place where we started:

- "I have to forgive…" → "I get to be free"
- "I don't want to…" → "I'm privileged to obey God"

This shift changes everything. Because: *Obligation resists, but privilege embraces.* God's presence is not sustained by perfection. It is sustained by alignment. A heart that remains in His presence is: Humble – Surrendered - Forgiving – Selfless.

The Closed Hand

Imagine trying to receive something with your hand tightly closed. We cannot. That is what selfishness and unforgiveness do. They close our hearts. When our heart is closed*, we cannot fully receive what God wants to give.*

Application: Restoring the Heart

1. Examine your motives honestly. Where has self, taken the place of God?
2. Choose selflessness daily. Align your decisions with God's will.
3. Identify areas of unforgiveness immediately. Do not ignore them.
4. Release people through prayer even when it is difficult.
5. Shift your perspective to privilege. Obedience is not a burden. It is access to God's presence.

Freedom Through Surrender

The enemy wants our hearts hardened by selfishness and bound by unforgiveness. This is because it keeps us distant from God's presence. But when we surrender self and release others, something powerful happens: *Our heart opens, and our spirit aligns*. And His presence flows freely. This is because *we cannot walk deeply in God's presence with a divided heart.*

And one of the greatest deceptions we can believe is this: *"If I change my environment, I will change my behavior."*

Chapter 10

Under Pressure

Overcoming Complaint and Depression

"Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and have done everything, to stand firm." - Ephesians 6:11-13

Pressure does not create what is inside us. It reveals what is inside us. We can maintain an appearance for a while. We can manage behavior temporarily. We can "*fake it*" in certain environments. But when pressure comes, what is in us will ultimately come out. And this is exactly where the enemy works. If he can't stop our calling, he will attempt to corrupt our response under pressure.

The Battle Becomes Visible Under Pressure

We have identified multiple weapons of the enemy:

- Fear
- Ignorance
- Isolation
- False identity
- Immaturity
- Emotional instability
- Selfishness
- Unforgiveness

Now we see how these manifest under pressure. They usually show up as **weapon #9**: Complaint and **weapon #10:** *Depression*. These are not just emotional states. They are spiritual conditions.

The Spirit of Complaint

Complaint is more than negativity. It is a spiritual posture. Complainers complain when they have and when they don't have. It is not about circumstances. It is about perspective. Complaint targets: Our attitude, mindset, outlook, and approach to life. It shifts our focus from:

- God's faithfulness to our frustration
- God's provision to our perceived lack

Complainers see crisis instead of process and problems instead of purpose. They often blame others, avoid responsibility, and remain unproductive. This is because complaint removes vision.

Complaint does something very dangerous: *It minimizes what God has already done.* It ignores His provision, His protection, and His faithfulness. And in doing so*, it dishonors His presence.*

Scripture teaches: "*God inhabits the praises of His people*." Which means *God does not dwell in the complaints of His people*. Complaining will push us out of awareness of His presence.

We all need to be aware and be warned of the following:

- *Numbers 11:1* — God hears complaint and responds with displeasure
- *Psalm 77:3* — Complaint leads to an overwhelmed spirit
- *Jude 16* — Complainers are described as spiritually unhealthy

Complaining is not harmless. In fact, it is destructive. Complaining takes us immediately out of the presence of God.

Praise Is the Counterattack to Complaining

Praise is not emotional. It is intentional. It is a choice. And it produces a progression: *Exaltation → Revelation → Manifestation.*

- Exaltation – When we make God big, even bigger than our situations
- Revelation – He reveals Himself to those who exalt Him
- Manifestation – His power is then released into the exalter's life

Praise positions us for the supernatural. No praise = No power.

Weapon #10 - The Spirit of Depression

If complaint is the entry point, depression is the deepening of that condition. Depression is the spirit of complaint on steroids. Depression convinces us:

- "This bad situation is final."
- "It's going to die"
- "Nothing will change."
- "There is no way out."
- "It's dead, and it's not coming back."

It removes positive expectations. It removes hope.

There is a progression, and it goes as follows:

1. Complaint - criticizing God, focusing on what's wrong
2. Despair - losing heart - thinking constantly about giving up
3. Depression - losing hope - quitting on God and those around you

This is a downward spiral. Depression tells us: "It's over." But that is never the truth in Christ. Because *God is not finished until He says He is finished.*

Throughout Scripture, we see individuals who faced pressure, but chose faith:

- Moses - led through opposition
- David - worshiped in difficulty
- Joseph - remained faithful in injustice
- Jesus - endured the Cross

They all experienced pressure. But they refused despair. They chose faith. Faith is: *Not allowing what we see, hear, or feel to determine what we believe. It is not making humanism a god.* This is critical. Because depression is rooted in:

- What we see
- What we feel
- What we assume because of what we see and how we feel

But faith anchors us in what God said. That is because we are convinced that there is no failure in Jesus. He always does what His Word says He will do. *There Is No Failure in Jesus.* This must be settled in our spirit: *Jesus does not fail.* Circumstances may shift. Situations may delay. But Christ remains faithful.

The Power of Praise Over Pressure

Psalm 47:1 declares: "*Shout unto the Lord with the voice of triumph*." This is an attitude and a heart posture that declares that, because Christ is victorious and we belong to Him, Christ's victory is our victory. Praise reveals faith. And faith will reveal praise.

Psalm 30:5 reminds us: "*Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning*." This reveals a powerful truth: *Praise is not just a response to victory. It is a declaration before victory.*

Why These Two Weapons Are So Effective

Complaints and depression are dangerous because they feel justified, reasonable, and unavoidable. But they do something devastating: *They disconnect us from God's presence while convincing us that we are right to feel the way we feel*. We must always remember that when pressure comes, we have a choice:

Option 1: Complain

- Focus on problems
- Lose perspective
- Disconnect from God's presence

Option 2: Praise

- Focus on God
- Gain clarity
- Enter His presence

The Thermostat vs. the Thermometer

There is an old analogy. I'm sure that you have heard it, but it is worth repeating in this moment. A thermometer reflects the environment. A thermostat changes it. Complaint is a thermometer. Praise is a thermostat. One reflects pressure. The other transforms it.

Application

To respond correctly under pressure, make sure to focus on the following:

1. Monitor what comes out under pressure. It reveals what is inside.
2. Eliminate complaint immediately. Do not allow it to take root.
3. Choose praise intentionally, especially when it is difficult.
4. Reject the lie of finality. God is still working.
5. Anchor your belief in God's Word, not your feelings. Faith overrides emotion.

Pressure is not our enemy. It is a platform. It reveals:

- What needs to change
- What needs to grow
- What needs to be surrendered

And when we respond correctly, pressure becomes the place where God's presence is revealed most powerfully. Because we don't lose in pressure, we reveal who we really are. And when what's inside us is aligned with God:

- Complaint is replaced with praise
- Depression is replaced with hope
- Weakness is replaced with strength

And His presence becomes our reality, no matter the pressure.

There Is No Failure in Jesus.

Chapter 11

His Presence Activated

Living a Life Empowered by His Presence

Moses said to the LORD, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people, 'but You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight." Now therefore, if I have found favor in Your sight, please show me now Your ways, that I may know You in order to find favor in Your sight. Consider too that this nation is Your people." And He said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." And he said to him, "If Your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not in Your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and Your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?" And the LORD said to Moses, "This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." - Exodus 33:12-17

Up to this point, 1) we have established the necessity of God's presence, 2) exposed what keeps us out of God's presence, and 3) confronted the internal and external battles. Now we must move into a deeper level: *Activation***.**

It is not enough to know about His presence. It is not enough to experience His presence only occasionally. *His presence must become active in our life.* Activated means – Stirred – Engaged - Set in motion - Fully operational. This is the difference between:

- Having access and walking in authority
- Being aware and being empowered

The Cry of Moses - "If You Don't Go…"

In the above Scripture, Moses makes a defining statement: "*If Your presence does not go with us, do not send us*." Moses understood something many miss: *God's presence is not an addition to leadership. It is the foundation of it*. Without His

presence, we don't know which way to go or what to do; we have difficulty making the right decisions, and leadership becomes exhausting.

His Presence Is Needed for Leadership

Leadership Is Stewardship. Whether we realize it or not, we are leading. It could be a family, a ministry, in the workplace, or in our relationships. But whether we know it or not, or whether we want to or not – we are leading someone, somewhere. Leadership is not about position. It is about *influence and responsibility*.

One of the most overlooked areas of leadership is communication. Especially when it comes to disagreements, controversial topics, or moments when emotions are high, the question becomes: Are we trying to win the argument or advance the Kingdom?

We must desire for our leadership to be fixed in the presence of God. Leadership rooted in God's presence produces love rather than pride, humility rather than control, and self-awareness rather than defensiveness. It chooses *obedience over being right.*

"*Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is*?"
Genesis 41:38

In the above Scripture, Pharaoh said: "*Can we find such a one as this… a man in whom is the Spirit of God*? Joseph's distinction was not skill alone. It was God's presence.

God's Presence Is Needed for Intimacy

We cannot know God without God the Holy Spirit. God is not known intellectually alone. He is known relationally, through God the Holy Spirit. Without His presence, God becomes distant, Scripture becomes informational, not transformational, and prayer becomes routine. True intimacy with God produces:

- Recognition - you know His sound

- Discernment - you distinguish His leading
- Understanding - you comprehend His ways
- Appreciation - you value His nature

Jesus said: "*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.*" - John 10:27.

We can be familiar with God and still not be intimate with Him. Familiarity knows about Him, but intimacy knows Him.

The Favor of The Lord

Intimacy leads to obedience, and obedience leads to favor. Favor is not earned. It comes from alignment. Favor is not manipulation. It is the result of a life lived in accordance with God's will. Obedience releases favor. We can see obedience through:

- Acts of kindness
- Compassion
- Serving others
- Going past convenience

"Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you. I will look on you with favor…"
Leviticus 26:8-9

Favor produces a supernatural advantage in our battle against the enemies of our soul. The above Scripture says, "*Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand*…" This is not natural math. This is divine multiplication. This is *presence-driven favor*. God multiplies effectiveness when His presence is active.

Favor allows us to have an impact on others for Jesus, by reflecting Christ, thereby advancing the Kingdom. Without presence, our influence is limited. With presence, your influence is multiplied.

His Presence Is Needed for Spiritual Maturity

Spiritual maturity is not a moment. It is a process. Spiritual maturity requires learning, the application of that learning, and adjustment as appropriate. The evidence of spiritual maturity looks like:

- Responding instead of reacting
- Choosing obedience over preference
- Letting go of trivial arguments
- Aligning behavior with truth

The Danger of Immaturity in Spiritual Growth

Immaturity has a way of creating unnecessary conflict and focusing on non-essential issues. Spiritual immaturity also produces competition instead of cohesion. It is impossible to be spiritually mature when we are emotionally immature.

"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things." - 1Corinthians 13:11

God calls us in 1Corinthians 13:11 to put away childish things. Spiritual growth demands intentional change. It is important that we identify childish patterns, release them, and then replace them with Godly disciplines.

Maturity is not achieved through effort alone. *The Holy Spirit must be activated.* When He is activated, He will teach us, convict us, guide us, and transform us. Without Him, growth is limited. With Him, growth is inevitable.

When God's presence is activated in our lives, we lead differently, love differently, think differently, and respond to life's situations differently. We are no longer passive, or reactive, or inconsistent in spiritual things. We become intentional, aligned, and empowered.

The Engine That Isn't Running

Imagine a car with a powerful engine. Everything is prepared. But the engine is off. The potential is there. But there is no movement. That is what it looks like when we have the Holy Spirit but have not activated His presence in our lives.

Application: Activating His Presence Daily

1. Invite the Holy Spirit intentionally. Do not assume, but instead, engage.
2. Lead with awareness of God's presence, especially in difficult conversations.
3. Pursue intimacy, not just information. Know God personally.
4. Align your actions with obedience. God's favor follows obedience.
5. Commit to ongoing growth. Maturity is a daily decision.

Presence That Moves

God's presence is not meant to sit dormant in our lives. It is meant to be active. It is meant to move us, empower us, and transform us. Moses understood: *That without God's presence, nothing else matters.* And when His presence is activated:

- Leadership becomes effective
- Intimacy becomes real
- Favor is revealed
- Maturity becomes consistent

Because the aim is not just to experience His presence, but to live a life that is fully activated by it.

His presence must become active in our life.

Chapter 12

The Great Exchange

From Performance to Presence

Moses said to the LORD, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people, 'but You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight." Now therefore, if I have found favor in Your sight, please show me now Your ways, that I may know You in order to find favor in Your sight. Consider too that this nation is Your people." And He said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." And he said to him, "If Your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not in Your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and Your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?" And the LORD said to Moses, "This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." – Exodus 33:12-17

The enemy does not always attack with obvious darkness. Sometimes he introduces something much more dangerous, a substitute. He introduces not open rebellion, but quiet compromise - not rejection of God, but replacement of His presence. And when that happens, we begin to see a shift:

- Performance replaces presence
- Image replaces intimacy
- Activity replaces anointing

True rest and true success are only found in the presence of God.

The Danger of a Counterfeit Spirit

There is a spirit that seeks to operate within the Church, not outside of it. It looks spiritual. It sounds spiritual. But it is not rooted in God's presence. It is a counterfeit spirit, a performance-driven mentality. It desires to please people rather than honor God.

There is an “Ishmael spirit”. It looks like the real thing. It sounds like the real thing, but it has no power to deliver on God's promise.

There is the “Lucifer spirit”. It is an arrogant spirit that will not submit to the word of God, the presence of God, or the man or woman of God. It seeks to undermine all divine authority and bring attention to itself.

A “Harlot Spirit,” at its core, is about attracting attention without sustaining covenant. It aims to look as good as it can while entertaining as many clients as possible. It prioritizes: Looks over authenticity; Attraction over obedience; Crowds over consecration. It asks: “What will people respond to?” Instead of: “What is God requiring?”

The spirit of King Saul is a spirit that chooses popularity over obedience and image over integrity. It is more concerned with how it looks than whether God is pleased. King Saul thought that his glory was more important than God’s.

The Leviathan spirit seeks to suffocate the Word of God and the presence of God. It desires to leave only a religious form and fashion, as an imitation of Godly things.

The Jezebel spirit is a tenacious spirit that seeks to destroy all divine prophetic authority.

The Absalom spirit is a spirit of the son or daughter seeking to overthrow the father or mother. This spirit seeks to destroy the authority that is over them.

There are many counterfeit spirits in the Church. We must be on guard against them all. They all follow much of the same pattern.

- Comfort is preferred over conviction
- Entertainment replaces encounter
- Convenience replaces commitment

When people would rather be entertained than transformed, or affirmed than challenged, the presence of God is no longer central. The result is a powerless Church and a powerless people.

When God's presence is replaced, something holy and vital is lost. Not visibly at first. Eventually, power disappears**,** because His presence is not there. We may still have programs and activity. We may even have a large crowd. But we no longer have God's presence, which means we lose His authority, His power to transform, and the manifestation of His presence. Scripture describes this as: *"Having a form of godliness, but denying its power."*

The Tragedy of Misalignment

The Church can become well-organized, well-attended, and well-presented, yet spiritually ineffective. This is because what man builds cannot produce what only God can provide.

Then said I, "Woe is me! For I am undone; for 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!" – Isaiah 6:5

Now and then we ought to leave church completely and utterly undone, entirely wrecked by the presence of God. In Isaiah 6:5, Isaiah, who was the pinnacle of human righteousness at the time, says that because he has encountered God's presence, his righteousness is literally coming apart at the seams. This is how it must be for the authentic Christian, at least occasionally, whether in private worship or corporate, that a glimpse of God's holiness should and would cause us to become undone.

This is an important issue in the modern Church in America. Too many churches are built on the charisma of men rather than on the presence of God. As a result, the church may be well organized and well attended, with lots of programs and activities, but it lacks power because it lacks the presence of God. It is spiritually out of order. It has a controlling spirit that can never fulfill God's promise. It has been established by men and for men, rather than by God for God. There is a

passion, even a zeal, but it does not acknowledge the power and presence of God.

This leads to a people that are deceived. They believe they are something that they are not. Many are like turkeys on the side of the road, operating in one of three levels of being lost.

One Sunday I was driving to church in Knoxville, TN. I was driving along I-75N and 40E. It was a cool winter morning. There was a flock of turkeys standing on the side of the road. They were watching the cars go by as though they were looking to cross the road. There were several dead turkey carcasses on the edge of the highway, presumably having been hit by passing cars. Behind the turkeys was a forest; it was their safe place. But from the looks of things, they seemed intent on crossing the road, most likely to their demise. At that moment, God the Holy Spirit reminded me that many people are just like these turkeys. They are lost and dying when their safe place is closer than they can imagine. He said there are three levels of lost humanity.

Level 1: Completely Lost

- No awareness of where they are
- No awareness of where they should be

Level 2: Aware, But Directionless

- They know where they are
- But they don't know where they should be

Level 3: Aware, But Unable to Progress

- They know where they are
- They know where they should be
- But they don't know how to get there

At all three levels, they are positioned for disaster because they are outside a place of spiritual safety. There is only one solution to it all: to be consistently

found in God's presence. For only God's presence grants direction, clarity, safety, and movement in a way which honors Christ.

The Cry of Moses Revisited

In Exodus 33:14–15, God promises: "*My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."* Moses responds: *"If Your presence does not go with us, do not send us."* This is the dividing line. Some value presence, and some settle for progress without it. Which are you?

His Presence Produces Divine Rest

Divine rest is when we are free from striving. We are restrained by God the Holy Spirit from operating in humanism and in our perceived best interest. Instead, we learn how to rest on the Word of God and in the person of Jesus Christ. Rest is not inactivity. It is the absence of anxiety, fear, and pressure-driven living. In God's presence, His divine rest produces:

- Relaxation - lack of anxiety, fear, or deep concern
- Renewal - strength is refreshed
- Reorganization - priorities are realigned
- Rectification - what was wrong is corrected
- Recreation - rebirth
- Reformation - reorganization, regeneration
- Renovation - reconstruction, transformation

In the presence of God, we find:

- REST-oration - being reinstated, recovering that which was lost
- REST-itution - what was taken is returned
- REST-raint - self-control is strengthened

This is not surface-level peace. This is deep, transformational rest.

"Thus says the Lord, Stand by the ways (paths of life) and see and ask for the ancient paths (that which is hidden – eternal), Where the good way is, and walk in it; And you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, "We will not walk in it."
Jeremiah 6:16

The encouragement to us all is to *"Stand… ask for the ancient paths… walk in it… and you will find rest…"* But notice the response: "*We will not walk in it.*" Rest is available. But it must be chosen.

His Presence Produces Divine Success

The world defines success as: Achievement – Recognition – Accumulation. But God defines success as: *Obedience to His will*.

There is a danger of settling for less than the presence of God offers. The people of God commonly confront this temptation: "Let's not go all the way… let's settle here." Instead of pursuing the promise, they build something comfortable. But: *Comfort is not the same as calling.*

Moses understood: "I cannot be successful apart from You." This is the question we must all answer: Do we really believe that?

"As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper." – 2Chronicles 26:5

"*As long as he sought the Lord (made the Lord essential), God made him prosper*." Success is not achieved through human effort alone. It is released through a pursuit of God.

Without God's presence, life becomes effort-driven, stress-filled, and performance-based. But in His presence, we stop striving, because we start trusting, as we move more and more into accordance with His word and will for our lives.

Building Without Blueprint

Imagine trying to build a structure without a blueprint. We may succeed in building something, but it may not be what was intended. That is what life looks like without God's presence. Effort without alignment leads to misdirection.

Application: Returning to His Presence

1. Examine your priorities honestly. Are you pursuing presence, or performance?
2. Reject comfort that replaces calling. Do not settle short of God's will.
3. Choose rest over striving. Trust God's process.
4. Reinterpret success biblically. Success is obedience.
5. Make His presence essential, not optional. Like Moses, refuse to move without Him.

The Only Thing That Matters

At the end of everything, what is it that really matters? It is not our accomplishments. It is neither our reputation, nor our level of activity for the Lord. Only one thing will matter. It is His presence. Did we walk in His presence? In His presence we find our rest, our success, our direction, and our source. And without His presence, nothing we build will last. But with it, everything we do carries eternal weight.

God defines success as: *Obedience to His will*.

Chapter 13

The Evidence of His Presence

Marked, Distinguished, and Empowered

"For how shall it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not in Your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and Your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?" And the LORD said to Moses, "This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." – Exodus 33:16-17

One of the most dangerous assumptions in the Christian life is this: *"Because I've moved from where I was, I must have arrived at where I am supposed to be."* But movement is not the same as alignment. We can leave where we were and still not be where God wants us to be. As in the illustration in the previous chapter about turkeys on the side of the road, we can be moving but not progressing with purpose. And this is where many believers live:

- Active, but not aligned
- Engaged, but not empowered
- Moving, but not transformed

This is because: *Progress without God's presence is still misdirection.* It is the presence of God that reveals, distinguishes, and authenticates the believer's life. We must prepare for His presence. Before we step into what His presence produces, we must understand how we position ourselves for His presence:

- Praying without asking - communion, not just requests
- Praising without complaint - discipline, not emotion
- Preparing our hearts through His Word - alignment, not assumption

Too often, we approach spiritual things casually. But His presence demands intentional preparation.

His Presence Reveals the Pleasure of God

God's presence residing in us is a mark of God's pleasure. In Exodus 33:16, something important is revealed: *God's presence is the evidence that we have found favor with Him*. It is not external success. It is not public recognition. It is His presence.

When God's presence is active in our lives, it sends a message that we are not intimidated by the ways of evil, because the enemy is defeated in our lives and we know who we are in Christ.

"…for the joy of the Lord is your strength (power)." - Nehemiah 8:10

The joy of the Lord is our strength. Joy isn't emotional excitement. It is stability, confidence, and assurance in the Word of God and the person of Jesus Christ. And it comes from God's presence. His pleasure produces our power.

His Presence Differentiates Us from the World

"Then you will know that the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel." Exodus 11:7

Exodus 11:7 declares that God distinguishes between His people and the world. *That distinction is His presence.* This distinction is a visible difference. God's presence speaks to the world, declares to spiritual realms, and reveals who we are in Christ. It becomes our identity marker. His presence turns into the definition of our souls, for only God can tell us who we are.

Our identity defines our capacity. *Who we are determines where we can go and what we can do.* And who we are is revealed in His presence.

God's presence transforms us. When we walk in God's presence, who we are changes, where we go changes, and what we do changes. We begin to step into places we weren't qualified for, opportunities we didn't earn, and make an impact we couldn't manufacture.

We see this pattern repeatedly:

- David — from shepherd boy to king
- Joseph — from prisoner to ruler
- Paul — from persecutor to apostle
- Esther — from orphan to deliverer
- Peter — from fisherman to leader

What was the difference? The presence of God is the difference, the common denominator.

The same becomes true for us: because of His presence, we get jobs we weren't qualified for, doors open that we didn't expect, and we receive influence that we did not pursue. This is because *God's presence expands our capacity.*

Our limitation is not our background. It is not our resources. It is not our education. *We are only limited by how much of God's presence we practice.* And this will determine how deep our anointing flows.

His Presence Authenticates Our Efforts

There is a difference between our effort and God's anointing. We can work hard and still not produce eternal impact. But when God's presence is involved*, our efforts are authenticated.*

God the Holy Spirit is God's mark of authenticity. He confirms who we are. He confirms what we can do. He validates our direction and establishes our credibility in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. We become genuine, dependable, and Spirit-led. As a result, we have irrefutable impact for the Kingdom of God, for the glory of God. Because of His presence, His effect through us is indisputable; it is incontestable, it is indubitable. This is what happens when God's presence is evident. People may question you, but they cannot deny what God is doing through you.

His presence reminds us that we *will accomplish what God has called us to do.* This will happen not because of our strength, but because of His Spirit.

"The Lord shall make you the head, and not the tail; and you shall be above only, and you shall not be beneath" - Deuteronomy 28:13

Deuteronomy 28:13 reveals that God will make us the head, not the tail. This is divine positioning. This flows from God's presence.

The Danger of Losing Distinction

"Her priests do violence (destroy) to my law (word) and profane (disrespect) my holy things; they do not distinguish between the unclean and the clean." Ezekiel 22:26

Ezekiel 22:26 warns us that when God's people fail to distinguish between the holy and the common, they lose their identity. And when identity is lost, their influence is diminished, and their power is reduced because God's presence is neglected.

When God's presence is active, we carry joy in difficulty, we walk with confidence in uncertainty, and we operate with authority in opposition. *Our lives become the evidence of God.*

The Seal of Authenticity

Imagine a document stamped with an official seal. That seal confirms that the document is genuine, authorized, and recognized as official.
That is what God's presence does in our lives. It marks us as authentic.

Application: Living as Evidence of His Presence

1. Stop equating movement with arrival. Seek alignment, not just activity.
2. Prepare your heart daily through Word, prayer, and praise.
3. Value God's pleasure over public approval. His presence is the true reward.
4. Embrace your identity in Christ. Let His presence define you.
5. Trust God to authenticate your life. You don't have to prove yourself. He will.

Marked by His Presence

At the end of the day, the question is not: How much did you accomplish? or how much did you achieve? The question is: Does His presence mark us*?* Because His presence reveals God's pleasure, distinguishes us from the world, and authenticates everything we do. And when we live in that reality*, our life becomes clear proof that God is with us.*

We are only limited by how much of God's presence we practice.

Chapter 14

A Case for His Presence

From Pain to Transformation

"Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, "Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the LORD and you will save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. And this shall be the sign to you that the LORD has anointed you to be prince over his heritage. When you depart from me today, you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah, and they will say to you, 'The donkeys that you went to seek are found, and now your father has ceased to care about the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, "What shall I do about my son?"' Then you shall go on from there farther and come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from their hand. After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim, where there is a garrison of the Philistines. And there, as soon as you come to the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre before them, prophesying. Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God is with you. Then go down before me to Gilgal. And behold, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do." When he turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. And all these signs came to pass that day." - 1Samuel 10:1-9

There comes a moment when form is no longer enough. When religious routine no longer satisfies. When surface-level Christianity cannot sustain real life, it is time to stop playing spiritual games. People are hurting. Not superficially, but deeply. People are living in broken homes with broken relationships. Life has dealt many tragedies that have left many emotional wounds and scars. There is generational pain and private struggles that no one can see. And too often, instead of bringing that hurt into God's presence, we try to manage it.

The Church's Dilemma - Medicate or Meditate

There is a sobering truth that must be exposed: *We have chosen to medicate instead of meditate.* Instead of dragging our situations into the presence of God, sometimes kicking and screaming*, we medicate the pain of our lives with distraction, entertainment, busyness, and temporary relief*. Spiritually, we attend services, hear messages, and even participate outwardly. And yet, we never truly encounter God.

When pain is medicated instead of healed, it remains, and it deepens, and it keeps resurfacing. This is because: *Only God's presence can address the root.* There is a cry rising from the heart. There is a cry rising and not just from individuals, but from the Church more and more: *"We are desperate… we are chasing after God… take us to the King…*" This is not affective language. It is spiritual hunger.

Illumination That Produces Revelation

God's presence brings light instead of darkness, clarity instead of confusion, and comprehension instead of perplexity. This is because: *We cannot heal what we cannot see.*

Illumination exposes hidden issues, false beliefs, and misaligned priorities. The purpose is not to bring shame, but to reveal truth. Scripture warns us:

- Evil can masquerade as light (2 Corinthians 11:14)
- But God is pure light - without darkness (1 John 1:5)

This is critical because not everything that appears right is true.
Jesus said: "*You are the light of the world*." - Matthew 5:14. But we do not produce that light. We echo it. And that only happens in His presence.
There is power in God's presence that breaks through the darkness, reveals the truth, and brings full clarity.

"Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim You, who walk in the light of Your presence, O Lord." – Psalm 89:15

"*Blessed are those… who walk in the light of Your presence*…" This is not occasional. It is a lifestyle.

Renovation - The Transformation Within

Renovation is not surface improvement. It is intrinsic transformation. It is development, growth, and maturity. We need renovation. We need something to confront the immature parts of us. Because those immature areas, if left unchecked, will disrupt our lives, distort our decisions, and disconnect us from God's presence.

"Therefore, let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity…" - Hebrews 6:1

"*Let us go on to maturity*…" God never intended for us to remain spiritually stagnant, emotionally immature, and relationally unstable.

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers (sisters), whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you can be mature…" James 1:2-4

Trials are not interruptions. They are instruments. They produce perseverance, strength, and maturity. We do not grow by effort alone. We grow by remaining in His presence. This is because His presence corrects, strengthens, and refines.

Integrity - The Evidence of Transformation

Integrity is *being the same person in private as you are in public.* It is consistency. It is accordance with the Word of God and the Will of God. There are at least three powerful dimensions of integrity:

1. Dedication (Perseverance)
Remaining committed to God regardless of the circumstance.

2. Admiration (Approval of God and His People)
Living in a way that reflects God's character.

3. Determination (Fortitude)
We have a settled decision to fulfill our purpose, no matter what.

"In my integrity you uphold me and set me in Your presence forever."
Psalm 41:12

Integrity sustains access. God entrusts His presence to those who are aligned.

Our main Scripture for this chapter, 1 Samuel 10:1-9, outlines Saul's transformation after he was anointed king of Israel. Saul's encounter with God is a powerful example of the transformation that can occur when we encounter God's presence. Before his encounter with God, Saul was no one special, unprepared, and unqualified. However, when the Spirit of God came upon him*, he was changed into another man*. This is the power of God's presence. This is not modification, but transformation.

The True Solution to Pain

Pain is real. But the solution is not avoidance, distraction, or suppression. The solution is an encounter with the One True Living God. When we bring our hurt into God's presence, He reveals the truth, He renews our mind, and He restores our hearts. God's presence is the only answer to the pain we try to medicate instead of heal.

Treating Symptoms vs. Healing the Source

Imagine taking pain medication for a serious injury. It may reduce the discomfort, but it does not fix the problem. That is what happens when we medicate instead of meditate. We manage symptoms, but remain broken.

Application: Moving From Pain to Presence

1. Stop masking pain. Bring it honestly before God.
2. Invite God to reveal what is hidden. Illumination leads to healing.
3. Commit to growth and maturity. Do not remain where you are.
4. Develop integrity intentionally. Align your private and public life.
5. Choose presence over performance. Encounter God. Not just activity.

The Only Place Healing Happens

At the end of the day, programs cannot heal us, people cannot complete us, effort cannot transform us. Only one thing can heal us, complete us, and transform us. That is *the presence of God.* Because in His presence, His light exposes darkness, His truth replaces confusion, His growth replaces stagnation, and His integrity replaces our inconsistency. And our pain is transformed toward purpose.

We cannot heal what we cannot see.
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Chapter 15

The Passion and the Proof

Living Under His Protection, Prosperity, and Purity

"Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, "Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the LORD and you will save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. And this shall be the sign to you that the LORD has anointed you to be prince over his heritage. When you depart from me today, you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah, and they will say to you, 'The donkeys that you went to seek are found, and now your father has ceased to care about the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, "What shall I do about my son?"' Then you shall go on from there farther and come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from their hand. After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim, where there is a garrison of the Philistines. And there, as soon as you come to the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre before them, prophesying. Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God is with you. Then go down before me to Gilgal. And behold, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do." When he turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. And all these signs came to pass that day." – 1Samuel 10:1-9

Let's face something honestly: We are called children of the Most-High, redeemed, and set apart. And yet, many so-called believers no longer carry a passion for Jesus Christ. At least not the kind of passion we once had for the world. Think about it. Where is our energy, our excitement, and our priority for the Lord and the things of God? We used to give everything to what didn't matter and now struggle to give ourselves fully to what matters most.

Something has shifted. And the issue is not discipline alone. The issue is that we *have lost our intensity for God's presence.* We are not pursuing God. We have

become a Pharisee. We have long flowing robes and beautiful words, but our hearts are not near to Jesus Christ. We look good. We sound good, but our hearts do not burn for God's presence.

We must remember that God's presence isn't merely something we feel. It is something that produces God's protection, God's prosperity, and God's purity. These are not independent blessings. They are outcomes of union with His presence.

God's Presence Provides Protection

God's presence protects from the outward enemy. There is a real enemy. He operates through hidden schemes, accusations, opposition, and attempts to plunder our lives.

"How great is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You, which You bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in You. In the shelter of Your presence You hide them from the intrigues (schemes) of men; in Your dwelling You keep them safe from accusing tongues." - Psalm 31:19-20

Psalm 31:19–20 declares: "*In the shelter of Your presence… You hide them…*" This is critical: *God's protection is found in His presence.* There are moments when it appears as if the situation is against us, that the odds are not in our favor, that the outcome is uncertain. And yet, throughout Scripture we find examples of God's supernatural protection for those who abide in His presence.

- Abraham faced impossible tests
- Joseph was betrayed and imprisoned
- David was hunted
- Jesus was crucified

And still God's presence turned their disadvantage into their advantage.

What was meant to destroy us becomes the platform God uses to raise us. *Our opposition becomes our platform for promotion.*

God's presence also protects us from the enemy within. This is just as important. Occasionally the greatest threat is not external. It is internal. Many times, our greatest struggles are on the inside against fear, sin, mediocrity, rebellion, misaligned priorities, and a desire to conform to the world. These are all powerful internal enemies. And without God's presence*, we are vulnerable to ourselves.* God's presence does not just protect us from an outward attack. It sustains our spiritual integrity. According to Jude 24, it is Him "*who can keep us from falling*…"

His Presence Produces Prosperity

Prosperity is often misunderstood. It is not simply financial or materialistic. It is success in every area of life, spiritually first and then in every other way: emotionally, relationally, physically, financially, in every way. It is the absence of deficiency. It is the "lack of lack" and the "abundance of abundance." True prosperity produces fullness of joy - complete joy. Not dependent on circumstances. Not based on results but rooted in God's presence. There is a price to be paid for lasting prosperity: *Obedience.* Joshua 1:6–9 connects success directly to meditating on the Word and acting on what God says. 1 Samuel 10:7 declares: "*Do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you*." Presence empowers action.

"In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider."
Ecclesiastes 7:14

God's presence sustains us in both increase and difficulty. Prosperity is not the lack of difficulty. It is God's presence in every season.

His Presence Produces Purity

There is a call for holiness. Purity is not optional. It is essential. It means being set apart for God's use. It means being holy, being made fit for God's purpose, and being ready to honor Him. It means being in harmony with His nature, His character, and His ways. God's presence prepares us to honor Him, to carry His glory, and to represent Him well.

There are real barriers, real disruptors to our efforts to be pure:

- Bad habits
- Poor attitudes
- Confusion
- Unfulfillment
- Wrong influences

These are not small issues. They affect our ability to remain in His presence.

"You cannot stand before your enemies, until you take away the cursed thing from among you." - Joshua 7:13

This is a sobering truth: *Impurity weakens spiritual authority.*

"Create inside me a pure heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me. Do not cast me from Your presence." – Psalm 51:10-11

"

Create inside me a pure heart…" Notice the connection: David links purity directly to God's presence. "*Do not cast me from Your presence…*" Because he understood: *Purity sustains presence.*

The Connection Between Passion and Purity

We cannot separate passion for God's presence from purity. If passion declines, purity weakens, sensitivity dulls, and presence grows distant. But as passion is restored, purity returns, clarity increases, and presence grows tangible.

Saul - A Life Changed by Presence
1 Samuel 10:1-9

Saul's encounter reveals something powerful: When God's presence comes upon us*, we are changed.* It is not a slight change but a drastic one, one that is visible externally.

Fire and Refinement

Fire does two things. It both purifies and strengthens. When metal is heated in fire, impurities are removed, and strength increases. That is what God's presence does. It refines us.

Application: Restoring Passion Through Presence

1. Reignite your passion intentionally. Do not accept spiritual dullness.
2. Position yourself under God's protection. Stay in His presence daily.
3. Pursue obedience as the pathway to prosperity. Do what God says, consistently.
4. Remove anything that compromises purity. Do not tolerate what weakens you.
5. Ask God to renew your heart continually. Stay sensitive to His Spirit.

The Life That Reflects His Presence

When God's presence turns central, we are protected, sustained, and purified. And our lives begin to reflect something different: Confidence without arrogance, Peace without passivity, Power without striving. Because:
His presence isn't simply something we experience. It is something that transforms everything about us.

Purity sustains presence.

FINAL CHARGE

You have now seen it, not merely heard about it or considered it. But have been confronted with it: *The necessity of God's presence.*

You now understand:

- What keeps you out of His presence
- How the enemy fights your connection to God's presence
- What is available to you in His presence
- What your life is meant to look like

And because of that, you cannot go back to living casually.

It is possible to hear the truth, feel conviction, and experience clarity, yet still return to old habits. But understand this: *Returning to what you came from will cost you more than it did before.* Now you know better.

Living in God's presence is not a one-time experience. It is a daily choice. Every day you will decide: *His presence or distraction - Obedience or convenience - Faith or fear - Surrender or control.*

You do not need to be perfect. But you must want to be perfect. You must try to be perfect. You must at the very least be consistent. Because consistency builds awareness of His presence, strengthens your discipline, and deepens intimacy.

If you commit to this, your life will not remain the same. You will:

- Think differently
- Respond differently
- Walk with authority
- Carry peace in pressure
- Reflect power without striving

Your life will become: *Evidence that God is with you.*

Do not just admire this message. Do not just agree with it. Live it. Practice His presence when you feel like it, when you don't feel like it, when life is easy, and when life is difficult. Because this is the Truth: at the end of everything, it is not about your achievements. It is not about how much recognition you receive. It is not about how active you have been for God. Only one thing will matter: *Did you live in His presence?*

Make this your decision: *I will not live disconnected*. I will not live distracted. I will not live beneath what God has made available. *I will practice His presence.* And when you do - everything changes. ***EVERYTHING***.

The Bishop's Blessing

May your hunger for God always exceed your desire for success. May His Word become sweeter to you with every passing year. May your prayers become deeper than your sermons.

May your character grow faster than your influence. May your private worship always exceed your public ministry. May your home remain your first ministry. May your family see Jesus in you before anyone else.

May your faith remain strong in adversity. Let your heart remain humble in prosperity. May your hands remain open in generosity. And may your eyes remain fixed upon Christ until the day faith turns into sight.

May the Lord establish the work of your hands. May His presence surround you. May His peace sustain you. May His Spirit empower you.

And may your life bring glory to Jesus Christ until you stand before Him. Amen.

Ad Gloriam Christi.
Bishop Dr. Anthony Collins

Appendix - A: Collins Kingdom Principles for Daily Living

1. Nothing supernatural happens outside of the presence of God. But when we live in His presence, everything becomes possible.
2. Anything that leads us into a deeper level of God's presence will face resistance.
3. Power flows from presence, not from requests alone.
4. God knows how to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary.
5. When His presence and obedience meet: Overflow becomes inevitable.
6. Fear is often a symptom of disconnection from God's presence.
7. Identity determines function. Behavior follows identity.
8. And one of the greatest deceptions we can believe is this: "If I change my environment, I will change my behavior."
9. Unforgiveness gives the enemy an advantage.
10. His presence must become active in our life
11. The aim is not just to experience His presence, but to live a life that is fully activated by it.
12. God defines success as: Obedience to His will.
13. We are only limited by how much of God's presence we practice.
14. We cannot heal what we cannot see.
15. Purity sustains presence.

PRACTICING
HIS
PRESENCE

Study Guide

Download the Practicing His Presence (Volume 1) Companion Workbook at HOWICP.org

Use with the Companion Workbook for best results.

Author's Note

Thank you for reading "*Practicing His Presence" - Volume 1*. If this book encouraged, challenged, or strengthened your walk with Christ, would you consider leaving a brief review? Your review:

- Helps other believers find this resource
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Blessings,
Bishop Anthony Collins

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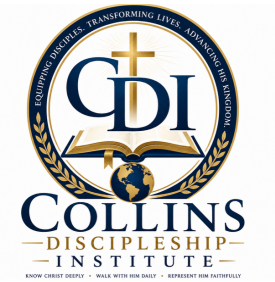

In Matthew 28, our Lord Jesus Christ gave His Church its mission, its vision, and its process for reaching the world. We know it as the Great Commission.

Jesus commanded His followers to go *and make disciples of all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching *them to obey everything He had commanded*. This is not one ministry among many; it is the mission of the Church. It is the one assignment that every believer, every local church, and the Church universal has received directly from our risen King.

Sadly, much of the modern Church has neglected this divine responsibility.

Many who stand behind the sacred desk have never themselves experienced intentional biblical discipleship. Consequently, they have little vision or passion for discipling others. This stands in direct opposition to both the command and the example of Jesus Christ.

Disciple-making is rarely easy. It is often inconvenient, time-consuming, and personally demanding. It requires patience, commitment, and sacrifice. But the Kingdom of God has never been advanced through convenience. It has always been advanced through faithful men and women who were willing to invest their lives in others.

We cannot fully accomplish biblical discipleship from the pulpit alone. Preaching is essential, but it is only one part of the process. Neither can we effectively disciple someone through occasional meetings or brief conversations. Jesus did not simply teach crowds; He invested deeply in twelve men. He walked with them, answered their questions, corrected their misunderstandings, modeled obedience, and allowed them to observe His life day after day.

That remains the biblical pattern.

Discipleship is life shared. It is walking alongside another believer, allowing them to see how we respond to life's victories, disappointments, temptations, and trials. It is opening God's Word together, praying together, encouraging one another, and holding each other accountable to grow in Christ.

For us, intentional discipleship means meeting regularly - ideally at least once each week - for meaningful conversation centered on Scripture, spiritual growth, and the practical challenges of living faithfully in a fallen world. It is helping believers develop the spiritual disciplines that deepen their intimacy with Jesus Christ and strengthen their walk with Him.

The goal is not simply to produce knowledgeable Christians. The goal is to develop mature disciples who, in turn, become disciple-makers themselves.

This is the multiplication strategy of the Kingdom.

At **Collins Discipleship Institute (CDI)**, our passion is to equip individuals, churches, and Christian organizations with practical, biblically sound resources that cultivate mature, vibrant, and Spirit-empowered followers of Jesus Christ. We desire to strengthen believers in the essential areas of Christian life and ministry, so they can faithfully fulfill the Great Commission. We do not exist to produce better church members. We exist to produce mature disciples who make mature disciples.

We believe that the future strength of the Church will not be determined merely by the size of our congregations, but by the depth of our disciples. When disciples make disciples, churches become healthier, families become stronger, communities are transformed, and the Kingdom of Jesus Christ advances.

The Great Commission has never been rescinded. It remains the calling of every believer. May we not merely admire it, but may we obey it.

Contact us at info@HOWICP.org for more information. All discipleship resources are free.

Beyond The Veil,
Bishop Dr. Anthony Collins

Author Bio

Bishop Dr. Anthony Collins is a former pastor, a teacher, author, and international ministry leader committed to equipping believers to live with purpose, power, and spiritual authority.

Over 20 years ago, he co-planted a non-denominational, multi-cultural church that continues to impact lives today. A strong emphasis on discipleship, spiritual maturity, and the practical application of Biblical truth marks his leadership. Bishop Collins has also led international ministry efforts for more than a decade, with work spanning Mexico, Central America, Russia-Ukraine, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and regions of Africa.

Bishop Collins is the founder of **Houses of Worship International Christian Partnership (HOWICP)**, a ministry focused on supporting churches, developing leaders, and advancing the Gospel globally. Through this work, he also oversees initiatives such as **Children for Christ Ranch** in Yucatán, Mexico, an outreach dedicated to feeding, discipling, and caring for children while building sustainable, Christ-centered community impact.

He is also the founder of the **Collins Discipleship Institute**, an organization that exists to glorify Jesus Christ by forming faithful disciples who love God wholeheartedly, love people sacrificially, handle God's Word accurately, shepherd His Church with humility, and reproduce disciple-makers throughout the nations.

Bishop Collins is passionate about mentoring pastors and spiritual leaders, helping them grow in spiritual depth, clarity of calling, and effectiveness in ministry. His teaching consistently calls believers beyond routine religion into a life marked by God's presence.

Through his writing and ministry, he challenges the Church to return to what matters most - *intimacy with God, alignment with His will, and the power that flows from His presence.*

"*Until every believer is a disciple, every disciple is a disciple-maker, and every nation has faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ - Ad Gloriam Christi*."